

WILTSHIRE CONSERVATION SERVICE – CONSERVING FIVE CREMATION URNS

[June 29, 2012](#) [Helen Williams](#) [Commercial Archaeology](#), [Conservation](#), [Day of Archaeology](#), [Day of Archaeology 2012](#), [Excavation](#), [Finds](#), [Roman Archaeology](#), [BMI Bath Clinic](#), [Burial](#), [Death customs](#), [Harry Lane](#), [king](#), [metal object](#), [St Albans](#), [Urn](#), [Wiltshire Conservation Service](#), www.wshc.eu/blog.html

The work of a conservator can be really varied and we never quite know what we'll be asked to work on from one day to the next. At Wiltshire Conservation Service, one of the projects we are working on with Foundations Archaeology and the BMI Bath Clinic on is the treatment of five burial urns dating back to the Roman conquest. These were found at the site of Linden Homes' King Harry Lane development in St Albans.



Archaeologists have determined that the site King Harry Lane, was of significant importance. The cremation urns were found at a burial ground, located at the entrance to a late Iron Age 'oppidum' or defended settlement . St Albans, known as Verulamium, was a key site in the Roman period and as such, these cremation urns, along with the other archaeology on the site, are seen to be nationally important.

Before we started excavating the BMI Bath Clinic has kindly scanned the urns, using their CT scanner. From this we were able to see the extent of the cremated material inside and also that one of the urns also contains a small metal object. We have been excavating the urns on a microscopic scale, detailing the contents and making them stable. Click on the link below to see the scan.



[CT scan of Cremation Urn from King Harry Lane](#)

Once the cremations have been removed from the urns, the bones will be cleaned and dried under laboratory conditions. The information gathered from this micro-excavation will then

be sent to the archaeologists who will be able to interpret the evidence alongside the archaeology already discovered. Click on the link below to see the excavation in progress.



[Excavation of cremation urn](#)

We hope to be reconstructing the urns ready for display. Check our regular blog post at www.wshc.eu/blog.html for future updates.