

Rebuilding a Saxon ship

Just up the road in Woodbridge a team of volunteers, the Sutton Hoo Ship's Company, are building a replica of the ship that was found in the ground at Sutton Hoo in 1939.

Many of you will have seen the Carey Mulligan and Ralph Fiennes film 'The Dig' which captured the story of the excavation and shared the many treasures that were buried within the ship's hull.

The ship was thought to be the final resting place of King Raedwald in 625. The ship is now being brought back to life so that we can discover how it behaves on the water and therefore what it might have been originally used for.

So far, the timber for the keel has been sourced and is being worked into shape using traditional Anglo-Saxons axes. The company has also made life-size and scaled models to perfect the construction techniques and have a number of experimental resources on display.

A much smaller version of the ship called Sæ Wylfing can be seen moored up along the quay to give you a better idea of what the ship will eventually look like. This version requires eight rowers whereas the full-size ship will need up to 40.

Visitors can watch the work taking place at The Longshed on Tide Mill Way on weekdays between 9.30am and 4pm when the end doors are open. On Saturday and Sunday, their sister company The Woodbridge Riverside Trust, open the doors from 11am to 1pm for viewing. You can visit the Ship's Company website to find out more about volunteering, donating, sponsoring or arranging guided tours www.saxonship.org or email at contact@saxonship.org for more information.

