



# Arms and the man

## Reconstructing the life and times of an Iron Age warrior

Why was an Iron Age warrior buried in West Sussex 2,000 years ago, equipped with a sword, shield, and spectacular helmet? With a new exhibition in Chichester exploring these finds, Carly Hilts found out more about this unique grave and its enigmatic occupant from **Amy Roberts** and **Portia Tremlett**.

**O**ver 2,000 years ago, in what today is West Sussex but at the time lay within the territory of the Iron Age Regni tribe, an elaborate funeral was taking place. The man being laid to rest was an important and seemingly well-respected individual, with his mourners sending him to the grave accompanied by an extraordinary array of warrior regalia – a rare honour in a region where, at this time, cremation was the norm.

Who was this man who had seemingly commanded such high regard in life?

After his burial was rediscovered two millennia later, analysis of his physical remains and his unique grave goods has yielded intriguing clues. His is a story of Continental connections and migrants fleeing conflict across the Channel. Today, thanks to a £50,000 grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, this story is being explored in *Mystery Warrior: the North Bersted Man*, an exhibition currently running at the Novium Museum in Chichester (see 'Further information' on p.36), but the discovery of his grave takes us back more than two decades earlier.

ALL IMAGES: Chichester District Council unless otherwise stated.