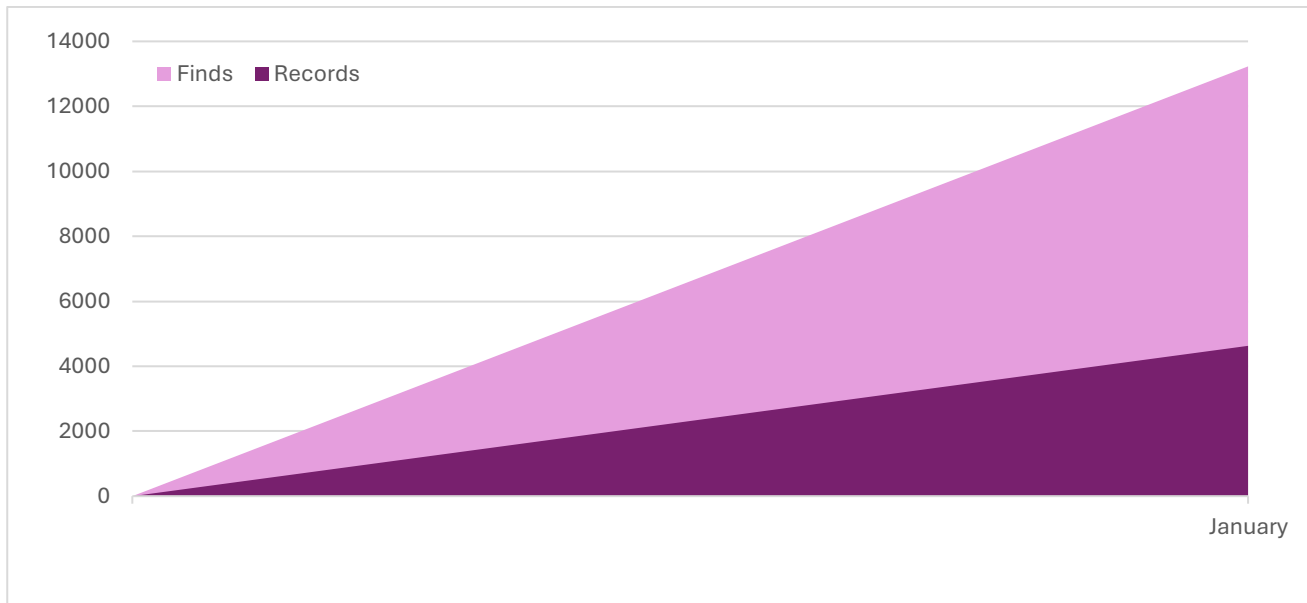


Portable Antiquities Scheme update **January 2025**

I hope 2025 has been treating you well... It has been a busy year for the PAS so far. This latest monthly update aims to keep the detecting community (and others) informed on the work of the Scheme across England from a British Museum perspective. Lots more is happening locally!

Finds recording

13,230 finds (within 4,628 records) were added to the [PAS Database](#) in January 2025. These were discovered by 667 finders, bringing the total on the database to 1,781,180 items (within 1,155,677 records). A further 109 Treasure cases were reported this month.



Graph: Number of finds and finds records added to the PAS Database in 2025.

In my December update, I noted that almost 80,000 items were added to the PAS Database in 2024. Again, I would like to thank the many detectorists who recorded their items with the PAS. Only by working together can we ensure that metal-detected (and other public finds) add to archaeological knowledge. This year looks to be especially exciting, as by the end of it (!), we should have a new database (see below), including a platform to make recording more effortless and efficient.

The main object types recorded this month were coins (1,737), buckles (370), brooches (278), tokens (165) and vessel fragments (154). Most items were Post-Medieval (1,439), followed by those of Medieval (1,427) and Roman date (1,105). 2,634 items were copper-alloy, then made of silver (1,055) and lead (424). PUBLIC recorders added 397 finds. Most finds came from Norfolk (578).

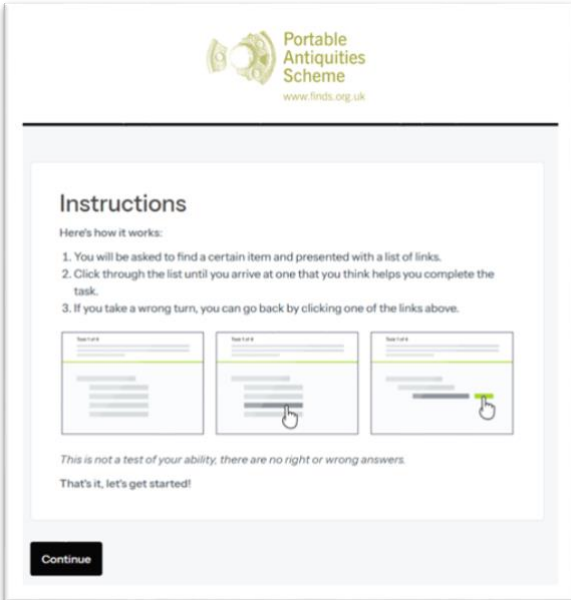
ARCHI UK

This month, we were very grateful to Chris Kutler for giving a presentation on [ARCHI UK](#) (the Archaeological Sites Index) to PAS staff and Portable Antiquities Advisory Group (PAAG) members (see below). Chris shared insights as a metal detectorist and his professional background, which includes 18 years at the UK's National Archives, developing record cataloguing projects and releasing historical data to the public. His primary motivation for creating ARCHI UK, was to help people explore and learn more about archaeological and historical landscapes.

All the information on ARCHI UK is derived from publicly accessible datasets but does not include PAS data. Even so (!), some people, including detectorists, have raised concerns with FLOs and detecting organisations that it appears to include their finds. How could this be? In short, it is a coincidence, but anyone with concerns can raise the matter with the PAS Central Unit or their local FLO, who can work with Chris to investigate further.

PAS Database Development

[Numiko](#) (with the BM/PAS team) continued rebuilding the PAS website and database. Work has progressed well on redesigning the website architecture. Thanks to everyone who has helped us by completing the online survey. This will help us make the website much more user-friendly and accessible: please look at the second iteration of our [online survey](#), which aims to test the proposed website (it should be open for a few more days). The PAS Finds Advisers have been exploring how we use the [FISH thesauri](#) to record finds. This is currently used on the PAS database but with a flat hierarchy. It also is not as flexible as we need for PAS. How we use the FISH thesauri is crucial as it helps recorders *record* finds and researchers *search* the database. We are also sketching out our new finders' portal, which will enable finders to upload basic information (photos, findspots, dimensions, etc) about their finds for consideration for full recording by the PAS team. This will provide the basis for recording finds on the [main database](#) (as necessary) and (otherwise) collating basic details about other (more common) that will be of more general interest. I am excited about this, as we hope to have features that will be useful to finders, besides helping us ensure that metal-detecting makes maximum benefit to archaeological knowledge. In due course, we will share mock-ups of what we are designing with the detecting community, so look out for that.



PAAG

The Portable Antiquities Advisory Group (PAAG), as the name suggests, is a group that helps advise the work of the PAS in England. It includes representatives of the UK's leading archaeological bodies, landowner representatives (CLA and NFU) and detecting organisations (AMDS, NCMD, etc). It usually meets twice a year, but in January, we had a special meeting to discuss how the PAS better connects with **landowners** as key stakeholders in protecting the historic environment. We also discussed metal detecting **rallies**, especially where organisers could do more to support the recording of finds with the PAS and the reporting of Treasure. As a result, we are looking to update our advice to landowners and provide some handy tips to finders and landowners on how to best communicate the importance of recording finds with the PAS. Regarding rallies, we wish to better understand who is organising them so we can promote finds recording and encourage other aspects of best practice.



Find of the Month

I am fascinated by this lead alloy medieval badge found by Zsigmond Varju near Overton, Hampshire ([SUR-743012](#)), recorded with Simon Maslin (Surrey FLO) just a few days ago; Zsigmond kindly provided the image. Hard to make out (due to wear), the central motif seems to show Christ Crucified. The letters on either side of him read IHC, for the Christogram denoting the first three letters of the Greek for Jesus (IHΣΟΥΣ), though sometimes also read for 'Jesus, Saviour of Mankind'. The legend around the edge appears to read 'IhC EST TITVLV +...' (many thanks to Rob Webley for his help with the identification). The reverse has a casting seam and two stumps for an integrally cast attachment.



Contacting the PAS

Please use the details below to contact me to discuss any aspect of the PAS's work. Please note that the PAS is a partnership project with Finds Liaison Officers (FLOs) and other staff (in England) employed locally. So, in most cases, it is best to [contact the local FLO](#) or their manager.

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