

# PRESS RELEASE

Save the Willingale Treasure!

Epping Forest District Museum is launching an appeal to save some treasure.

A medieval gold ring has been found in the parish of Willingale and we need you to help us keep it in the district, before the item goes on sale on the open market.

It is the first medieval gem set ring to be found in the district, and the first known finger-ring to be discovered in Willingale. The decoration is of an extremely high standard and, to the best of our knowledge, unique.

In total £11,500 is needed to save the ring ensuring it is on free public display for generations to come. The campaign has already received support from the ACE/V&A Purchase Grant Fund and SHARE Museums East and Epping Forest District Museum has committed funding from its reserves leaving £3000 to be raised.

**Donate at:**

[www.spacehive.com/willingaletreasure](http://www.spacehive.com/willingaletreasure)

or

**Epping Forest District Museum, 39 – 41 Sun Street, Waltham Abbey, EN9 1EL**

If the targets reached the ring will go on public display in the museum's newly renovated core gallery. If the funding is not raised, the ring may be sold and possibly leave the UK permanently.

## **Other treasures at the museum**

You can also currently see on display a selection of items acquired by the museum through the national Portable Antiquities Scheme, which recently celebrated 20 years of recording treasure finds. On display are items found across the Epping Forest District, the oldest are a bronze axe and small gold bead, which are some 3500 years old, also displayed are medieval Noble coins of Edward III found near Abridge and a fine silver gilt medieval crucifix discovered near North Weald.

Ends

Word count: 273

Notes to Editors:

For more information please contact Jill Holmen, Collections Manager on 01992 716882 or [museum@eppingforestdc.gov.uk](mailto:museum@eppingforestdc.gov.uk)

**About Epping Forest District Museum**

Epping Forest District Museum, based in Waltham Abbey, celebrates the Epping Forest District with an emphasis on people and the environment in which they live. This is achieved through exhibitions, collections and records, education programmes and events.

The museum in Waltham Abbey has undergone an exciting project to refurbish and extend the building in Sun Street. A grant of nearly £2 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund has helped to pay for improved facilities, a lift for accessibility, better displays and an extension into the building next door with increased exhibition space and a community room.

### **About The Arts Council England/Victoria and Albert Museum Purchase Grant Fund**

The Arts Council England/Victoria and Albert Museum Purchase Grant Fund is a government fund that helps regional museums, record offices and specialist libraries in England and Wales to acquire objects relating to the arts, literature and history.

- It was established at the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A) in 1881 and continues to be part of its nationwide work.
- The annual grants budget, currently £750,000, is provided by Arts Council England (ACE).
- Each year, the Purchase Grant Fund considers some 200 applications and awards grants to around 100 organisations, enabling acquisitions of over £3 million to go ahead.
- Visit the website: [www.vam.ac.uk/purchasegrantfund](http://www.vam.ac.uk/purchasegrantfund)

### **About the Heritage Lottery Fund**

From the archaeology under our feet to the historic parks and buildings we love, from precious memories and collections to rare wildlife, we use National Lottery players' money to help people across the UK explore, enjoy and protect the heritage they care about. [www.hlf.org.uk](http://www.hlf.org.uk).

### **About the Portable Antiquities Scheme**

The PAS is a partnership project, managed by the British Museum working with at least 119 national and local partners to deliver the Scheme's aims. It is funded through the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport grant to the British Museum with local partner contributions. All the Finds Liaison Officers working for the PAS are employed locally, but work as a national team.

Thousands of archaeological objects are discovered every year, many by members of the public, particularly by people while metal-detecting. If recorded, these finds have great potential to transform archaeological knowledge, helping archaeologists understand when, where and how people lived in the past. PAS ([www.finds.org.uk](http://www.finds.org.uk)) offers the only proactive mechanism for recording such finds, which are made publicly available on its online database.

The PAS has also benefited from Internships funded by the Headley Trust, providing opportunities for people to develop a career in archaeology. Also, the Graham and Joanna Barker Fund, which has enabled extra support for

the PAS in areas where resources are low. The PAS welcomes anyone interested in supporting its work locally to contact the British Museum.

As part of the HLF funded project PAST Explorers: finds recording in the local community, the PAS is working with volunteers across the country to record archaeological finds made by the public and to get people involved in archaeology. In 2016, 202 volunteers, including 102 metal-detectorists who record their own finds on the PAS database, have contributed to the work of the Scheme.

Many organizations have also supported the acquisition of Treasure finds, including Art Fund, the Headley Trust, the Heritage Lottery Fund, the National Heritage Memorial Fund and the V&A Purchase Grant Fund. Without these, as well as public donations, many important archaeological finds would not be in public collections.

The *Code of Practice for Responsible Metal Detecting in England and Wales* has been endorsed by: Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum of Wales / PAS Cymru , the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers, the British Museum / Portable Antiquities Scheme, the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, the Council for British Archaeology, the Country Land & Business Association, the Institute for Archaeology (University College London), Historic England, the National Farmers' Union, the Royal Commission on the Historical & Ancient Monuments of Wales, and the Society of Museum Archaeologists.

For more information about the museum please contact the museum via email [museum@eppingforestdc.gov.uk](mailto:museum@eppingforestdc.gov.uk). Alternatively you can keep up to date with the project and all of our current events through our social media channels:

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/efdmuseum](http://www.facebook.com/efdmuseum)

Twitter: @efdmuseum

Blog: [www.efdmuseum.com](http://www.efdmuseum.com)