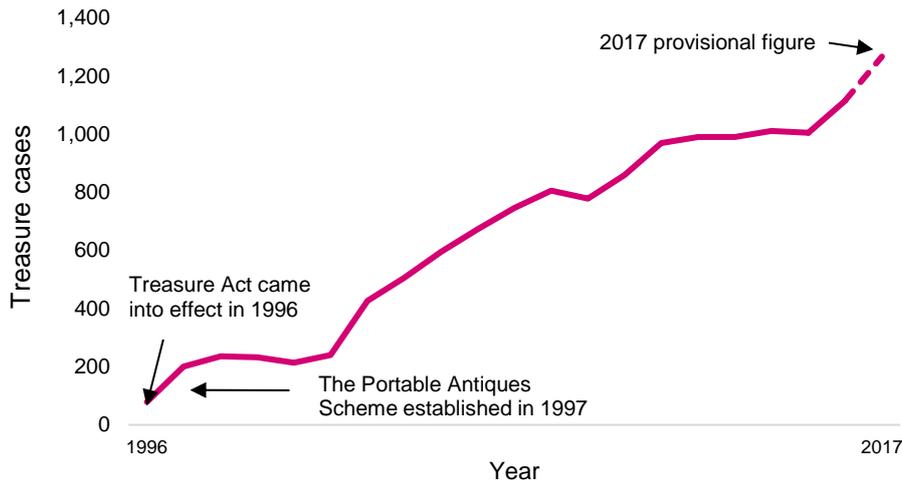




# Statistical Release for Reported Treasure Finds 2016 & 2017 (Provisional)

The number of reported treasure finds in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, 1996 to 2017



## Key findings

- In 2016, there were 1,116 cases of reported treasure finds.
- The provisional figure for 2017 was 1,267 making this the fourth year in a row when the number exceeded 1,000.
- In both 2016 and 2017 (provisional), the largest number of reported finds was in Norfolk, accounting for 12% of all cases in 2016 and 10% in 2017. This was followed by Suffolk in 2016 (7%) and Essex in 2017 (9%).

### In 2016:

- 85% of treasure finds were object cases<sup>1</sup> (944 cases), of which over half were disclaimed/museum withdrawal cases (499 cases). Almost a quarter of object cases were acquired (223 cases).
- The remaining 172 cases (15%) were coin cases.
- A large majority (94%) of reported treasure finds in were discovered by metal detecting.

This statistical release presents data on the number of reported treasure finds for 2016 and provisional figures for 2017 within England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Data for 2016 are broken down by county, period and distribution and method of discovery. Figures for 2017 are provisional and are provided by county and region only.

Data presented on treasure finds are collected by the Department of Portable Antiquities & Treasure and recorded by the [Portable Antiquities Scheme](#).

Data reported for metal detecting engagement was collected in the 2017/18 [Taking Part Survey](#)

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<sup>1</sup> An object case is a find of any non-coin artefact

# Chapter 1: Key findings

## 1.1 Total reported treasure finds in England, Wales and Northern Ireland<sup>2,3</sup>

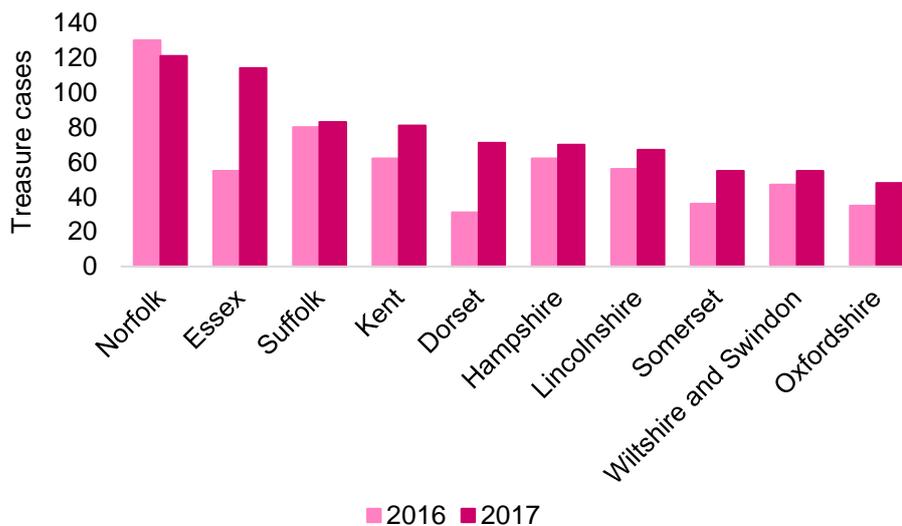
In 2017, the number of reported treasure finds reached over a thousand (1,267) for the fourth year in a row and for the fourth time since the Treasure Act 1996 replaced the common law of Treasure Trove in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The equivalent number for 2016 was 1,116<sup>4</sup> which was an increase of 111 cases from 2015.

## 1.2 Reported finds by county in England, 2016 & 2017 (provisional)

In both 2016 and 2017 (provisional), the largest number of finds in England was in Norfolk (accounting for 12% of all finds in 2016 and 10% in 2017). This was followed by Suffolk in 2016 (7%) and Essex in 2017 (9%)

Essex and Dorset recorded the greatest increase in treasure cases in 2017 compared to 2016, with increases of 59 and 40 treasure cases respectively. Staffordshire and East Yorkshire had the largest number of decreases compared to 2016, with decreases of 22 and 18 cases respectively.

**Figure 1.1 Counties in England with the greatest number of reported treasure cases, 2016 and 2017**



## 1.3 Total reported treasure cases by Country and by English Regions 2017 (provisional)

There were 1,238 treasure cases reported in England in 2017, an increase of 165 cases since 2016. Among regions in England, the East of England had the greatest number of cases at 352 and the North East had the fewest cases at 14.

In Wales, there were 28 reported treasure cases, a decrease of 12 cases from 2016.

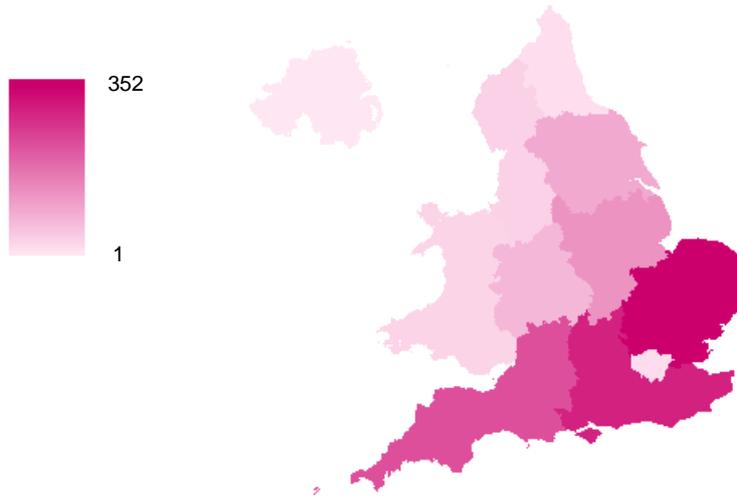
2. A number of 2017 cases have not been resolved and it is not possible to provide a breakdown of factors such as period and disposition in this release. This final breakdown will be provided in the treasure Statistical Release in 2019 which will cover the treasure finds for 2017 and provisional figures for 2018.

3. Data for Scotland is collated under the Scottish Treasure Trove system available at: <https://treasuretrovescotland.co.uk/reports-and-minutes/>

4. This figure has been amended since the provisional 2016 figure (1,120) reported in last year's release.

There was 1 treasure case reported in Northern Ireland compared with 3 in 2016. It should be noted that there are additional restrictions on searching for archaeological objects in Northern Ireland, imposed by the Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (NI) Order 1995.

**Figure 1.2 Reported treasure finds by country and English regions, 2017 (provisional)**



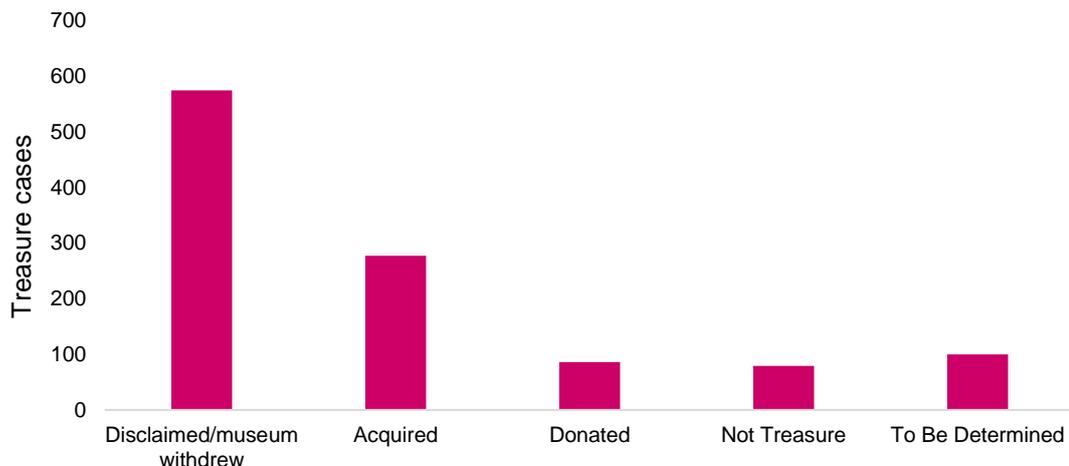
Contains OS data © Crown copyright 2018 Contains LPS Intellectual Property © Crown copyright and database right (2018). This information is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence ([www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3)).

#### 1.4 Characteristics of reported finds, 2016

In 2016, 85% of reported treasure finds were object cases (944 cases), of which over half were either disclaimed or the museum withdrew<sup>5</sup> (499 cases) and just under a quarter were acquired<sup>6</sup> (223). Of the 172 treasure finds that were coin cases, 44% (75 cases) were disclaimed and just under a third were acquired (54 cases).

A total of 86 treasure case finds were donated allowing them to be acquired by museums at no (or reduced) public cost. 83% of donated cases were object cases.

**Figure 1.3 Reported treasure cases by distribution; England, Wales and Northern Ireland, 2016**

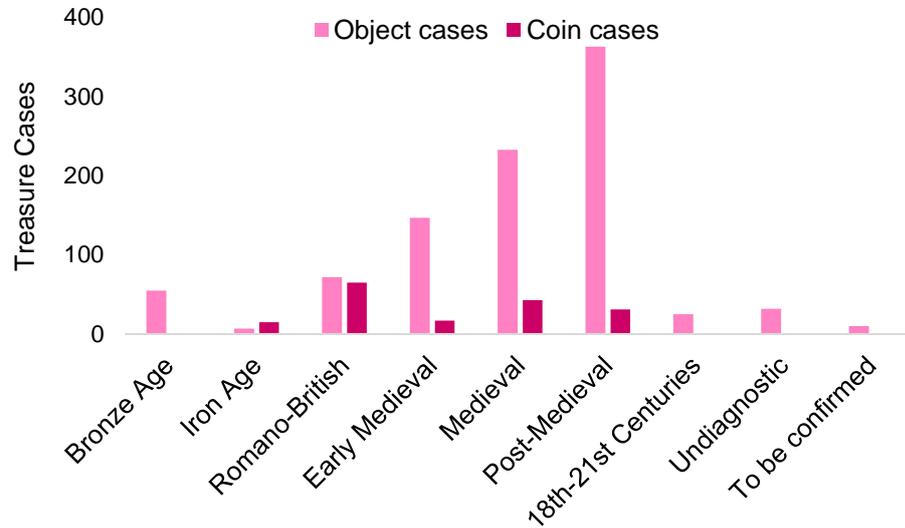


5. Disclaimed/museum withdrawal cases are those case where the Crown disclaims title for the find prior to inquest, or where an inquest is held declaring the find to be treasure (and therefore vesting in the Crown) but where a museum subsequently fail to acquire the find and it is returned to finder or landowner.

6 Acquired cases covers finds that have been acquired as well as finds where museums have made an expression of interest, but have not yet acquired.

Over a third (35%) of treasure cases in 2016 were from the post-medieval period (363 object cases and 31 coin cases) and a quarter (25%) were from the medieval period.

**Figure 1.4** Reported treasure cases by period, England, Wales and Northern Ireland, 2016



## 1.5 Mode of discovery

A large majority (94%) of treasure finds were discovered by metal detecting. A further 4% (45 cases) were archaeological finds and 1% (10 cases) were from field walking or searching the foreshore.

## 1.6 Percentage of adults in England taking part in metal detecting

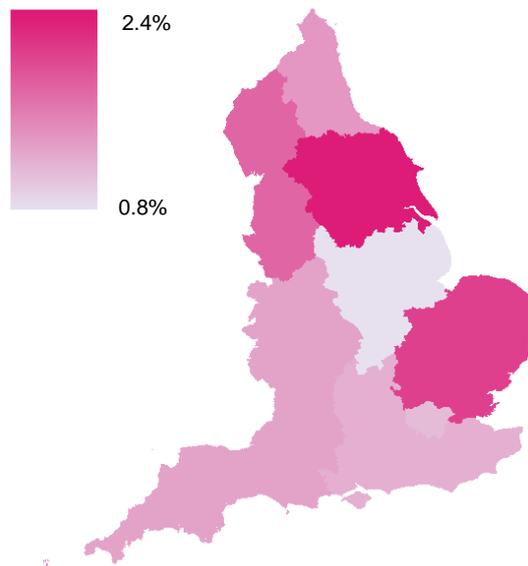
Data in this section are taken from the 2017/18 Taking Part Survey, a household survey in England which measures engagement with the cultural sectors. Taking Part Survey data are widely used by policy officials, practitioners, academics and charities. For more information about the Survey please see <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/taking-part-survey>

In 2017/18, 1.5% of adults (16+) in England said they had taken part in metal detecting at least once in the 12 months prior to interview.

Regionally, the rate ranged between 0.8% in the East Midlands to 2.4% in Yorkshire and the Humber, however this difference in rates between regions is not statistically significant<sup>7</sup>.

7. A non-statistically significant difference is where we cannot be confident that the differences seen in our sampled respondents are reflective of the population.

**Figure 1.5** Percentage of adults in England who took part in metal detecting at least once in the year prior to interview, 2017/18.



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### 1.7 Museum acquisitions, 2016

In 2016, 363 treasure cases were acquired by or donated to museums in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Of these 7% (27 cases) were obtained by the **Potteries Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent** and 6% (22 cases) were obtained by **Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery**.

## Annex A: Background information

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1. Treasure Finds is an Official Statistic and as such has been produced to the professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. Official Statistics undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure they meet customer needs and are produced free from any political interference. See the Statistics Authority Code of Practice for more information.
2. The data presented here are collected by the Portable Antiquities and Treasure section, Department of Portable Antiquities & Treasure, and recorded by the [Portable Antiquities Scheme](#).
3. **The Treasure Act 1996** replaced the common law of Treasure Trove in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. This has been further supplemented by the 2002 Treasure (Designation) Order. The Treasure Act sets out the definition of treasure, which includes the metallic composition required for a find to qualify as treasure and it extends the definition of treasure to include other objects found in archaeological association with finds of treasure. The Act confirms that treasure vests in the Crown, or the franchisee if there is one, subject to prior interests and rights. It simplifies the task of coroners in determining whether or not a find is treasure and it includes an offence of non-declaration of treasure. Lastly, it states that occupiers and landowners will have the right to be informed of finds of treasure from their land and that they will be eligible for rewards.
4. **The Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS)** was established by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) in 1997 to record archaeological finds found by the public. It also has an important educational role, enabling children and adults alike to learn about archaeology, get involved and bring the past to life. The work of the Scheme is managed by the British Museum and guided by the Portable Antiquities Advisory Group which advises on issues relating to portable antiquities. There is no requirement by the Treasure Act to present statistics on the PAS before Parliament. This administrative data series is continuously updated and available at <http://finds.org.uk/>. The PAS has been a key factor in the success of the Treasure Act and the large increase in reported treasure finds. Through working with metal detecting groups and others, the Scheme's Finds Liaison Officers (FLOs) are able to explain the system of treasure reporting and encourage detectorists and others to report their finds.
5. Metal detection participation figures were collected in the 2017/18 Taking Part Survey. For more information about the Taking Part Survey, including quality and technical information please see <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/taking-part-technical-reports>
6. The responsible statistician for this release is Rosanna White. For enquiries on this release please contact [evidence@culture.gov.uk](mailto:evidence@culture.gov.uk). For general enquiries please contact [enquiries@culture.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@culture.gov.uk).
7. The next release of data is scheduled for November 2019 and will include finalised treasure finds data for 2017 and provisional data for 2018.

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