

Ancient Woodland: land that has had a continuous woodland cover since at least 1600 AD.

Anglo-Saxon / Saxon: AD450-1066 (AS) period of history in Britain from the end of the Roman period until the Norman Conquest in 1066.

Archaeological monitoring: involves an archaeologist being present during the course of development works, to identify and protect archaeological deposits, features or objects which may be uncovered or otherwise affected by the works.

Archaeology: the scientific study of past human life and change through analysis of material remains that humans have left behind.

Artefact: any portable object, material or substance that is made, modified, used, deposited and/or affected by human action and is of cultural heritage value or interest.

Conservation Area: an area of historical and architectural character whose boundaries have been designated in local plans. Local planning authorities have special planning powers covering these areas, which aim to preserve and enhance their character.

Cropmark: archaeological features identified from variation in crop growth visible in aerial photographs. Crop marks are particularly visible in dry summers when the plants stay greener in the deeper soil of cut features and ripen quicker in the shallower soil over structures.

Cultural heritage: object, place or practice of heritage which is of human origin. The term is often used by way of contrast with natural heritage. Comprises monuments, architectural works, works of monumental sculpture and painting, elements or structures of an archaeological nature, inscriptions, cave dwellings and combinations of features, which are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science.

Deserted medieval village (DMV): an abandoned village, often related to plague, famine, war, climate change, environmental destruction, or deliberate clearances.

Designated heritage asset: a World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.

Desk-based assessment (DBA): an assessment of both the known and potential archaeological resource within a specified area carried out using available sources such as HERs, cartographic evidence, documentary sources and aerial photographs.

Earthwork: any monument made entirely or largely of earth.

English Heritage (EH): The government agency charged with the protection and care of the monuments and heritage resources of England.

Evaluation: a limited programme of non-intrusive (desk-based assessment, geophysical, topographical or fieldwalking survey); and/or intrusive fieldwork (usually trial-trenching or test-pitting), which determines the presence or absence of archaeological features, structures, deposits, artefacts or ecofacts within a specified area. The results of an evaluation will establish the requirements for any further work.

Excavation: intrusive fieldwork with specific aims, which examines and records archaeological deposits, features and structures; and recovers artefacts, ecofacts and other remains within a specified area or site. Often followed by a programme of post excavation and publication.

Feature: a stratigraphic change that is the result of a past human event or action, as opposed to the steady accumulation of natural deposits; for example a darker area of soil indicative of a former posthole, pit or ditch. Not all stratigraphic anomalies investigated are the result of human activity: some may be the result of natural / animal actions, such as tree roots or animal burrows.

Fieldwalking: a form of evaluation that includes a systematic walkover of the ground surface and is primarily focused on artefact recovery, as an indication of periods or areas of former human occupation. Visible surface features observed are also recorded.

Geophysical survey: a method of 'seeing' beneath the ground surface using a number of methodologies, including Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR), Resistivity and Magnetometry, all using specialist field equipment and interpretation.

Heritage: the physical remains of archaeological sites, historic buildings, structures and landscape that are elements of the historic environment.

Heritage asset: a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape positively identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions.

Historic Environment Record (HER): a database (usually computerised and sometimes online) of all archaeological sites and artefact find-spots from a particular County, maintained by the County Council. Formerly referred to as the sites and monuments record (SMR).

Important Hedgerow: an 'important' hedgerow is one that has existed for 30 years or more and fulfils other criteria defined in the Hedgerows Regulations 1997, under section 97 of the Environment Act, 1995. For example, a hedgerow marking the boundary, or part of the boundary, of at least one, pre-1850 parish or township; or one that incorporates a Scheduled Monument.

Iron Age: (IA) a period of prehistory [Lowland Britain] 700 BC-AD43.

Jurassic: major unit of the geologic timescale that extends from about 200 million years ago (Ma) to 145 Ma, from the end of the Triassic to the beginning of the Cretaceous.

Listed Building: a building of special architectural or historical interest included in the Lists published by the DCMS.

Moated site: a defended homestead, usually medieval and consisting of a square or rectangular enclosure defined by a bank and a broad, flat-bottomed, formerly water-filled ditch.

Medieval: (med) a period in European history 1066-1547.

Non designated heritage asset: historic landscapes, important hedgerows, buildings of local historic interest, artwork and non-scheduled archaeological remains.

Occupation site: a human settlement site; the term is usually used to indicate a prehistoric site.

Palaeochannel: a remnant of a former / currently inactive river or stream channel system that has been either filled or buried by later unconsolidated sediments or semi-consolidated sedimentary rocks.

Palaeoenvironment: an environment at a period in the geological past.

Parliamentary Enclosure: the practice developed of obtaining authorisation for the dividing, enclosing and allotting of agricultural land by an Act of Parliament. The first enclosure Act was passed in 1604. The 'Inclosure Acts' consolidated strips in the former medieval open fields into more compact units, and enclosed much of the remaining pasture commons or wastes.

Post-medieval: (post-med) a period of human history 1547-1700.

Pottery scatter: a concentration of ceramic artefacts on the ground surface, probably indicating a former human occupation or activity site.

Prehistoric: (PRE) a period of human existence preceding the written records with which recorded history begins.

Quaternary: a subdivision of geological time (the Quaternary Period) which covers approximately the last two million years up to the present day.

Registered Park and Garden: gardens, grounds and other planned open spaces deemed to be of national importance and included on the 'Register of Historic Parks and Gardens of special historic interest in England', a listing and classification system that is managed by English Heritage under the provisions of the National Heritage Act 1983.

Ridge and furrow: an archaeological field pattern of ridges and troughs, the result of a system of ploughing with non-reversible ox-ploughs used in Europe during the medieval period and typical of the open field system.

Roman / Romano-British: period of human history [Lowland Britain] (RB) between AD43-AD450, following the Roman conquest and the creation of the province of Britannia.

Scheduled Monument: nationally important sites and monuments given legal protection by being placed on a list, or 'schedule' by English Heritage, under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 (DCMS 2010). Scheduling is the only legal protection specifically for archaeological sites.

Setting: the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral (NPPF 2012).

Significance (for heritage policy): the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic (NPPF 2012).

World Heritage Site: a place (such as a monument, archaeological site, forest, mountain, lake, island, desert, building, complex, or city) that is listed by UNESCO as being of special cultural or physical significance and outstanding interest, and therefore needs to be preserved as part of the world heritage of mankind as a whole.