

# A new countryside legacy from Roman Britain

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The book explores the extent to which the landscape of Roman Britain continues to influence our modern day approaches to land management.

New research from the University of Exeter has found that the Roman influence on our landscape extends beyond the legacy of our urban infrastructure to also shape the countryside and our rural surroundings.

The findings are outlined in a new book, "The Fields of Britannia: Continuity and Change in the Late Roman and Early Medieval Landscape," which has been written by leading researchers at the University.

The book explores the extent to which the [landscape](#) of Roman Britain continues to influence our modern day approaches to land management and explains that more of our countryside dates back to the Roman period than previously thought.

Co-written by Professor Stephen Rippon, Dr Chris Smart and Dr Ben Pears from the University's Archaeology Department, The Fields of Britannia is based on findings from The Fields of Britannia [project](#) which highlights the enduring legacy of Roman land practises.

Professor Rippon, Project Director, said: "Although it was well known that some of our towns and cities are built upon Roman foundations, before starting this research we had no idea that the same was true of our countryside.

"To ask, 'What did the Romans do for us' is a bit of a cliché, but across much of Britain they created the fields that our farmers still use today."

Funded jointly by the Leverhulme Trust and the University of Exeter, The Fields of Britannia project explores the relationship between Romano-British and medieval landscapes and draws on archaeological and palaeoenvironmental evidence from hundreds of excavations to investigate Roman field systems and land-use across Roman and early Medieval Britain.

Findings from the project will form an important and innovative contribution to the current debate over one of the major formative periods in British history: the nature of the transition from Roman Britain to medieval England.

The Fields of Britannia, published by Oxford University Press, is Professor Stephen Rippon's latest publication. Previous works have included "Beyond the Medieval Village: The Diversification of Landscape Character in Southern Britain" (2008), and "Making Sense of An Historic Landscape" (2012).

Provided by University of Exeter

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