

ROCDAM BASING JAM

[July 26, 2013 Hampshire Cultural Trust Education, Excavation, Museum Archaeology, Post Medieval, Roman Basing House, Damerham, Excavation, Hampshire County Council, Rockbourne Roman Villa, University of Southampton](#)

It's that time of year when our historic sites (those looked after by Hampshire County Council) shake off their Spring sleeping dust and shout out for Summer holiday participation. This weekend sees a combination of an Archaeology Activity Day at Rockbourne Roman Villa, a Young Archaeologists Club Visit to Basing House, with the latter site also hosting a special 'conservation workshop' (restoring the brickwork is a more or less constant concern there) and a training excavation for students from the University of Southampton. As the 'person in the middle', rather than muddle, I hope, it's my job to find good resource material and provide exciting opportunities.

Rockbourne is 'RocDam' at the moment as it's linking with the archaeological work at Damerham – a neighbouring community project focused on long and round barrows. These are obviously an archaeological world away from a Roman Villa, but there are some good points of comparison. The project has already seen a school drama production, telling the story of the discovery of the sites and this weekend's event will feature a new 'excavation pit' full of sherds, stones and bones and many other activities. I'm currently sorting out some human bone for an osteology workshop and pepping up the site tour.

At Basing, the discovery of an in situ stone fireplace, hidden for centuries in the ruins, will be a good focus for the conservation day talks, and the dig – re-examining a few trenches not backfilled in the 1960s, will speak for itself. The Young Archaeologists should be able to have a dig and I'm busy looking in the Museum stores to find some of the material dug up 50 years ago, just in case they draw a blank.





The digpit at Rockbourne – ready and waiting



Archaeological training at Basing.