

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF AN ARCHEOLOGICAL CONSERVATOR

July 29, 2011 Liz Goodman Commercial Archaeology, Day of Archaeology, Day of Archaeology
2011, Finds, Science Abrasive, Abrasive blasting, Archaeology, conservation, Iron, Metalworking

So the Day of Archaeology has finally dawned and my chance to talk about archaeological conservation in a commercial unit has arrived. I had hoped that I was going to be called out onto site to lift some vulnerable but really valuable find and save the day. The reality is of course much more mundane, but probably as or more important, as today I'm going to spend the day investigating objects for publication.

People forget that archaeology is not just about digging but also disseminating information. Archaeological conservation can be vital to that process, as it reveals what objects are and what they look like. So I am currently working on the air abrasive cleaning of Roman iron. The air abrasive is a brilliant bit of kit as it is a micro-sandblaster and sometimes is the only thing that can remove thick, hard and dense corrosion to reveal the object.



Iron object

The air abrasive is a slow process but fingers crossed that by the end of the day I will have managed to reveal much, much more of the object.