

CHESS VALLEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

An update on field work

The Early History of Penn Wood – LIDAR and a walk over survey

Early in 2014, CVAHS was approached by the Woodland Trust and asked whether we would undertake a survey of the wood, with its early history in mind. This was to be one part of a major CVAHS project to record all the features of this important ancient heathland/woodland.

A grant application to support this project, submitted by the Woodland Trust and involving Penn residents, has recently been approved and funded. An important aspect of the application was funding for a LIDAR survey of the wood, which would hopefully reveal early man-made structures e.g. banks, ditches and other earthworks.

John Gover, one of our long-term members, will work on the LIDAR data and its interpretation. We planned a series of walks in the wood, across selected areas to record man-made structures with a view towards later excavation. These will take place in February and dates will be circulated shortly.

Whelpley Hill news and excavation

Four pieces of charcoal were retrieved from the 'pond' and from trench A, the possible dwelling, have been identified as *Quercus* (oak) and *Maloideae* (apple-like family). This prompted an application to the Royal Archaeological Institute for funds to cover the cost of radiocarbon dating. News on whether this has been successful is expected later this month.

Meanwhile we have decided that further excavation of the circular feature, one of four possible dwellings. The plan is to extend the existing trench further to the south, and slightly to the east thereby fully excavating a pit, partly uncovered during the 2014 dig and extending exposure of the 'floor surface'.

Latimer Park surveys and excavation

In September 2014, resistivity, magnetometry and GPR surveys were carried out in two fields associated with Latimer Park. The resistivity data proved to be the most informative of these identifying a number of features worthy of further exploration. Two strong magnetometry signals should also be explored. The data from the surveys was sent to the manager of the Latimer estate with a request to carry out excavations during the summer of this year

Yvonne Edwards