



Archaeology

Digging for Answers



**Dr Diane Davies,
Archaeologist**

Being an archaeologist, I try to understand how people lived in the past by looking at the things they left behind.

Archaeologists are like detectives, we find clues about the past through digging (excavation) then piece these clues together to create a picture of what life might have been like in the ancient world. From this we also try to make a chronology, a sequence of events and dates through time.



Telling the Story

While it is wonderful to find objects of beauty, the past is about people not objects and what is more important is the story behind the objects. We can only tell this story if the artefact is in its original resting place and has not been moved. It is for this reason that objects found through excavation are especially important because being underground they are often protected from nature and humans.

Have a look at the patch of ground above with your tablet. Archaeologists dig down through the earth to reveal what was there in the past. The further back in time they dig, the deeper they go. In this example of what might be found, a mediaeval house is uncovered first from about 500 years ago. Digging further down, you will discover the remains of a Roman mosaic, evidence of people living there during the Roman occupation from 43AD onwards. Dig further down and you will uncover strange dark circles, all arranged in a wider circle. Are these the evidence of an Iron Age roundhouse? All the evidence together seems to suggest that people have been living here for a long time!

With this evidence, can you make a chronology that shows who may have lived here?