

## Glossary

**A.D.** – Abbreviation for the term *Anno Domini Nostri Jesu Christi* (or simply *Anno Domini*) which means "in the year of our Lord Jesus Christ." Years are counted from the traditionally recognized year of the birth of Jesus. In academic, historical, and archaeological circles, A.D. is generally replaced by the term Common Era (C.E.)

**Aerial Photography** – The various techniques of taking photographs of natural or cultural features from the air, using drones, aeroplanes, satellites and other sources, in order to study the features in their entirety from a top-down (birds-eye) view.

**Anglo-Saxon** – A chronological time period after the Roman administrative withdrawal from Britain and a number of Germanic tribes from the near continent settled in Britain and Ireland. Traditionally it is divided into the Early Anglo Saxon (AD410-699), the Middle Anglo Saxon (AD 700-849) and the Late Anglo Saxon (AD 850-1066)

**Anthropology** – The study of humanity, including their behaviour, biology, linguistics and social and cultural variations

**Antiquarian** – A term generally indicating a pre-20<sup>th</sup> century collector of ancient artefacts before the development of scientific archaeology and the establishment of standards for excavating and preserving finds

**Archaeology** – The study of the human past through its material remains.

**Archaeobotany** – The study of ancient plant remains

**Archaeozoology** – The study of animals in the past

**Artefact** – An object from the past.

**Assemblage** – A group of artefacts

**B.C.** – Abbreviation for the term Before Christ. Years are counted back from the traditionally recognized year of Christ's birth. In academic, historical, and archaeological circles, this term is now generally replaced by Before Common Era (B.C.E.)

**Bronze Age** – A chronological period characterised by the first use of metal (bronze) as a material for tools, weapon and ornaments, between 2200-700 BC and situated between the Neolithic and the Iron Age

**Ceramics** – Objects, often pottery, made of fired or baked clay



## Glossary

**Conservation** – A branch of archaeology that deals with the stabilisation, preservation, repair, reconstruction and general management of material culture and natural resources

**Context** – The position and associations of an artefact, feature or archaeological find in space and time, often representing a separate layer or artefact

**Culture** – A network of socially transmitted behaviours, beliefs and ideas that separate humans into distinct groups. Cultures directly affect the population of the material culture found at archaeological sites

**Domesticated** – Animals which have been kept by people. They are not wild. Domesticated animals include cows, sheep, pigs, cats and dogs. Wild animals would be, deer, boar, badgers, and hedgehogs

**Deposition** – When something is left behind (purposefully or by accident) and becomes part of the archaeological record

**Dendrochronology** – Dating when a tree was alive from the pattern of rings in the wood

**Environment** – The surroundings or area including the habitats and type of landscape

**Evidence** – Something that demonstrates that something is true. Archaeological evidence may be an object, the stratigraphy of a site, or any other indicators we have for what happened in the past.

**Excavate** – The principle method in archaeology to gain data by systematically uncovering archaeological remains and features by removing the soil and any other material covering them

**Feature** – A non-portable artefact, for example a hearth, ditch, pit or structural remains

**Geophysical Survey** – Ground-based physical sensing techniques used for archaeological imaging or mapping to determine the extent of buried archaeological features

**Hoard** – Deliberately buried groups of valuables or prized possessions, which for one reason or another, have not been reclaimed

**Interpret** – To explain or understand something. In archaeology, this focuses on the use of space by past communities and how they used the world around them

**Iron Age** – A chronological period between 700 BC and the invasion of England by the Roman Empire in AD 43. It comes after the Bronze Age and is characterised by the use of iron implements in the place of bronze tools

## Glossary

**Material Culture** – The buildings, tools and other artefacts that constitute the material remains of former societies

**Medieval** – A chronological time period that started with the Norman Invasion in AD 1066, and is often split into the high medieval (AD 1066-1399) and the late medieval after the Black Death (AD 1400-1539) that ends with the Dissolution of the Monasteries by Henry VIII

**Mesolithic** – A chronological time period, sometimes referred to as the Middle Stone Age, beginning around 10,000 years ago to around 5000 BC. It is situated between the Palaeolithic and Neolithic periods and is characterised by the use of small flint tools known as microliths

**Midden** – A deposit of occupation debris, rubbish and other by-products of human activity and found close to a living area

**Neolithic** – A chronological period, also known as the New Stone Age, between 5000-2200 BC. It is situated between the Mesolithic and the Bronze Age and is characterised by the development of agriculture and a change to a sedentary lifestyle

**Organic remains** – Any artefacts that were once alive e.g. plant remains

**Palaeolithic** – A chronological time period, referred to as the Old Stone Age and covers all of early human activity up to about 10,000 years ago. It is characterised by the earliest known stone tool manufacture

**Phasing** – A period of action or activity

**Post-Medieval** – A chronological time period that starts after the Dissolution of the Monasteries at the end of the medieval period between AD 1540-1799. Archaeology of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and later is generally not thought of as being post medieval in date, but classified as 'early modern'.

**Prehistory** – The period of human history before the introduction of writing

**Preservation** – How well an object has survived since its deposition

**Roman Period** – A chronological time period when the majority of England and Wales were under Roman administrative rule (AD 43-410)

**Settlement Pattern** – The distribution of human settlements in the landscape

**Site** – A distinct special clustering of artefacts, features and structures with organic and environmental remains, as a residue of human activity



## Glossary

**Soil morphology** – Examining soil in detail to understand how the soil was formed and disturbed

**Status** – How much power, wealth or importance a person has within a society

**Stratigraphy** – The order of layers or deposits found on an archaeological site, a succession of layers should provide a relative chronological sequence, with the earliest at the bottom and the most recent at the top

**Structural remains** - A structure is another word for a building. Structural remains are what would be left behind after the building fell out of use or was demolished

**Taphonomy** – The study of processes that have affected organic material such as bone, after death

**Technology** – Applying knowledge to achieve a practical purpose. Not just computer or anything electrical, this can refer to any type of tool or technique to do something