

**Date of Release:**  12 May 2025**Ref:** 4470

**Archaeological dig in Chichester’s Priory Park will further examine the city’s Norman castle**

Further work to find out more about Chichester’s Norman Castle will take place during an archaeological dig later this month.

The dig will take place from **Tuesday 20 May** until **Tuesday 3 June**, with a team of archaeologists focussing on an area to the north of The Guildhall.

The project is a collaboration between Chichester and District Archaeology Society and Chichester District Council, with the council’s own archaeologist, James Kenny, leading the project. This is the eighth dig that James has led to help uncover the secrets that lie beneath Priory Park.

A series of geophysics and ground-penetrating radar scans carried out in 2022 have helped identify which areas to focus the digging on.

As in past years, members of the public are welcome to come along and watch the archaeology in action and there will also be a special public day on **Saturday 31 May**, where people will have the opportunity to hear about the team’s discoveries. James will give a series of talks during the public day, and these are scheduled to take place at 10am, 12 noon and 3pm.

In 2024, the team uncovered the remains of a masonry causeway and bridge that would have led to the castle and is described as a very impressive and solidly constructed military defence system.

This year’s work will focus on further investigation of the bridge abutment and the motte ditch to its east. The aims will be to confirm the relationship between the bridge and the ditch; investigate the date of the ditch; establish the depth of the foundations of the abutment; and enable engineers reports to be produced on the masonry remains.

The work will also look at whether it will be technically possible in future for some of the remains to go on permanent public display within the park.

“We are very excited to be welcoming the team back to Priory Park this month. Their work over the past few years has been vital in helping improve our understanding of the rich history that lies beneath the park,” says Councillor Bill Brisbane, Cabinet Member for Planning at Chichester District Council.

“As the dig progresses, James and the team will also have a tray of finds that people will be able to view and handle, and the public day will offer people of all ages the opportunity to learn more about the project and what has been found.”

People can learn more about the work of the Chichester and District Archaeology Society at: [**www.cdas.info**](http://www.cdas.info)

**For further information, please contact Clare Hawkin, Senior Communications Officer on 01243 534679 or by emailing** [**chawkin@chichester.gov.uk**](mailto:chawkin@chichester.gov.uk)