Volunteer archaeologists will be hoping to uncover more secrets beneath Chichester’s Priory Park with another dig taking place from 23 May – 6 June, every day except Sundays.

The dig – coinciding with Chichester Roman Week – is being led by James Kenny, Chichester District Council’s archaeologist. As with previous digs it is being held in collaboration with the Chichester and District Archaeology Society, who will be hoping to unearth more secrets from Chichester’s buried history. Members of the public are encouraged to come along and observe the dig and stewards will be available to explain what’s happening.

On Saturday 3 June there will be a special public day, when James will give a series of talks throughout this day providing the opportunity to find out more about the team’s discoveries.

These talks will take place at:

* 10am;
* 12pm (midday); and,
* 3pm

This year’s excavation will be taking place to the north of the Guildhall. This area was the site of the Franciscan friary of which the Guildhall is the last building still standing.

Geophysics plans show where the buildings were in this area so it is hoped that this dig will reveal some interesting findings, with possibilities including masonry walls and remains of decorative flooring.

Previous excavations have concentrated on different areas around the Guildhall. In 2017-2021 the team focused on a group of three buildings to the south which were found using ground penetrating radar equipment. They were revealed to include part of a very well-preserved Roman bathhouse attached to a luxurious Roman townhouse, probably owned by a very wealthy private citizen of Roman Chichester.

‘‘The excavations which have taken place so far have been absolutely fascinating and revealed so much information about our city’s past,” says Bill Brisbane, Chichester District Council Cabinet Member for Planning. ‘‘The events have been extremely popular with members of the public and we’re delighted to be able to get digging again and find out even more about this endlessly fascinating area of the city.

‘‘The team carrying out the dig are extremely knowledgeable, and I would definitely recommend that people come along to see local archaeology in action and hear more about the finds and their significance at the public day. It’s not often you get to see a live archaeological dig in your local area and I’m sure that people of all ages will find it absolutely fascinating.”

This year’s dig coincides with Chichester Roman Week – a week of events celebrating Chichester’s Roman history. Events include a Roman re-enactment in Priory Park; a number of events at The Novium Museum including a talk on Vespasian and the II Augusta Legion; craft workshops for mosaic coasters and cardboard armour; and a guided walk from the museum to Fishbourne Roman Palace.

To find out more about this continuing area of interest during Chichester Roman Week, people can visit The Novium Museum’s What’s On page: [**https://www.thenovium.org/whatson**](https://www.thenovium.org/whatson)

Knowledgeable summaries of the discoveries made in previous excavations can be seen on Chichester and District Archaeology Society’s website: [**https://www.cdas.info/PrioryParkHome.html**](https://www.cdas.info/PrioryParkHome.html)