YAC member Jamie Waggott, aged 6, became interested in archaeology when he heard about an archaeological dig near his home in Didcot, Oxfordshire. His mum, Karen, told YAC more about what was discovered, and how this led to a campaign to try and protect the sites...

A rare ‘treasure’ find of 126 Roman gold coins was found near Didcot in 1995 by a metal detectorist. So, when builders came to build 3,300 homes on cornfields at the edge of the town, they knew to look out for archaeology. The main dig ended at the beginning of last year. It found archaeology from every era from the end of the last Ice Age to Roman times. The table shows what was found and how it fits into the different eras of prehistory (the time before history was written down and recorded).

### Cool Coins!

Jamie saw the gold coin hoard at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford. The coins look like new, even though they had been buried for nearly 2,000 years. The British Museum owns the coins. They say they could have been a gift from Marcus Aurelius when he became Roman emperor in AD 160 and that they were probably buried for safe keeping.

### Save Our Sites!

Jamie, and other people in Didcot, thought that more people should know about the archaeology and that other children could learn about history from what had been found. A petition was started asking for the sites to be protected. They suggested that a ‘9,000 Years of History Trail’ should be created amongst the new houses. The petition now has 1,160 signatures, see www.petitionbuzz.com/petitions/ddmile

The campaign still has a long way to go, but lots of people now know about the town’s long history. The house builders, who had already said they were not going to build on the Roman villa, have agreed to more information boards. The aim now is to get more of the sites where archaeology was found saved, and to make a proper path that links them together so people can take a walk through history.

There are other ideas too, such as building a replica Iron Age roundhouse and putting up information boards about the Great Western Railway and the power station (which will be knocked down this year), both of which are part of Didcot’s more recent history.

Wittenham Clumps (an Iron Age fort), Didcot Railway Centre and Harwell Diamond Light Source Scientific Centre are all nearby, so one day the Trail could tell the story of how humans developed technology from simple Mesolithic flints to steam trains, particle accelerators and nuclear power in 9,000 years!