



News and events

- **Next meeting: Wednesday 18 May.** Next month's talk will be given by Dianne Payne and is titled '**Researching and writing a book for Wheathampstead**'. Local historian Dianne will tell us about the many sources she investigated and explain how she used them when writing her book '*Wheathampstead – an Eighteenth Century Village*'.
- Bulletin 46 (December 2021) was about '**Saving Barton House**' by Anne Atton. Anne's book of the same title has been published and she plans to place a copy in the reference section of Wheathampstead Community Library.
- **Subscriptions** for the year 2022/23 (£8 for an individual, £12 for a couple) are due from 1st May. You can pay by cash or cheque, perhaps at a meeting, or by BACS to a/c 73 46 26 92 Sort code 20 53 33. Many thanks to those who have already paid.

Rectory Meadow

After a long wait because of problems with the geophysics equipment, the first part of the survey of the Rectory Meadow finally took place in late March. Kris Lockyear, with members of the Community Archaeological Geophysics group (CAGG) and the Wheathampstead History Society, spent a day conducting a magnetometer survey of the meadow. Unfortunately, the problems with the equipment had not been entirely solved and a second partial survey had to take place last weekend to fill in some missing pieces.



What was the purpose of the survey?

We were hoping to find out if there were any signs of buildings or other features in the meadow. The survey was prompted by a visiting archaeologist who some years ago suggested that the ditch and bank that runs parallel to the east of the Crinkle-Crinkle wall might be the boundary of the Saxon settlement.

What was the result?

The survey found no buildings or evidence of other activity, either Saxon or later.

Was the survey a waste of time?

Are reputations shredded? Perversely, finding nothing adds to the evidence because it suggests that the meadow was outside the envelope of the early medieval village. It backs up the idea that



the ditch and bank, now overgrown and partially eroded, could be part of the defences of the early village.

What will we do next?

The only way that the ditch and bank can be dated is to dig a section across them to investigate their shape and any finds. We hope that this part of the investigation will happen later in the year, possibly in the autumn.

For a straightforward explanation of magnetometry and other methods of geophysical survey, see <https://hertsgeosurvey.wordpress.com/geophysical-survey-in-archaeology/>