

Portable Antiquities Scheme Update February 2026

The shortest month of the year saw a steady number of finds for recording and Treasure for reporting with the Portable Antiquities Scheme. Thank you to all of the finders for coming forward with their discoveries in February. This is a broad overview of the Scheme's work on finds recording and treasure processing in the past month, with a few additional highlights. As usual there were many more activities going on around the country.

Finds recording

This month, **5,196** objects (within 4,720 records) were added to the Database by PAS staff - FLOs, FLAs, interns and volunteers and detectorist self-recorders. The record with the most objects was a Roman coin hoard of 81 copper-alloy coins. This brings the grand total on the database to 1,866,716 finds within 1,213,652 records (as of 2nd March 2026).

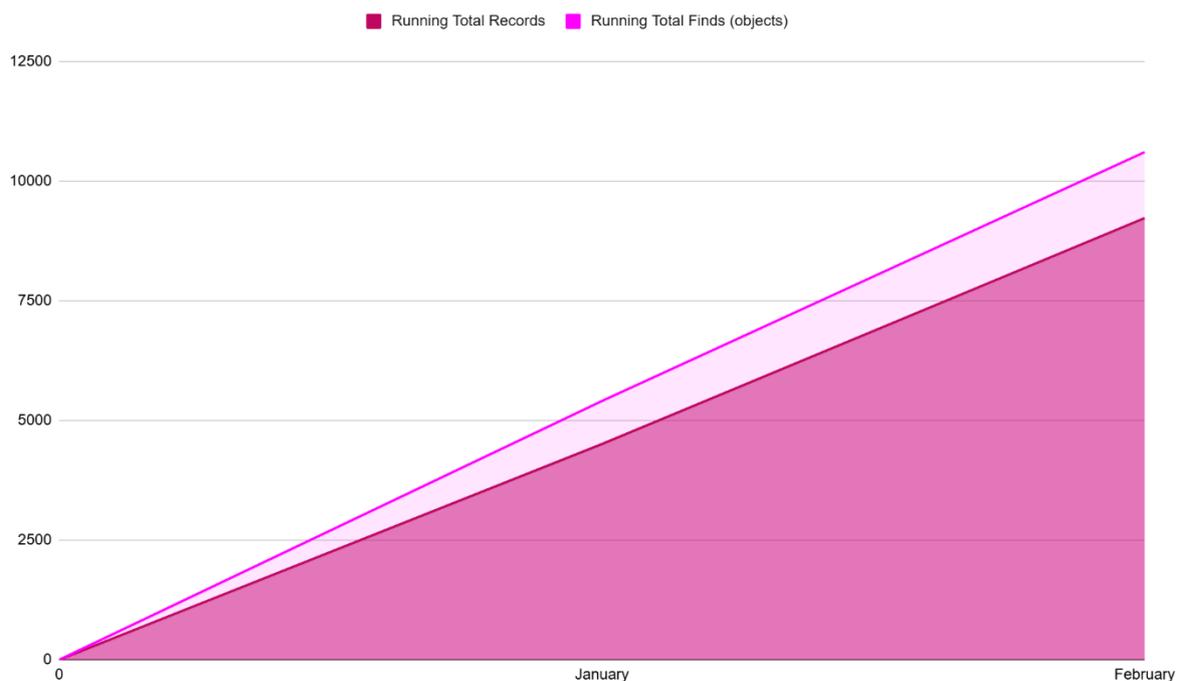


Chart 1: Total PAS Record and Finds for 2026

The distribution of records by period in February was consistent with the usual pattern, with Roman, Medieval and Post-Medieval finds much more prevalent than those of other periods. The Roman period finds were once again the most prevalent objects recorded.

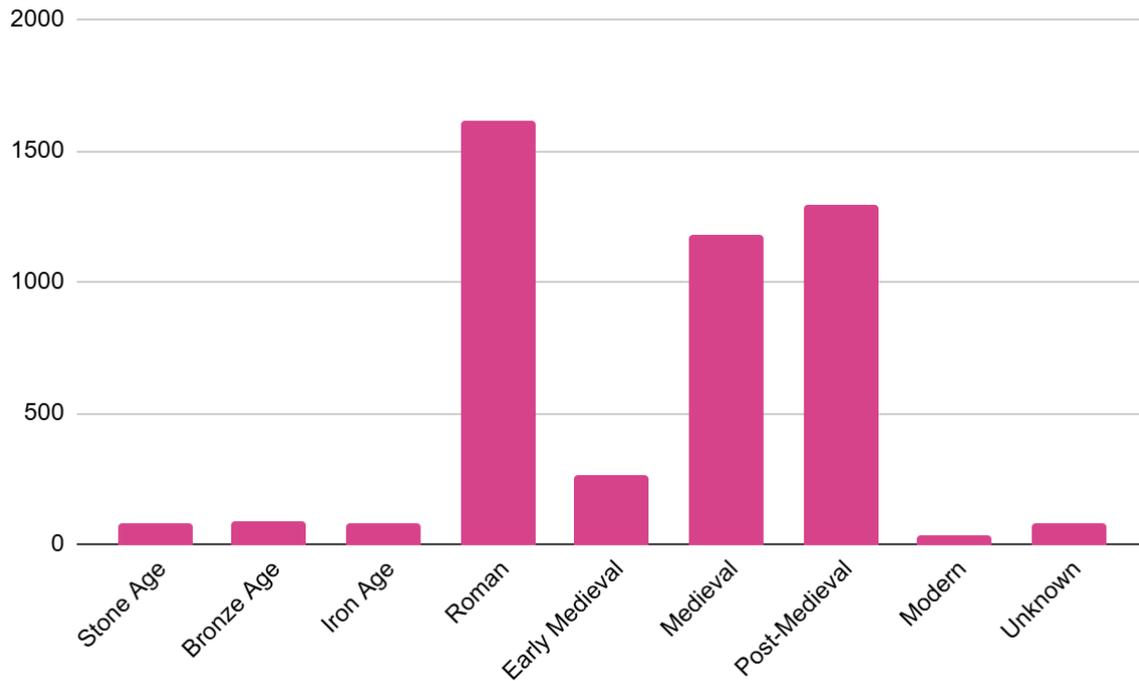


Chart 2: PAS records by period, for February 2026

There were **107** Treasure cases from England reported this month. **18** cases were paid for and acquired by museums through the Treasure process. This included a hoard ([NARC-49A445](#)) of 47 axeheads and five pieces of casting waste dating from the Middle Bronze Age (c.1500-1150 BC) found in Deanshanger, Northamptonshire, which was acquired by Northampton Museum after an extended period of fundraising. Many thanks to the two finders for their patience; it is great that this important collection of prehistoric material will be in public ownership.



Photo 1: NARC-49AFF5 – 47 axeheads and five pieces of casting waste from Deanshanger, Northamptonshire, acquired by Northampton Museum © Ellie Cox, Finds Liaison Officer

One Treasure case was acquired through donation: an Early Medieval silver pyramid mount ([SF-F744D6](#)) found in Orford, Suffolk which is going to Orford Museum. At least another two non-Treasure finds were donated to museums, including an Iron Age silver unit ([CAM-744984](#)) found in Meldreth, Cambridgeshire, which was donated by the finder to the Fitzwilliam Museum.

Sometimes, a donation can happen retrospectively. In 2020, a Roman silver finger-ring ([WILT-21A7B5](#)) with a blue-glass intaglio from Broughton Gifford, Wiltshire, was acquired by Bradford on Avon Museum with the landowner waiving a claim to a reward under the Treasure Act. In February 2026, after a discussion initiated by Wiltshire Finds Liaison Officer Sophie Hawke, the finder, Andrew Harrison of the Chippenham and District Metal-Detecting Club, kindly returned his share of the reward to the museum and now it is a fully donated find currently on [display](#) acknowledging his generosity.

Derby Museums ‘Unearthed Gallery’

On 28th February, Derby Museum & Art Gallery opened their new archaeology and natural history galleries, ‘[Unearthed](#)’ to the public. The galleries feature both Treasure and non-Treasure finds recorded with the PAS, including material donated by prolific self-recorder and detectorist Roger Thomas, who has now sadly passed away. There are also interpretative panels explaining the work of the Portable Antiquities Scheme and the Treasure Act, and hands-on displays – including a chance to rebuild a fragmented Roman ceramic pot! Attending a launch event the previous evening were Finds Liaison Officer Meghan King (Derbyshire & Nottinghamshire), Finds Liaison Assistant Victoria Szafara (Derbyshire & Nottinghamshire) and Finds Liaison Assistant Megan Preece (Lincolnshire).



Photo 2: Right to left – Meghan King, Victoria Szafara and archaeologist Cameron Black

Heritage Crime Education

One of the conclusions from the recent APPAG [inquiry](#) into Archaeology and Metal Detecting was a welcoming of ongoing police training and support for the pursuit of criminals who target archaeological sites. The PAS continues to support this. Alex Whitlock (FLO Lancashire & Cumbria) and Heather Beeton (FLO, Cheshire, Greater Manchester & Merseyside) attended a Heritage Crime workshop day at Chester

Castle on the 10th February. They worked with Steve Glüning (Cheshire Police Heritage Crime PSV) to deliver a session on metal detecting, nighthawking and Treasure. In attendance were multiple heritage crime police forces in the wider region including Lancashire, Cheshire, Merseyside, North Wales, Staffordshire, West Mercia and Derbyshire, as well as some English Heritage colleagues. The training was extremely well received and lots of material was shared with the teams.

Acquisition appeals

The British Museum announced on the 10th of February that it had been successful in [raising](#) the money to acquire the Tudor Heart, an early 16th century gold and enamel suite of jewellery featuring the motif of Henry VIII and Katharine of Aragon, found by metal detectorist Charlie Clarke and reported to Finds Liaison Officer Teresa Gilmore (Staffordshire & West Midlands), through the Treasure process. Much of the money came from substantial donations from the National Heritage Memorial Fund, Art Fund, Juila Rausing Trust and Rauch Fund. Equally heartening was the news that 45,000 individuals gave some amount – totalling 10% of the £3.5 million needed. It really was a nationwide effort.

Public appeals to assist with fundraising for finds reported under the Treasure Act are becoming more common. February also marked the launch of an [appeal](#) by Leicestershire Museums to help raise £150,000 for the acquisition of a Middle Bronze Age gold flange-twisted torc ([LEIC-BD528B](#)) from the Harborough area.



Photo 3: Middle Bronze Age gold torc from Harborough area, Leicestershire (LEIC-BD528B)

Find of the month

I realise this is now two Roman finds in a row being highlighted as ‘finds of the month’, but this interesting bracelet ([YORYM-D94DEE](#)) found by Brian Leslie deserves some attention. Discovered in the Brompton area of North Yorkshire it features a punched ring-and-dot decoration on the exterior of the copper-alloy band, giving it almost modern look. The shiny patina and the fact it is complete makes it a remarkable survival – the majority of Roman bracelets recorded with the PAS are fragmentary.



Photo 4: A late Roman copper-alloy bracelet from Brompton area, North Yorkshire (YORYM-D94DEE)



A decade of work with the Scheme

Last, and certainly not least, we are saying a sad goodbye to Andrew (Andy) Agate, our Finds Liaison Officer for the North East, who is retiring this month. Over the years, many FLOs have moved on to other jobs, but Andy joins a select group of FLOs who have finished their careers with the PAS. Andy started as an FLO in 2016 and his deep knowledge and affable nature made an immediate impression on finder community and beyond. He has been a tireless promoter of the importance of preserving the archaeological record and shared his passion

Photo 5: Andy Agate examining a pair of Bronze Age socketed axes

for history with diverse audiences. In one of his first public engagement events for the Scheme, he visited the Broadwood Primary School and spoke to 80 pupils about the Romans. Andy recorded thousands of finds in his time but he reports that one of the most memorable was a Medieval copper-alloy sword pommel ([NCL-41D1B2](#)) found in the area of the battle of Otterburn (August 1388). Thank you, Andy for all the fantastic work you've done to preserve our collective heritage!

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.

Ian Richardson

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