

Farnham is a community with a rich and unique past, much of which we know about from the work of archaeologists and historians over the years. Although its designation as a craft centre is recent, its history of industrial and artistic traditions – whether the Roman pottery industry, medieval tile-making or Georgian and later Victorian hop production which dominated the area – has much earlier origins and is just one of many aspects which sets Farnham apart.

A few of the artefacts or sites which lie beneath our feet:

Prehistoric dwellings

In the Mesolithic period (8300-4300 BC), nomadic hunter-gatherer groups lived off of what they could hunt or find seasonally. Their flint tools and waste flakes are what are left to now indicate their movement from site to site.

Stone Age flint-knapper by Victor Ambrus



Stone pillar marking the site of the Mesolithic pit dwellings at Bourne Mill Spring (Photo by Chris Shepherd)

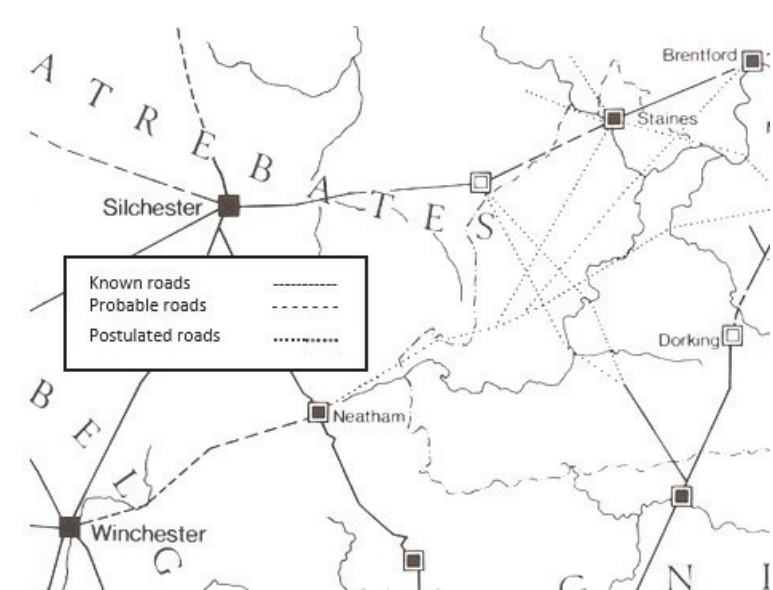


Flints (blades, axe, scrapers) from Farnham terraces (Photo by David Graham)



Roman roads

Although Surrey is crossed by a number of Roman roads from c.AD 100, there is no firm evidence – as of yet – of one in Farnham. However, a trackway is assumed to run somewhere to the north of town, passing through the Roman town of Neatham (Alton) and continuing north of the Hog's Back.



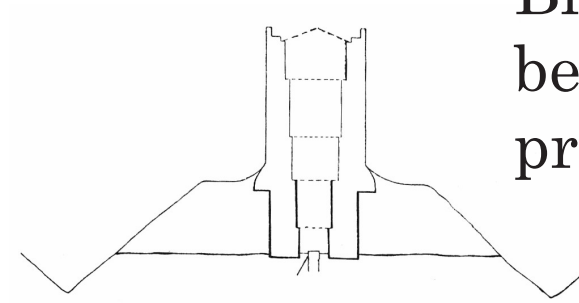
Roman roads in West Surrey (Map by Audrey Graham)

Domitian *denarius* and Roman well from Neatham (Photo by David Graham)



Farnham Castle

Archaeological work at the castle was first undertaken in 1958, when the foundations for the square masonry tower were found set within a large mound. This variation on the motte-and-bailey type was first dated to AD 1138 and the bishopric of Henry de Blois, but reassessment now suggests it began life as a country house under the previous Bishop Giffard (1100-29).



Reconstruction of original castle keep and excavation of well-shaft cut into the tower's foundations (Photo and section by M W Thompson, redrawn by Audrey Graham)



13th century 'Surrey whiteware' from castle (Photo David Graham)



Aerial photo of castle, showing later 12th century shell keep (Photo David Graham)



Medieval forester by Victor Ambrus



Norman pillar carved from timber from castle chapel (Photo David Graham)

Tudor market and trade

In 1566 the town received a charter which gave the people responsibility for their own trade and behaviour, and a Market House was built at the bottom of Castle Street.

Tudor merchant by Victor Ambrus



Model of former Market House, later knocked down by the Victorians (© Museum of Farnham)



Trader token c.1658 from Farnham Castle (Photo David Graham)

Learn more about the fascinating history of our town and the hidden heritage below our feet by exploring the Museum of Farnham, Farnham Castle and other local sites. Visit www.farnham.gov.uk for more information, including links to the town's informative guides and leaflet series.