The Roman Rural Settlement Project

Coins and Brooches from the east of England: preliminary results

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Proportions of sites with and without coins

Percentage of sites without coins: 44%
Percentage of sites with coins: 56%

Proportions of sites with and without brooches

Percentage of sites without brooches: 59%
Percentage of sites with brooches: 41%
Percentage of sites with brooches but not coins: 8%
Percentage of sites with coins but not brooches: 21%
Percentage of sites with coins and brooches: 34%
Percentage of sites with neither coins nor brooches: 37%

Proportions of sites with coins and brooches
Sites where coins were present but unquantified
- 2.96%

Sites with coins but no dating information
- 6.21%

Sites with coins with precise identifications
- 8.58%

Sites with only broad dating information
- 82.25%

Sites with brooches listed but not quantified
- 2%

Sites with quantification of brooches
- 98%
Distribution of sites which produced coins (red dots) and sites with no coins (yellow dots)
Distribution of sites which produced brooches (red dots) and sites with no brooches (yellow dots)
Number of coins recovered from individual sites shown against area of investigation (x-axis)
Number of brooches recovered from individual sites shown against area of investigation (x-axis)
Sites with coins
Average area of investigation 2.02ha

Excavation 86%
Evaluation 12%
Watching Brief 2%

Sites without coins
Average area of investigation 0.85ha

Excavation 63%
Evaluation 32%
Watching Brief 5%

Sites with brooches
Average area of investigation 2.35ha

Excavation 90%
Evaluation 9%
Watching Brief 1%

Sites without brooches
Average area of investigation 0.9ha

Excavation 65%
Evaluation 30%
Watching Brief 5%
The impact of controlled metal detector use on archaeological sites

• At least 30.59% of all coins and 19.23% of all brooches were found on sites where a metal detector had been used.

• Of 11 sites with over 1000 coins, 5, (45.5%), had a metal detector used on them.

• Of 16 sites with over 40 brooches, 5, (31.25%), had a metal detector used on them.
Kernel density of area of Investigation (hectares)
Densities of Roman coins from archaeological investigations and those recorded by PAS.
Kernel density of combined excavated and PAS coins
Densities of Roman brooches from archaeological investigations and those recorded by PAS.
Kernel density of combined excavated and PAS brooches
Percentage of all coins arranged by site type major

- Nucleated settlement
- Rural settlement
- Religious ritual and funerary
- Industry
- Military
- Rural landscape
- Communications
Distribution of coins and nucleated sites (unwalled ‘small towns’ and villages)
Distribution of brooches and nucleated sites (unwalled ‘small towns’ and villages)
Distribution of sites with late Iron Age coins

Distribution of sites with 1st century coins
Distribution of sites with 2nd century coins
Distribution of sites with late Roman coins
Conclusions

• Coins and brooches are far from ubiquitous finds at sites in eastern England
• This clearly in large part reflects the area of investigation and the investigation strategy
• Unsurprisingly, greater quantities of coins and brooches are recovered from nucleated settlements, although this may in part also reflect a disproportionate amount of investigation undertaken at these sites
• Coin profiles from sites in the east of England are very variable, and it is not easy to recognise ‘footprints’ for particular sites based upon their coin profiles alone
• Whilst there is a broad regional pattern in terms of the distribution of different brooch types there is intra-regional variation
• Analysis of patterns of coin and brooch loss will undoubtedly prove more beneficial when the results from several regions are compared