

# HIDDEN LANDSCAPES AND MAKING PLACES

July 11, 2014 Adam Mindykowski Day of Archaeology 2014, Iron Age, Landscape Archaeology, Medieval, Post Medieval, Romano-British Landscape archaeology

“Local Government archaeology.” No! Don’t jump to the post about Sub-Roman ritual mud carvings in darkest pre-Shropshire just yet. This day has been about promoting the discovery of a hidden archaeological landscape and a partnership that is working to promote landscape conservation and creative design in placemaking and housing development.

One of the great pleasures of my job is seeing how discovery, research and interpretation of archaeological landscapes, their sites and artefacts is taken forward to create situations where conservation of the cultural/prehistoric/historic landscape is gaining greater status.

One area of great potential is in Green Infrastructure planning, which appeals to this landscape archaeologist because it is about connecting things up; big picture stuff, but not at the expense of the seemingly mundane yet ultimately special local sites. Traditionally, archaeology has not been part of Green Infrastructure planning with its focus on health, well-being and access nature. This is changing as those involved understand how the interaction between people and the environment has created the places we value. So, to see how a former Roman road will become a shared cycle way and footpath, bounded by hedgerows and trees that create great habitat for wildlife is, simply, wonderful.

As for the aforementioned hidden archaeological landscape, well, let me take you on a very short walk. Imagining a grey little road twisting its way through a large woodland area. Like so many other woodland lanes, but here you walk from the car into trees, no distance at all and yet through the undergrowth you see a group of pits, like small craters. These are the remnants of 17th century AD coal mining dating from just before the Industrial Revolution. Walk a little further and a prehistoric settlement enclosure looms on the wooded skyline. A great earthwork, yet it recedes quickly into the tangle of trees as you walk on. Back across the little grey lane and on a few paces more: a ruined farmstead appears set in fields that were carved out in the medieval period. The walk takes all of, say, ten minutes and yet you have discovered 1800 years of archaeology in that time. The [Forest of Wyre](#) has many similar discoveries and I am lucky that part of my job is about sharing and promoting the stories of this wonderful place.

Enjoy your discoveries and the Day of Archaeology that we all share.