

T H A M E S V A L L E Y

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Becks, Park Lane, North Newington,
Banbury, Oxfordshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief

by Andy Muddin

Site Code: BPN16/105

(SP 4207 3978)

**Becks, Park Lane, North Newington,
Banbury, Oxfordshire**

An Archaeological Watching Brief

For Mr and Mrs S Finnegan

by Andrew Muddin

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code BPN 16/105

May 2016

Summary

Site name: Becks, Park Lane, North Newington, Banbury, Oxfordshire

Grid reference: SP 4207 3978

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 25th May 2016

Project Coordinator: Tim Dawson

Site supervisor: Andrew Muddin

Site code: BPN 16/105

Area of site: 52 sq m

Summary of results: A parcel of land on the north of the property was reduced over the footprint of a proposed new building. No archaeological deposits of interest were encountered. Pottery and clay pipe was noted, but were of late Post-Medieval date.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Oxfordshire Museum Service in due course.

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	Steve Preston ✓ 26.05.16

Becks, Park Lane, North Newington, Banbury, Oxfordshire An Archaeological Watching Brief

by Andrew Munding

Report 16/105

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at 'Becks', Park Lane, North Newington, Banbury, Oxfordshire, OX15 6AD (SP 4027 3978) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Ms Isabel Lisboa, of Archaeologica Ltd, 7 Fosters Lane, Bradwell, Milton Keynes, MK13 9HD, on behalf of Mr and Mrs S Finnegan, the property's owners.

Planning permission (14/00356/F) has been gained from Cherwell District Council to build a new house on the front of land associated with Becks, using the existing access to Park Lane. This permission is subject to two conditions (9 and 10) relating to archaeology. Condition 9 states that prior to any work on the site an Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation should be submitted to the District Council for approval. This specification (Lisboa 2016) has been approved by Mr Richard Oram of Oxfordshire County Archaeological Service, adviser to the District Council on archaeology within the planning structure. The specification followed a brief prepared by him (Oram 2016). Condition 10 requires the watching brief to be carried out.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012) and the District Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out by Andrew Munding on 25th May 2016, and the site code is BPN 16/105.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Oxfordshire Museum Service in due course.

Location, topography and geology

North Newington is situated c.2km west of Banbury. The site is located on the south side of Park Lane on eastern side of North Newington (Fig. 1). It is delimited to the north by Park Lane and to the south by a dwelling (Becks) which is of 20th century construction, with open fields and parkland beyond (Fig. 2). Park Lane is one of the main residential streets in North Newington and within the Conservation Area, leading to Park Farm in the east. The Sor Brook is situated further to the east. The site lies at c.124m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) and the underlying geology is the Dyrham Formation, a combination of siltstone and mudstone, formerly known as Marlstone Beds (BGS 1982).

Archaeological background

The archaeological background to the project has been presented within the written scheme of investigation (Lisboa 2016). In summary, Park Lane is considered to part of the historic core of the village, with the site of the manor thought to be at Park Farm to the east, which includes a extant 17th century dovecot. The current site is between two Grade II Listed Buildings on this side of Park Lane (Hillside and Grafton/Grafton House), both are thatched, built of the local coursed ironstone and considered to be of late 17th century date (Fig. 2). A shrunken medieval settlement (HER 2925) exists as earthworks in the field to the south of Becks, containing holloways (sunken trackways), house platforms and a ruined fishpond situated within the valley bottom (Lisboa 2016).

A previous archaeological watching brief at Willow Bank, School Lane, produced evidence of 12th-14th century pottery from a rubbish pit, and a probable Medieval wall foundation (Lisboa 2016, Sim 2009). A later watching brief at 2 Park Lane revealed a stone wall boundary foundation, and a second plot dividing wall, though both were undated (Sim 2009).

Generally, this area is known for its wool production, with fulling mills known to have existed on the Sor Brook. This made the area and the village prosperous in Post-Medieval times, but it was in decline by the Victorian period (VCH 1969).

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the watching brief was to formally undertake archaeological monitoring and recording during development. This would include the stripping of overburden and ground reduction. Any archaeological deposits revealed shall be cleaned by hand and recorded in plan before excavated and recorded at an appropriate level.

The main aims of the project were;

- to identify and record the presence or absence, extent, condition, quality, character and date of archaeological remains in the areas affected by groundworking,
- to preserve by record any archaeological remains which groundworks will remove or damage within the development area
- to make available the results of the archaeological investigation,

Results

Machine reduction of the footprint of the new dwelling was observed under constant archaeological supervision (Fig.3). It was carried out by a small 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket. The area stripped was 16.7m by 5.4m. Topsoil was removed in the first instance to a depth of 0.26m. The topsoil was a dark sandy silt (50) and had been disturbed to the south of the excavation area by the recent removal of low shrubs. Adjacent to the existing garage, the topsoil gave way to an homogeneous fill of brick and tile rubble and topsoil used to create hard standing.

Under the topsoil was a light brown sandy silt (51) which was 0.22m thick. In turn this overlay a yellow brown clayey silt on top of the natural limestone geology (Pls 1 and 2). This deposit contained charcoal and clinker fragments and finds identifiable as of late Post-medieval date. The areas was then hand cleaned to search for archaeological finds or deposits at the base of excavation. The base of excavation was no deeper than 0.44m, to the top of the natural geological deposit. Two cuts were noted, one for a drainage pipe that was visible in the exposed driveway section (Pl. 1). A pit of modern date was also noted up against the side of the garage wall on the western side of the site. No deposits of archaeological relevance were encountered within the excavated area. The final excavated depth was at 124.69m aOD.

Finds

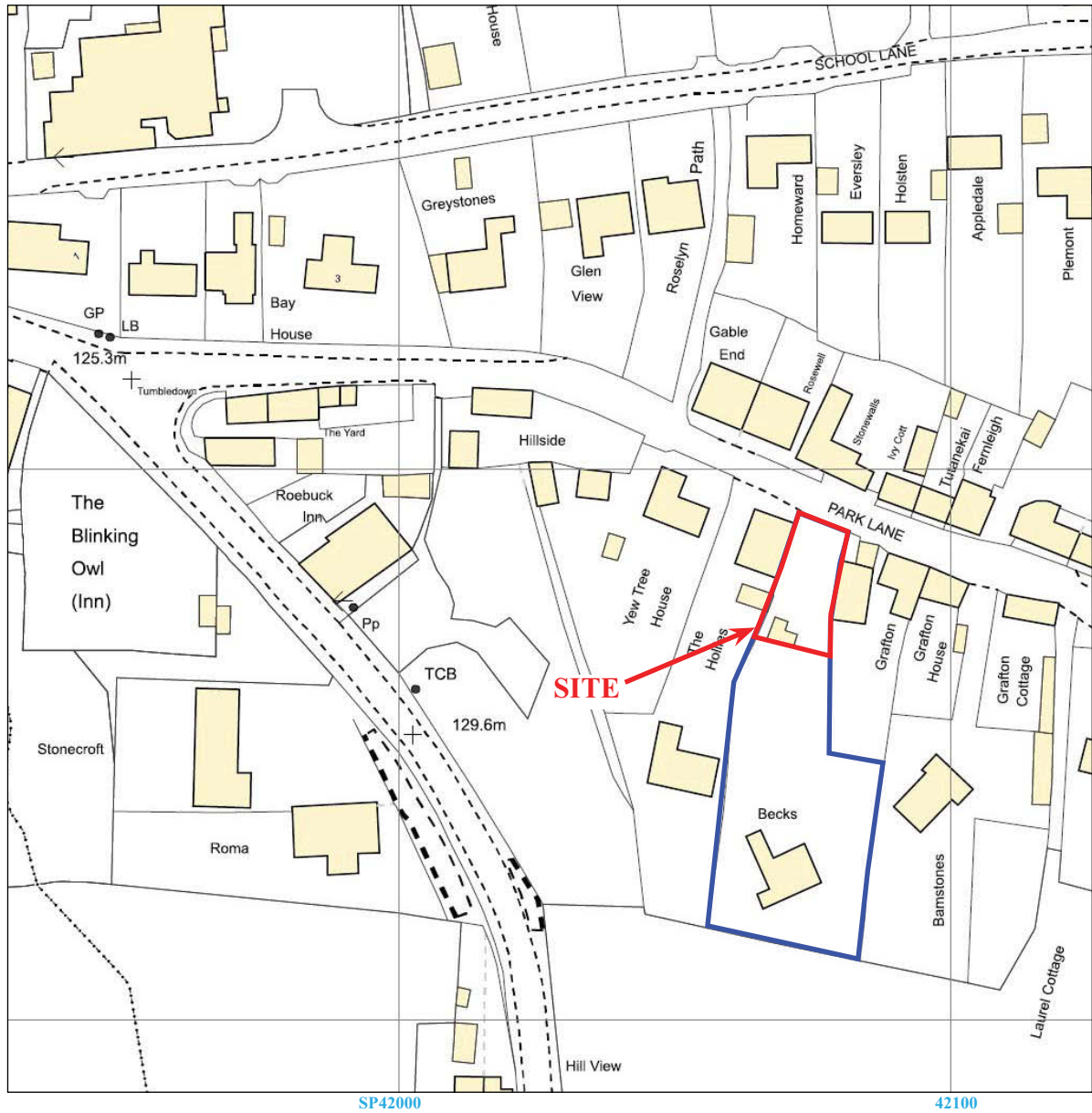
A small collection of material was initially recovered. The subsoil (51) contained pottery, ceramic building material, clay tobacco pipe stems and, very occasionally, small pieces of undiagnostic animal bone. Most of the pottery identified was of 18th-20th century date, and included sherds of dark brown salt-glaze, orange glazed red earthenware, and blue/white patterned 'china). Two thin clay pipe stems were also uncovered. None of this material is considered to be of archaeological interest.

Conclusion

The watching brief was successful in undertaking observation of the ground to be disturbed by the new development. However no archaeological deposits of interest were encountered.

References

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- NPPF 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Govt, London
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- Sim, M, 2009, 'Land adjacent to 2 Park Lane, North Newington, Oxfordshire', Oxford Archaeology report **7045**, Oxford
- VCH, 1959, 'Parishes: Broughton, In A History of the County of Oxford: Vol 9, Bloxham Hundred, ed. Mary D Lobel and A Crossley (1969), pp 85-102, British History Online <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/vol9/pp85-102> [accessed 26 may 2016].



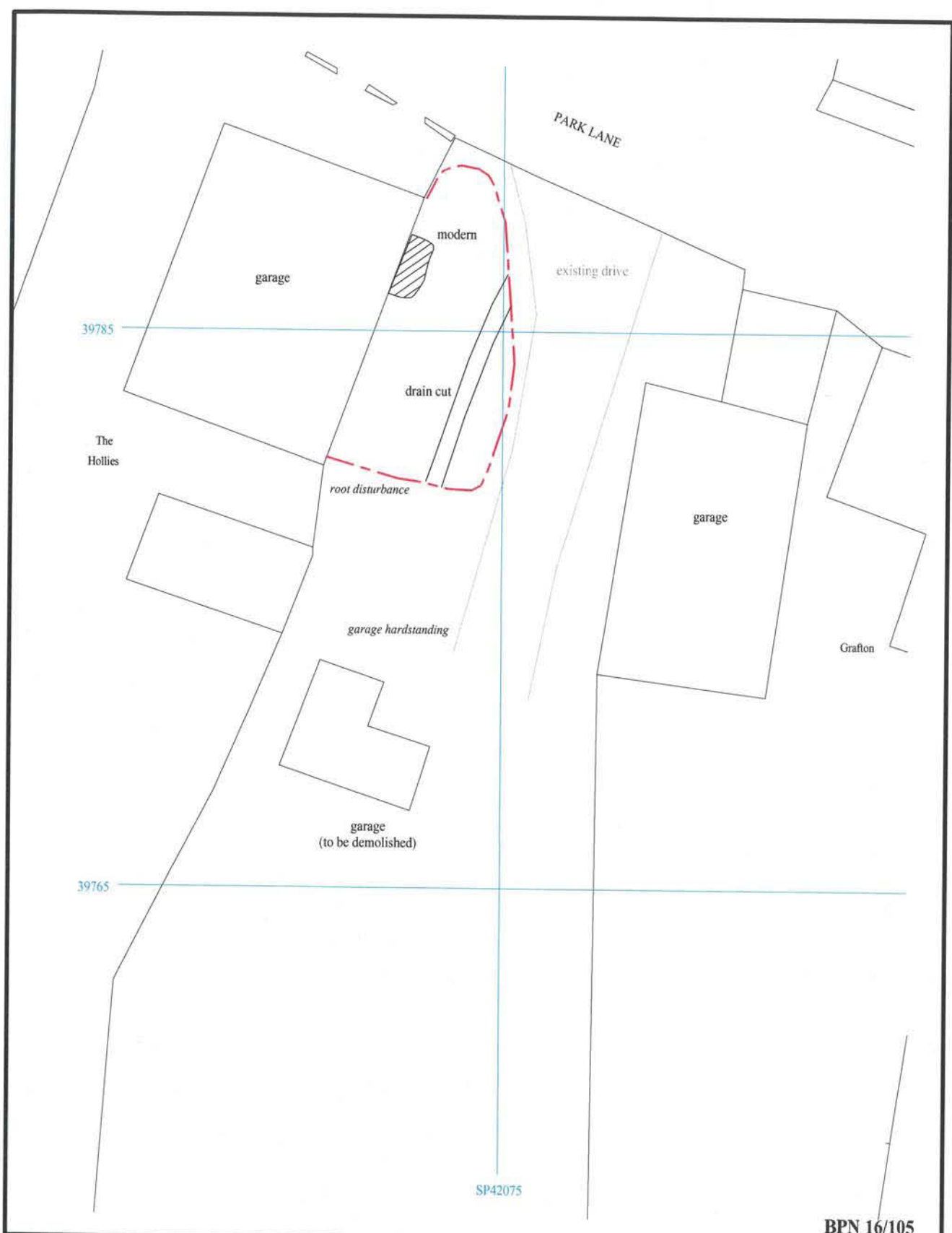
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Park Lane.

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Figure 3. Location of observed areas.



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Plate 1. Exposed section of site makeup, looking south, Scales: 1m and 0.5m.



Plate 2. Strip surface, looking north, Scales: 1m and 0.5m.

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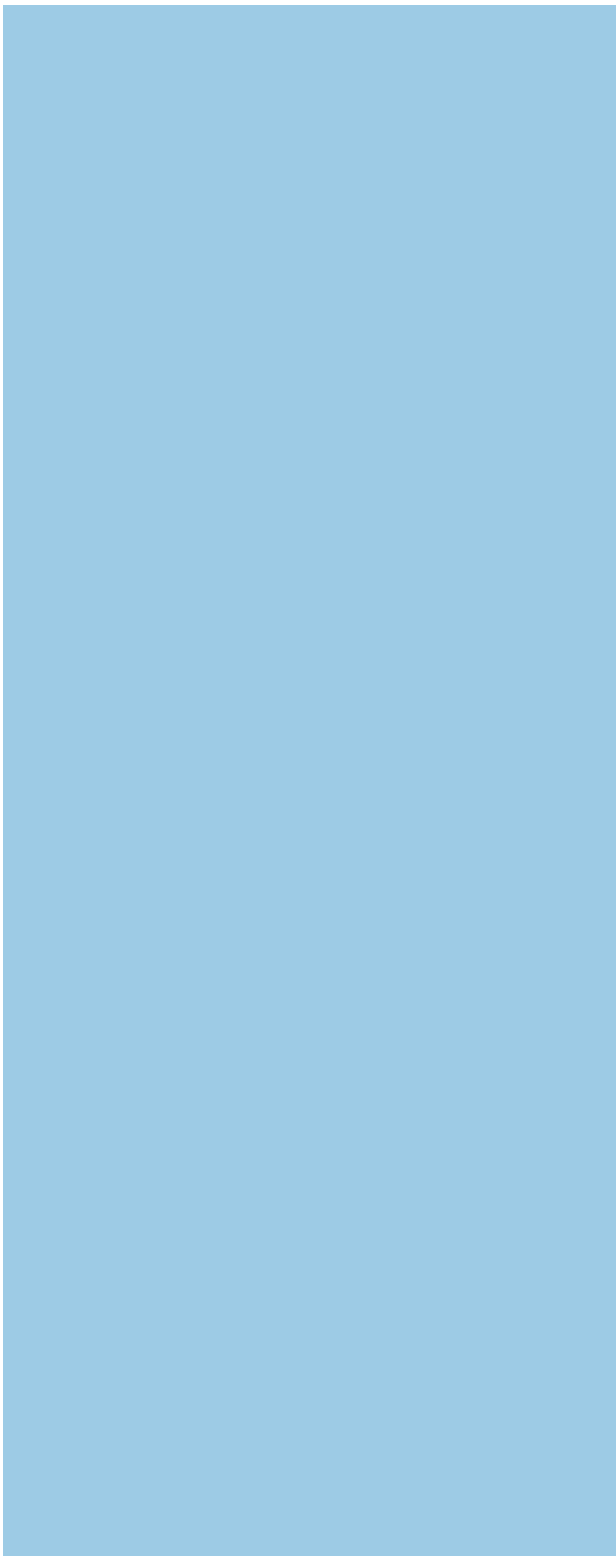
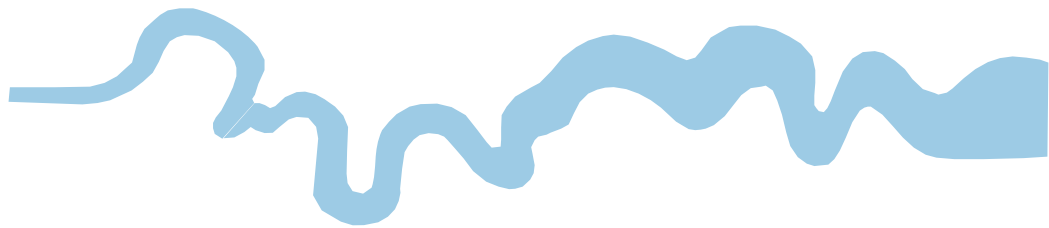
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Plates 1 - 2.**

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TIME CHART

	Calendar Years
Modern _____	AD 1901
Victorian _____	AD 1837
Post Medieval _____	AD 1500
Medieval _____	AD 1066
Saxon _____	AD 410
Roman _____	AD 43
Iron Age _____	BC/AD 750 BC
Bronze Age: Late -----	1300 BC
Bronze Age: Middle -----	1700 BC
Bronze Age: Early -----	2100 BC
Neolithic: Late	3300 BC
Neolithic: Early	4300 BC
Mesolithic: Late	6000 BC
Mesolithic: Early	10000 BC
Palaeolithic: Upper	30000 BC
Palaeolithic: Middle	70000 BC
Palaeolithic: Lower	2,000,000 BC





**Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd,
47-49 De Beauvoir Road, Reading,
Berkshire, RG1 5NR**

**Tel: 0118 9260552
Fax: 0118 9260553
Email: tvas@tvas.co.uk
Web: www.tvas.co.uk**