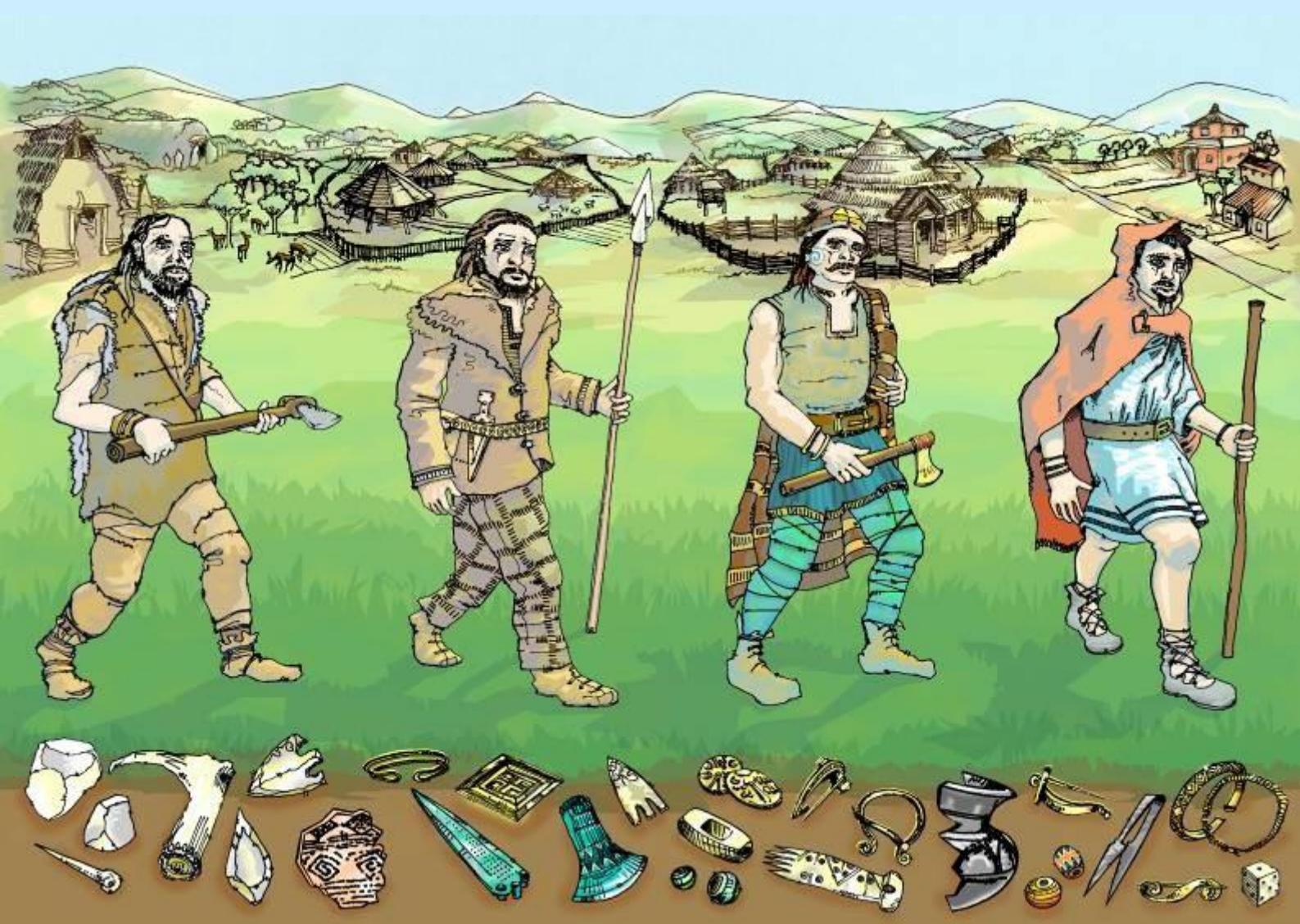


South Dorset Ridgeway Heritage Project

Neolithic to Iron Age

Archaeology Resource Box



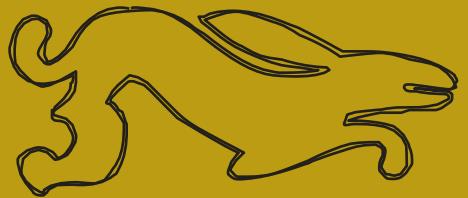
Dorset
AREA OF OUTSTANDING
NATURAL BEAUTY



South Dorset Ridgeway
Heritage Project


 **Heritage**
LOTTERY FUNDED

Information for Teachers

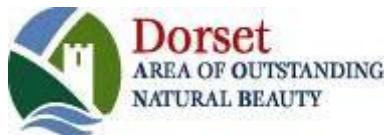


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*This Guide is a subset of the Dorset Ridgeway Heritage Project Guide which can be found at:
<http://www.dorsetaaonb.org.uk/our-work/south-dorset-ridgeway/learning/165-archaeological-resource-box>*



South Dorset Ridgeway Heritage Project

Archaeology Resource Box



Introduction

Dorset is rich in decaying remains reflecting the life and death of prehistoric people. The modern landscape of the South Dorset Ridgeway hides an amazing archaeological landscape varying from prehistoric burials to an Iron Age fort and Roman temple. The traces of our distant ancestors can still be seen in fields, on hillsides, and under buildings –though they are fast disappearing. All human activity destroys something of the past.

Nowadays the pace and scale of destruction has accelerated to such an extent that the remaining ancient landscapes must be rigorously protected for once any site is destroyed unique evidence is lost forever. We may know a lot about the lives of our predecessors, however there is much more we ought to know and donot.

Archaeology is the study of peoples' lives in the past based on what they have left behind. In most cases this will be their rubbish—broken pots, discarded tools and ruined buildings. Once a site has been excavated and recorded, all the finds (the pots, tools and suchlike) have to go somewhere. Museums are buildings dedicated to the collection, conservation, study, exhibition and interpretation of objects that have come from not only prehistoric sites but anything that has a historical, cultural, scientific or artistic value. Museums enable people to explore these collections for inspiration, learning and enjoyment, making objects accessible and holding them in trust for future generations.

This handling collection and related materials have been designed to beas

flexible as possible. It has been designed to encourage exploration of objects to find out about people in the past. This can be managed entirely through discussion work but, like archaeologists, there is the need to record in some way what they have discovered.

Archaeologists use a number of methods for recording; a sample South Dorset Ridgeway Record Sheet has been devised to aid with information gathering which can be adapted in any way you choose. There are suggestions for the use of this handling collection to meet the various needs of different groups.



The South Dorset Ridgeway—The Hellstone, Neolithic burial chamber © Hazel Dunning

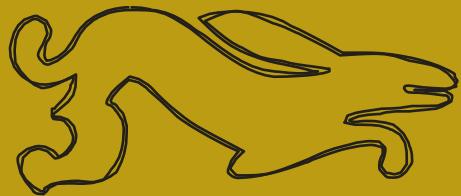
Picture credits:

Original Artwork © Darrell Wakelam
Dorset AONB,
Dorset County Museum
Wessex Archaeology
Matthew Knowles @ Dorset History Centre

Text credits: Pippa Brindley
Wessex Archaeology Dorset AONB



Information for Teachers



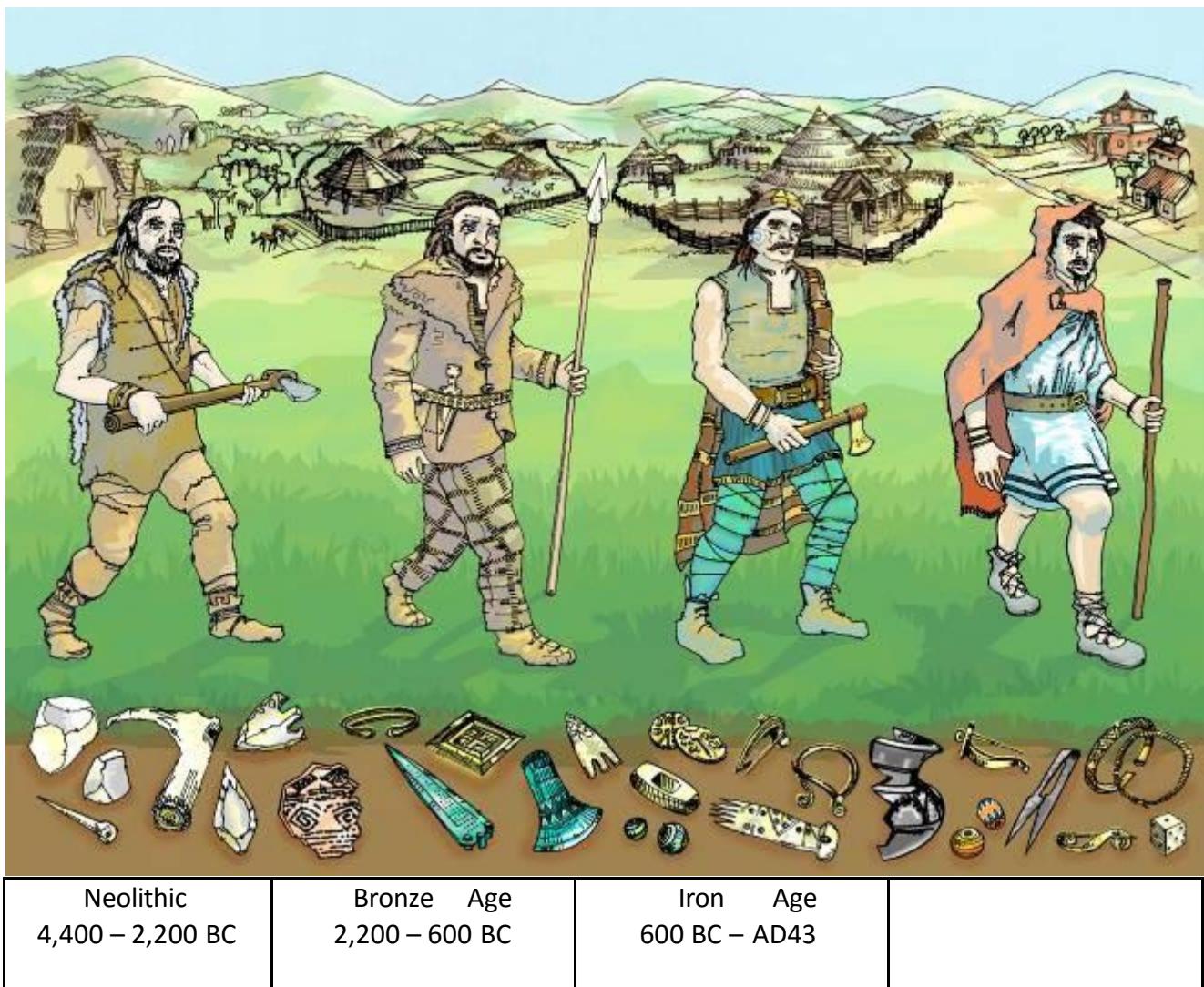
What's in the box

Inside the two boxes are replica artefacts, photographs and information from each of the four archaeological periods represented on the South Dorset Ridgeway

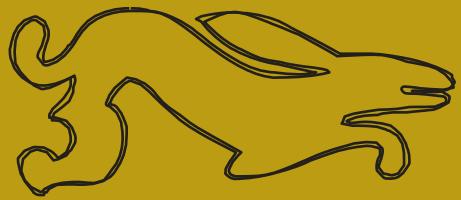
In the Wooden Box

Supporting Information:

- Teacher's Kit, A guide to using the South Dorset Ridgeway
- Archaeological Resource Box Guide
- Time Line. Drawn by Darrell Wakelam, this composite image shows the passage of time from Neolithic to Roman on the South Dorset Ridgeway



Information for Teachers



In the Wooden Box continued

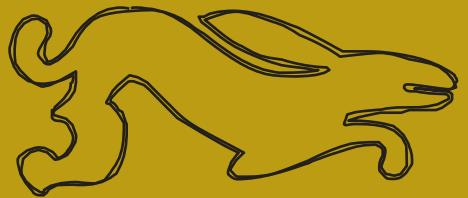
<p>Neolithic 4,400 – 2,200 BC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Picture of a late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age burial • Hafted flint axe • In the Plastic Finds Box <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End scraper • Oblique arrowhead • Leaf arrowhead • Bone needle • Fox boneawl • Bone fish hook 	<p>Iron Age 600 BC – AD43</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Picture of a an Iron Age burial—'The Whitcombe Warrior' • Black burnished ware dish • Weaving Comb • In the Plastic Finds Box <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coins; Durotrigian stater • Penannular brooch
<p>Bronze Age 2,200 – 600 BC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Picture of a late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age burial • Hafted bronze socket axe • Wessex dagger • The 'Clandon Lozenge' • In the Plastic Finds Box <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thumbnail scraper • Barbed and tanged arrowhead • Plano convex knife 	<p>Romano-British AD43 - 410</p> <p>See separate box</p>

In the Pottery Box

<p>Bronze Age</p> <p>Iron Age</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collared Um • Beaker shards • Black bumished ware cooking pot •
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Information for Teachers



Why Use Artefacts to Aid Learning?

Handling artefacts has a remarkable power to motivate. Finding out from objects requires no reading or writing skills which puts everybody, of whatever age or ability, on the same level. The thinking skills which are developed by working with artefacts are useful life-skills.

Artefacts can be used to develop:

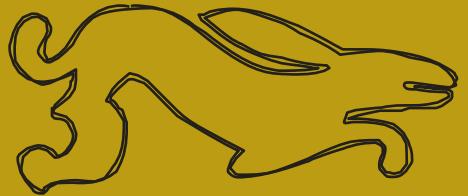
- Speaking and listening skills
- vocabulary about historic times and technical terms
- the skill of sequencing.
- an awareness of human activity in the past and an empathy with the people who made and used the objects.
- handling skills and an awareness of the preservation and conservation of the objects.
- an understanding of how structure, materials and function are related.
- an understanding of chronology, change, continuity and progress.
- an appreciation of fashion and the aesthetic quality of an object in its time, and now.

You may like to use the following questions to help stimulate ideas, research and discussion when looking at artefacts

Physical Features What does it look and feel like? What colour is it? What does it smell like? What does it sound like? What is it made of? Is it made from a natural or man-made material? Is it complete? Has it been altered or adapted? Is it worn?	Construction How was it made? Is it hand-made or machine-made? Was it made in one piece or several pieces? How has it been fixed together?
Design Was it well designed for its use? Were the best materials used? Is it decorated? How was the decoration done? Does the design look good?	Function Why was it made? How was it used? Has it had a change of use?
	Value - What is it worth? To the people who made it? To the people who used it? To the people who keep it? To you? To a bank? To a museum?



Information for Teachers



How to 'excavate' the box

When we are motivated, it is easier for us to learn. Archaeology allows us to explore the past by actually coming into physical contact with it and using our imaginations. This resource box will help you and your students experience what it is like to unearth the history of the past as an archaeologist of today.

This box has been produced to focus on Archaeology and prehistory but also offers opportunities for work related to other areas of the curriculum, especially:

- Maths
- Science
- Technology
- Art
- Literacy and English
- Geography
- Citizenship

Burial

The box has been designed so that the large image of either the Neolithic/Bronze Age, Iron Age burial can be placed with the 'grave goods' buried around the chosen burial – ready for excavation.

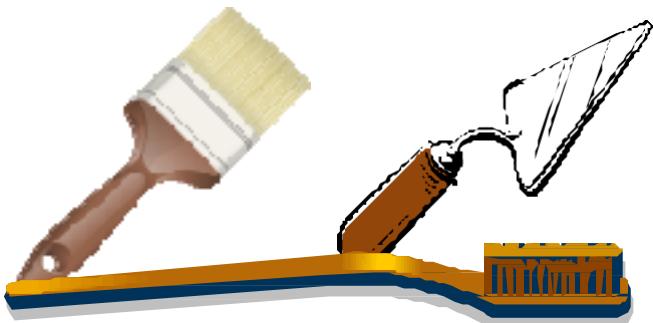
It is suggested that dry peat is the best material to bury the artefacts and skeleton, sand is an acceptable alternative but it will cause more damage to the photographs and resources. Polystyrene beads are also an alternative but be prepared for them to float around the classroom afterwards.



Archaeologist uncovering a mosaic in Dorchester© Wessex Archaeology

A part of an item protruding from the surface will excite investigation.

Thick paint brushes, small trowels and toothbrushes make useful excavation tools.





South Dorset Ridgeway Record Sheet

Name

Draw your object in this space

Choose some words to help label the drawing of your object:

Wood Stone Shiny Bone Flint Top Decorated Rough

Grey Round Brown Black Handle Broken Hole Lid

Rusty Edge Inside Antler Metal Outside Clay Coin

My object is a :

South Dorset Ridgeway Record Sheet

Name

Chose some words to help with writing about your object in the box below.

Rich Poor Man Woman Field Valuable Table

Cutting Hunting Water Hold Carry Food Trade

Animal Fish Home Clothes Light

Who would use the object?

Where would it be used?

Does it tell you about:

The work that people did?

What their homes may have been like?

People's diet?

This is what my object tells me about the people or how they lived:

Information for Teachers



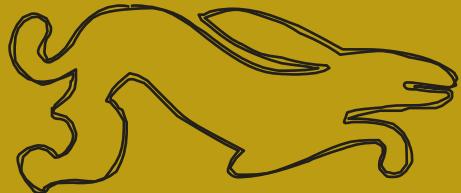
Excavation Activities

Some activities represent the kinds of tasks archaeologists themselves will undertake in the analysis of collected material, others do not.

- You may wish to divide the group into smaller sub groups- archaeologists who will excavate, those who will 'clean' the finds (use a soft paintbrush), the 'recorders' who draw the finds and the investigators who try to work out what the finds are
 - whom they think it belongs
- You may wish to make a grid to place over the excavation so your students can plot the position of their finds
- Emphasise that archaeology and excavation require patience and care, it is not work that can be hurried
- The students can identify characteristics and place the finds into various types of category; such as material, use, colour, size. The drawing of the people and their homes/lives included in the box and the photographs of further finds in the Teachers pack will be useful to help investigate the function of some of the finds
- You may wish to make a burial from two or more of the skeletons –as was discovered on the Ridgeway Hill excavation (see accompanying notes on Bronze Age burial)
- In a 'combined burial' as mentioned above the students could categorise the finds by age
- Use the finds to put together a timeline by laying the burials out on the floor, the students place finds next to the burial to
- Play a version of the panel game 'Call My Bluff' in which the students devise three alternative uses for an object (one being the true one) and attempt to persuade their classmates to choose an incorrect description
- Replicate a burial by researching costume of the period on the web and making items of clothing, make papier - mâché burial goods based on the photographs of further artefacts in the Teachers pack, devise a burial ceremony and dress a student and lay them out with the finds
- Make a modern burial based on the photograph of a modern student included in the box. What would they choose to have with them?
- Discuss the implications of excavation – what do the students think about burials being excavated? Write for and against arguments
- Using OS maps locate long barrows, round barrows, Maiden Castle and Roman sites in Dorset. Are there similarities/differences in the areas each time period occupies?
- Bury organic and inorganic materials in soil to observe/investigate how materials degrade.



Information for Teachers



Suggested Activities

- Using the record sheets and the objects pupils describe the objects, compiling class lists of as many appropriate adjectives as possible in one or two minutes. Encourage the children to think about the most appropriate words and select the four or five most apt adjectives from the list.

They can then write descriptions of the objects using the selected words. The descriptions could be displayed with the objects themselves or images of the objects. For example, if the object were the flint axe, the list might include words such as the colour, whether it was old, new, clean, dirty, shiny, rough, smooth etc.

A digital photograph of the axe could be displayed with a first-person description such as 'I am an old, rough, grey, flint axe.'

- Ask the pupils to keep a diary of what they eat at each meal for a school week.

Discuss the kinds of food they eat, what ingredients are needed and how the food is prepared. Compile and display word banks of foods accompanied by pictures. The images could be collected from magazines or by using ICT to carry out an internet search for pictures to download and print. There may be a wide variety of foods in multicultural schools.

Ask the children how we cook food

today – using the oven or microwave; grilling, frying, boiling, etc. – and what kitchen gadgets they have at home. Make sure they realise that food and cooking have always been very important in people's lives.

Look at food packaging. Discuss how ingredients, nutritional values, instructions for cooking and other information are presented (using lists, numbering etc.) Compare with the diets and cooking facilities of people in Pre-history.

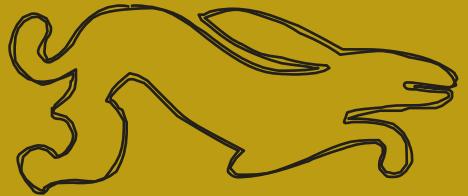
- Collect advertisements from magazines and newspapers. Talk to the children about advertising slogans, the products they sell and the language used.

Look at how comparatives and superlatives suggest that a particular product is better than other unnamed similar products. Look carefully at how language is used to convey a message and persuade the consumer that the product is worth buying.

Set up an Iron Age market where they have to buy/sell/exchange various items. You might want to give them a job/role and they have to devise a shopping list of items required. A farmer might need storage pots and has wheat to trade/exchange or potter has pots but needs a new cloak pin or brooch. Half the group could be buyers, the others sellers.



Information for Teachers



Suggested Activitiescontinued

- Recreate a scene from the life of the people in the past. When a Bronze Age house fell out of use, it is possible a very complex 'closing' ceremony took place.

This could form the basis of a drama / role play:

- a) The house was dismantled leaving the hearth in tact
- b) Flint was heated in a fire pit. The hot flint was used to roast joints of meat.
- c) The community enjoyed a series of feasts. (Storytelling could be used as entertainment at the feast). The 'best pots' were used at this feast.
- d) The flints were discarded around the central fire pit resulting in a horseshoe shaped 'burnt mound'
- e) After the last feast, a special ceremony took place in which the final act was the placing of two bronze bracelets: one by the hearth of the old house, the other on the base of a pit at the centre of the burnt mound.
- f) Feasting vessels were then thrown on top of the bracelet in the pit

- Discuss with the children objects and materials that create images of status: gold jewelled crowns for royalty, clothing, jewellery, latest technology and cars.

Examine what it is about the materials selected – are they rare, expensive, time-consuming to make? Collect images and models of objects or materials that have 'high status'.

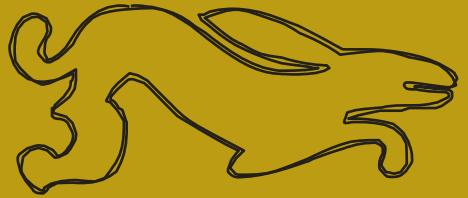
Discuss status objects and materials from the collection and examine what could be considered 'high status' at the time. Look at how people show they are rich, powerful or influential in society. Ask how the children might show their status and make collections of images and materials to create an individual ideas board. These could then be displayed alongside the status collection from the past.

- Pottery. Experiment in creating two-dimensional patterns using a wide range of materials: e.g. card combs through sawdust mixed with paint, mark-making on thin slabs of modelling clay using a range of tools including fingers. It is easier to work with pattern when it is on a flat surface. Try creating patterns by scratching marks onto paper through layers of coloured wax crayons and atop layer of black crayon in the style of scraperboards. Make wax resist patterns using wax crayons with a thin paint wash over the top.

Explore the pots from the point of view of their design – form often follows function. Make thumbnail sketches annotated with the design features: does it have a spout or handle, is it water tight or heatproof, what is it used for?



Information for Teachers



Suggested Activities continued

- Re-create 'Time Team' and assign roles to pupils to include excavators, recorders, researchers. Produce a short TV programme/film that can be shown to others in the school. Use interviews, 'live' exciting discoveries and talking about what the object might be/can tell us about the past.
- Stage the burial of someone from the Neolithic/Bronze Age/Iron Age period. Research clothing that the person might have worn, grave goods, food for the 'journey' etc. What ceremony might have taken place?
- Ask pupils to think about what happens to different materials over time and what is likely to survive for an archaeologist to discover. You could bury a small selection of objects – a vegetable, a stone, paper, leather, iron. Decide where to bury it, how long to leave it and try to predict what will happen to each object.

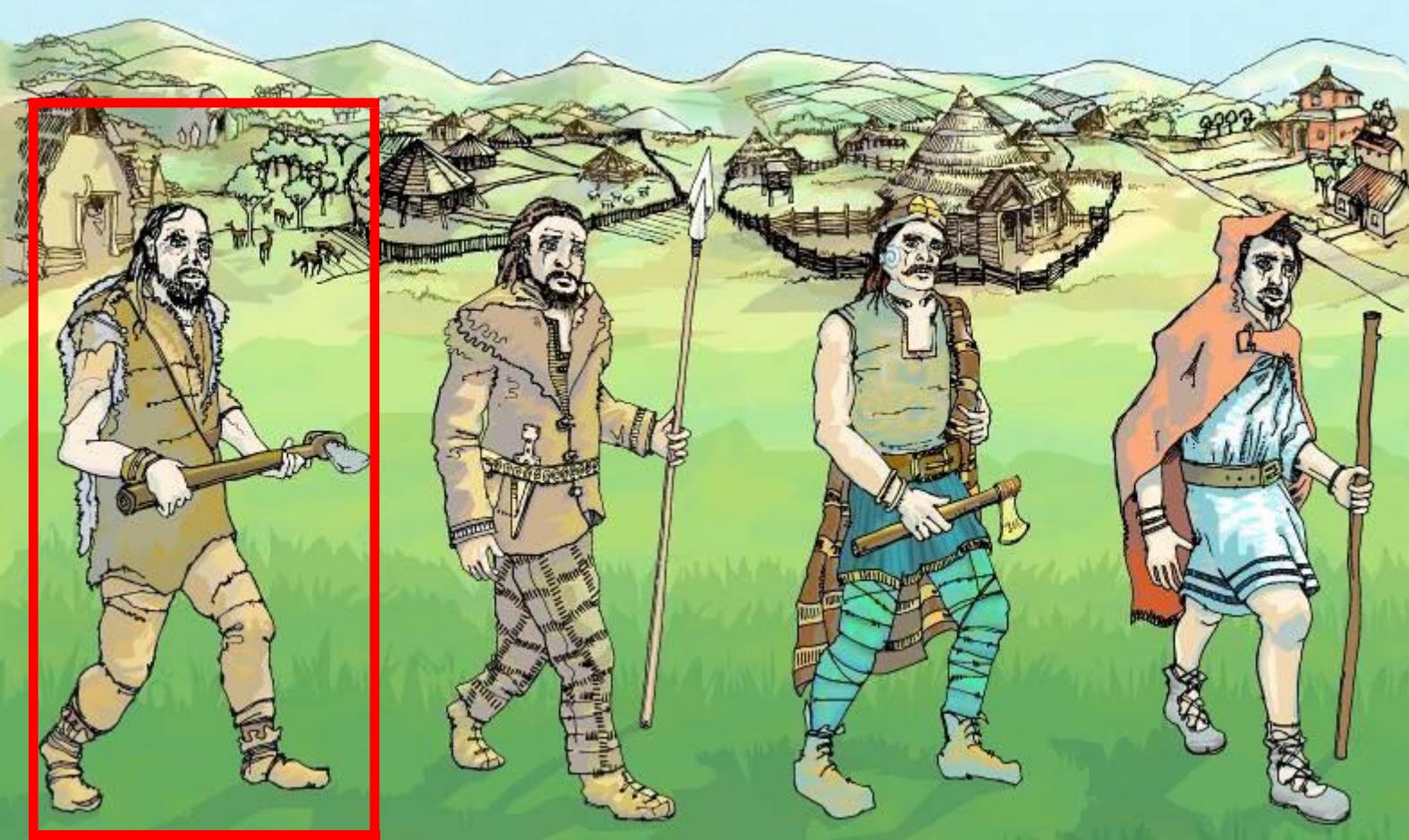
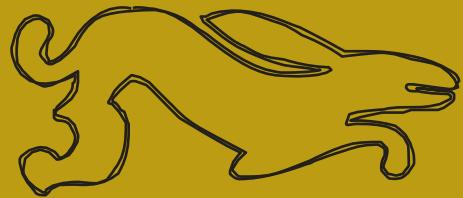
A similar experiment would be to test four iron objects, e.g. nails, under different conditions. Immerse one in water, one in damp soil, one in salt water and one in dry air. Leave them for several weeks. This could lead to a discussion about what an archaeologist is likely to find at different sites.

Quick ideas you've probably already thought of:

- Sorting and classifying according to:
Age
- Material Used
- Timeline of objects
- Make a classroom museum, writing labels, display etc
- Set a grid over buried objects (dry sand is good, so is peat – but not so ethical) as each object is uncovered it has to be plotted on a plan.
- Have a Neolithic/Bronze Age/Iron Age day at school – including lunch.
- Making copies of the pots
- "A day in the life of ..." to compare with theirs
- The ethics of Archaeology and excavating burials



Neolithic



Neolithic (New Stone Age) c.4000-2400 BC

From about 4,400 BC the landscape of the Ridgeway began to change. New people came from Europe to Britain, bringing with them the skills of farming and making pottery.

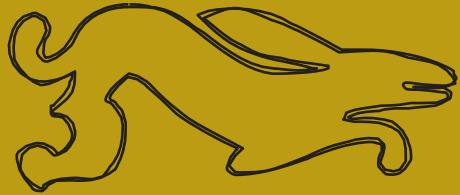
People became more settled, making clearings in the woodland for cattle, sheep, pigs and goats to graze. They began to grow wheat and barley in small plots and they coppiced timber to build houses and fencing. In the woodland beyond their settlements they collected wild food and hunted wild animals as had been done for thousands of years.

Although settlements became more permanent we still know very little of the people themselves.

Remains of Neolithic people are the earliest still visible: this is the first time that people made a visible impact on the Dorset landscape. But habitation sites are still difficult to locate and to understand – we know more about their dying than living. Timber houses leave little behind except for shallow post holes. It is hard to imagine what society was like; we don't know much about what they wore as their clothes have not survived. However, we do have the objects they left behind; stone tools, pottery and items of bone and antler.



Neolithic



Neolithic Flint

From 35,000 – c. 2,000 BC the use of metal was unknown and stone was used as a raw material for objects needed strength and durability.

Where it was available, flint was used for making tools and weapons, rather than other types of stone. In some places flint is found with chalk, either embedded within it or in layers; in others it occurs as nodules or pebbles scattered in the topsoil; it was this flint that was used for the making of early tools. During the Neolithic period flint mines were worked in various parts of Britain to provide first class, pristine flint. In Dorset flint was readily available as weathered surface nodules eroded from the natural chalk; fresh flint could have resulted from the digging of pits. Fresh flint was stronger and Neolithic axes used for felling trees, for example, needed that extra strength.

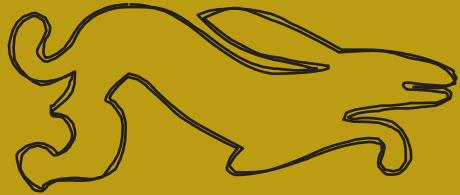
Flint was used because

- It breaks in a predictable way, so tools can be ‘designed’
- It is reasonably strong
- It produces sharp cutting edges and points

When a lump of flint is deliberately struck with a hammer stone a flake falls from it. Flint tools could either be made from the core (the lump of flint left after flakes have been struck from it) or from the flakes. The flake is first roughed out using a hammer stone and then retouched by removing small pieces of flint by applying pressure from a piece of bone or antler. Natural flint can be a variety of colours but usually shades of grey, black or brown. Its surface will often change colour as it slowly reacts with the air or soil around it.



Neolithic



Neolithic Scraper

Scrapers were used to scrape hides, hollow out wood or bone or remove bark from wood, for example. They are flakes that have a thick wide angled edge to allow a scraping action. The thickened edge provides strength and does not cut or tear the hide. Scrapers may have been mounted in a wooden handle, but are rarely found this way. With use a scraper becomes blunt and so is reshaped; this gradually makes the scraper smaller and smaller until it is no longer of use and is thrown away.

Very large numbers of stone tools were found at Maiden Castle. Over 21,000 pieces of worked stone were recovered during an excavation of a very small part of the whole site in the 1980s, and, although most of these were waste discarded after the production of tools the second most common tool was the scraper.

Neolithic Hafted Axe

During the Neolithic period a number of different axes were used and shaped according to their usage, such as an adze,

chisel and gouge. With the advent of agriculture there was a need to fell small trees (larger ones were probably culled with fire).

Polished stone axes required a great deal of time to create as they needed to be polished on a piece of abrasive stone. The smooth cutting edge gave the axe more strength: a flaked axe like the one above is weaker because of the uneven distribution of stress. Polished axes were traded through Europe in the Neolithic period and were made from a variety of stones.

Most of the flint found at Maiden Castle was waste from the production of tools. The amount suggests the hilltop was a focus for a considerable amount of production activity. One of the most important activities was the preparation of cores from which tools could be manufactured.

Most of these appear to have been taken away from the site. The cores would be used to produce tools as and when they were needed. Another process taking place on the site was the production of large tools, most probably axes. Large numbers of these were broken in the final stages of production and were discarded.



Neolithic



Oblique arrowhead



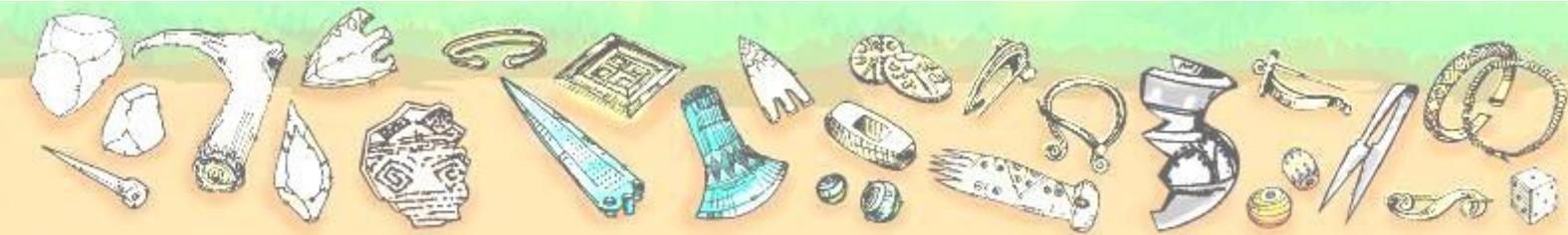
Leaf-shaped/laurel leaf projectile point

Neolithic Arrowheads

Projectile points, spearheads for example, appeared in the Palaeolithic (Old Stone Age) period and arrowheads proper appeared at the beginning of the Neolithic period, gradually replacing spearheads (although they continued in use). Flint arrowheads continued throughout prehistory, more and more types were produced as time wore on. There are many types that are widely distributed.

The oblique arrowhead had the side of the blade as the cutting edge, this would leave a wide wound and was probably for large swift animals. The wound made with these wide projectile points would bleed heavily and so slow the animal down.

At Maiden Castle archaeologists excavated a concentration of leaf arrowheads in an enclosure ditch. Most of these were broken and the way in which they were broken indicates that it was a result of their use.



Neolithic



Needle



Awl made from a fox bone

Neolithic Bone Items

Slivers of bone were used for needles. These were produced by the groove and splintering technique. A burin (a flint tool with a chisel edge) would be used to cut lines into bone, the splinter would be levered out and re worked into a needle using an awl to bore the hole for the needle eye.



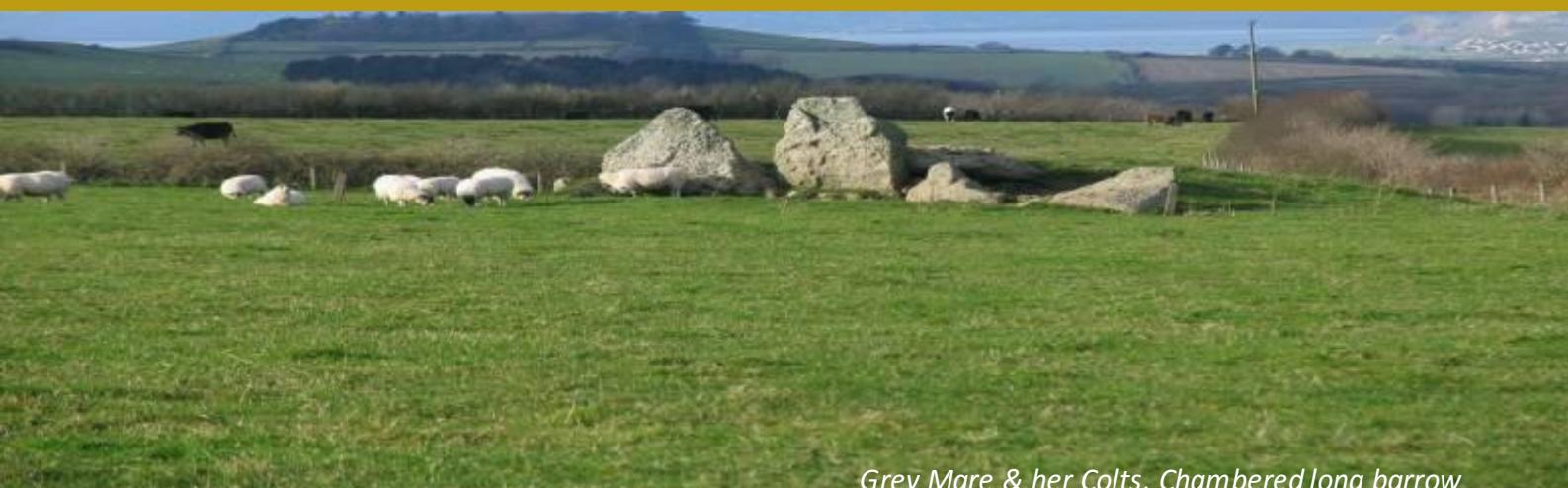
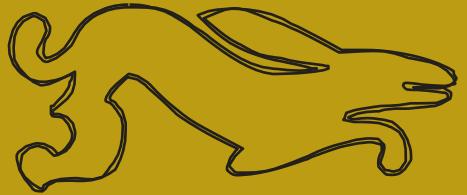
Fish hook

Much of the bone was from domesticated animals such as sheep, cattle and pigs. Bird bones were used for such things as musical pipes. Artefacts of bone survive well, except in acidic soils.

Antler and horn were also used. Antler is stronger than bone and could be used for handles, hammers for shaping flint tools and combs. Like bone, antler survives well, except in acidic soils.



Neolithic



Grey Mare & her Colts, Chambered long barrow

Neolithic Burials

Long barrows are elongated earth and stone mounds and are the most easily recognised of Neolithic graves or monuments. The South Dorset Ridgeway has at least ten and there are around 40 long barrows in the whole of Dorset. How people buried their dead in prehistory is a riddle. Few barrows have been excavated in modern times. Most barrows contained collective burials of several individuals, but they represent only a small fraction of the population and must have been selected from some form of elite group. Perhaps each family group had a tomb in which the bones of their dead were deposited.

Some of the long barrows have a burial chamber, often stone built. This might help explain why seven of the ten are clustered on the South Dorset Ridgeway north of Portesham where there is a large stony outcrop.

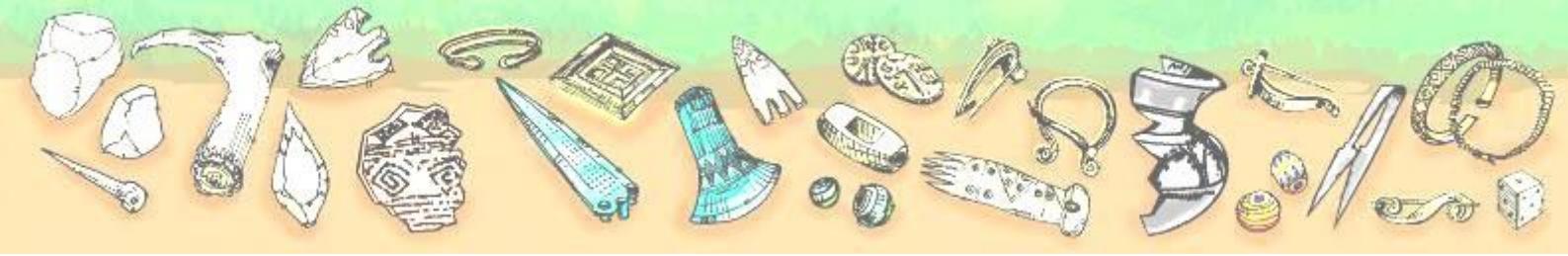
The longest of all bank barrows runs for 546 metres on Maiden Castle. It was examined by Sir Mortimer Wheeler in the 1930's during his hill fort excavations. Early Neolithic pottery and ox bone were found at the east end of

the ditches and nearby was the burial of a young man. There were also two crouched burials of children with an Early Neolithic cup.

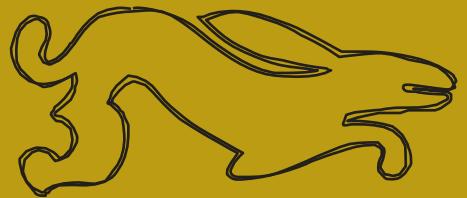
On Ridgeway Hill between October and December 2008 Oxford Archaeology carried out excavations on the Ridgeway to investigate the archaeology which would be affected by the Weymouth Relief road. One of the main themes of the archaeological investigation on the Ridgeway Hill site was burial –and they found them. These burials date from a number of different time periods and highlight that the area was a focus for ritual activity for thousands of years.

The burials tend to occur in groups, which helps to date them and points to some form of relationship between the people being buried. One group of five pits contained crouched skeleton burials dated to the Neolithic period and represents some of the earliest evidence on the site.

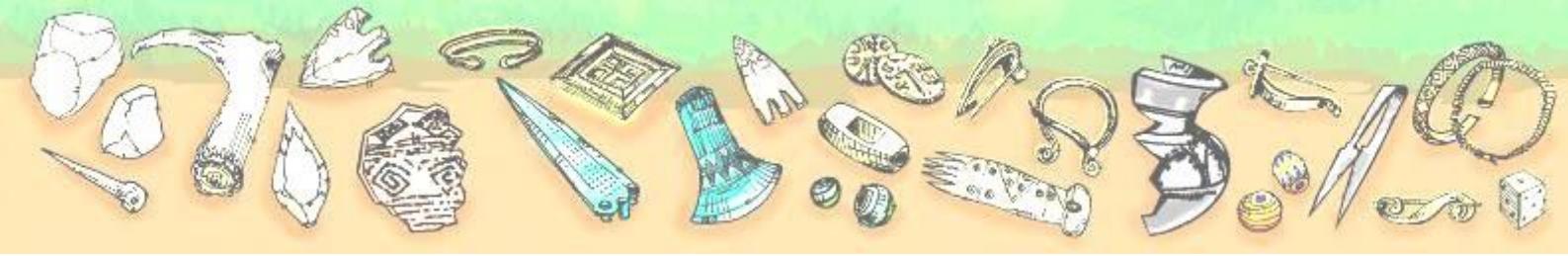
There were also a number of small non-burial pits from this period which contained worked flint tools and animal bone, indicating that people were moving through the landscape or perhaps visiting the area to bury their dead.



Neolithic



Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age burial of cremated remains © Wessex Archaeology



Neolithic



In the Image Bank (www.dorsetaonb.org.uk)



Museum— Neolithic Axes



Museum— Neolithic Arrowheads

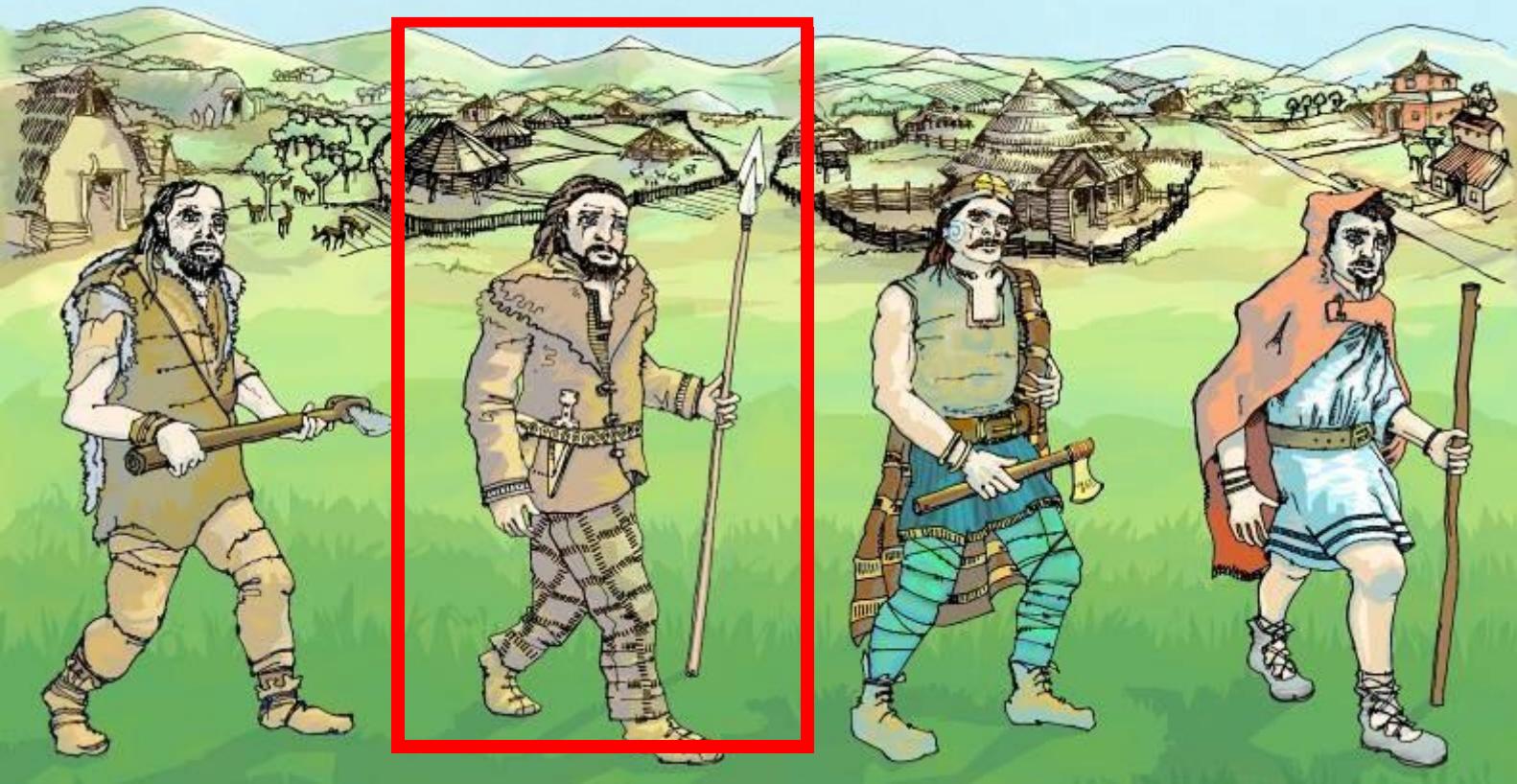


Museum— Neolithic Bone Pin

© Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society



Bronze Age



Bronze Age (c.2400-700 BC)

The Bronze Age is the time when metal: copper, gold and bronze, first appears in Britain. Archaeologists have found out a great deal about this period from excavating barrows, because people were often buried with the things that had been important or significant to them in life. Archaeologists have found flints, pottery, arrowheads, antler picks, polished stone axe-heads, metal knives and grave goods of gold.

Bronze is made from an alloy of copper and a small proportion of tin, neither metals are found in Dorset so any raw materials had to be brought in by trade or exchange.

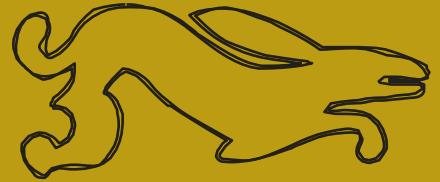
The Bronze Age appears to have been a time of agricultural expansion across the chalklands of most of Southern Britain, and south Dorset was no exception. The area between

the Frome and Maiden Castle was divided into four or five farms which were surrounded by fields. Similar farmsteads have been excavated; Hog Cliff Hill and Shearplace Hill near Sydling St Nicholas, Rowden south of Winterborne Abbas and Poundbury and Middle Farm on the outskirts of Dorchester.

Around 1,000BC there seems to have been a change in the settlement structure in this area. Many farmsteads that had flourished earlier in the Bronze Age were abandoned. Some of the poorer soils of the South Dorset Ridgeway appear to have been depopulated and that arable farming returned to the richer areas of the river valleys. This abandonment helps explain the preservation of these archaeological landscapes down to the present day.



Bronze Age



Bronze

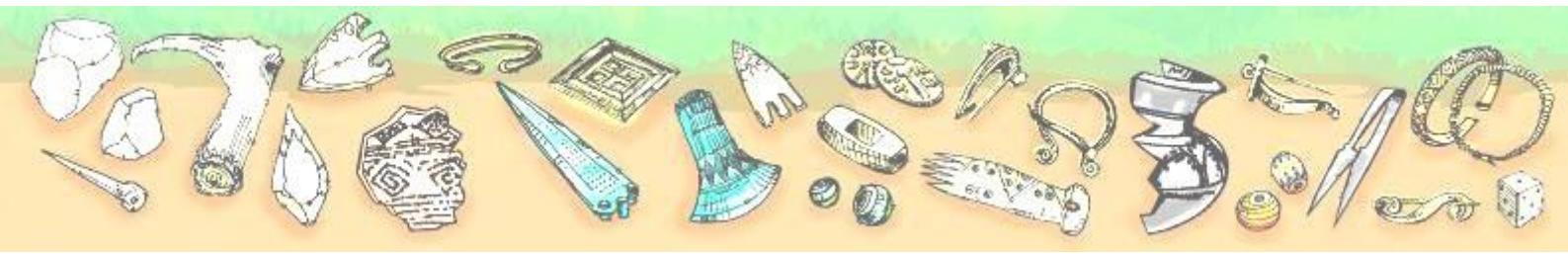
Bronze is especially suited to being cast into moulds. It holds the form of a mould very well and can be hammered to become stronger.

As the Bronze Age progressed the metal began to be used regularly for tools and weapons, among other things. It polishes well and was used for mirrors. As bronze also withstands heat well it could be used for cooking items.

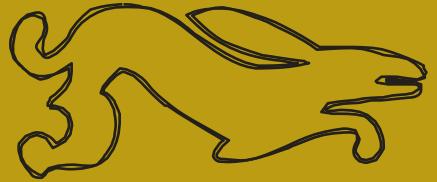
The first bronze axes were cast in moulds of stone or clay with a flat surface bearing the shape of the intended axe, two piece moulds were later used of more sophisticated shapes. Improvements in casting and shape seen

through the sequence of bronze axes are very useful for dating. The flat axe belongs to the Early Bronze Age followed by the palstave and socketed axes of the middle and late Bronze Ages.

Eighteen middle Bronze Age palstaves on display at Dorset County Museum come from a hoard of 90 found at Marnhull. Another hoard of six late Bronze Age socketed axes found at Eggardon in 1882, don't appear to have ever been used. It must be remembered that bronze was still expensive and flint was still used for tools such as scrapers and arrowheads.



Bronze Age



hafted bronze socket axe



Wessex dagger

Bronze Age Axes and Daggers

In the Early Bronze Age burials were in round barrows. 'Wessex Culture' is the name given to a few very rich burials in Wessex and parts of Dorset such as Oakley Down, the Ridgeway and Clandon Barrow. These burials are some of the richest and include gold objects, bronze daggers and knives and beads of amber alongside cups and pottery. These graves must have been intended to express wealth and status. It may be that this 'Wessex wealth' was a result of being the middlemen in the exchange and trade of raw materials such as copper.

The daggers are triangular in shape, either flat or with a well defined midrib and grooves that follow the blade line. Traces of wood or leather sheaths have survived with some daggers as well as dagger pommels of wood; one such was found in a burial mound in Dartmoor (Hambleton), in 1872. This was made from amber with hundreds of tiny holes drilled in the surface into which was inserted pins of gold wire. The finds were sent to

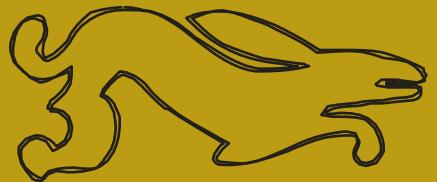
Plymouth Museum for safe keeping but sadly in 1942 the building along with its contents was destroyed in an air raid on the city. Therefore today all that remains of the Hambleton Dagger are some photographs and a written description.

Many of the implements and weapons had wooden handles or hafts that have not survived. The handles of daggers can be reconstructed to some extent using the rivets and studs that have survived. Axe heads, however, were tied with thongs or cords to loops to the haft and these have not survived, but the loops can still be seen.

The socketed axe was made in a two piece mould and was at the height of bronze axe technology. It could be mounted on the strongest of handles and was thick at the cutting edge so lasted longer before it had to be recast. It had a hollow end, so the handle fits inside the socket.



Bronze Age



Beaker



Collared Urn

Bronze Age Pottery

Bronze Age pottery was hand made with clay full of material such as grog (broken pot), crushed stone, fine sand or burnt flint, added to prevent the pot from cracking when it was fired. As a result some sherds (pieces of pot) look crumbly (a bit like dog biscuit).

The fabric of beakers is very fine; the grog was pre fired so it was pre shrunk thus giving more control of the whole potting process. All kinds of beaker were oxidized and so were a buff colour. Decoration took a variety of forms. One of the main types is a series of horizontal lines separating different parts of the pot; some of which are filled in with grooves. A cord pattern is also very common and may have been wrapped around the whole pot before it was fired and allowed to burn away in the fire. Some show decoration made by the potters thumb nail or have designs of small dots probably made with wooden or bone combs. Many pieces of Beaker vessels are found but most whole

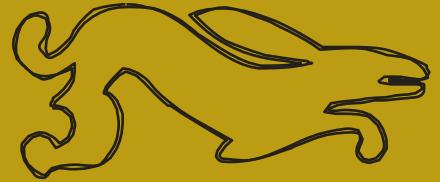
Examples come from burials.

During the middle and late Bronze Age the principal form of pottery was the urn and there were three main types; the collared, bucket and globular urn. The collared urn was large enough to take the cremated remains of a person.

A significant group of pottery came from the Bronze Age hut excavated at Rowden. There were heavy duty storage vessels, medium sized jars were probably used in food preparation and some fine ware probably used for the consumption of food and drink.



Bronze Age



Plano-convex knife



Barbed and tanged arrowhead

Bronze Age Flint Tools

Flint continued to be used in the Bronze Age for various tools. The main tools included plano-convex knives, which were typically leaf-shaped, elongated and retouched over the whole convex surface.

With barbed and tanged arrowheads the tang would be inserted into a haft of bone or wood and the barb would allow the arrowhead to stay in the animal and so slow it down.

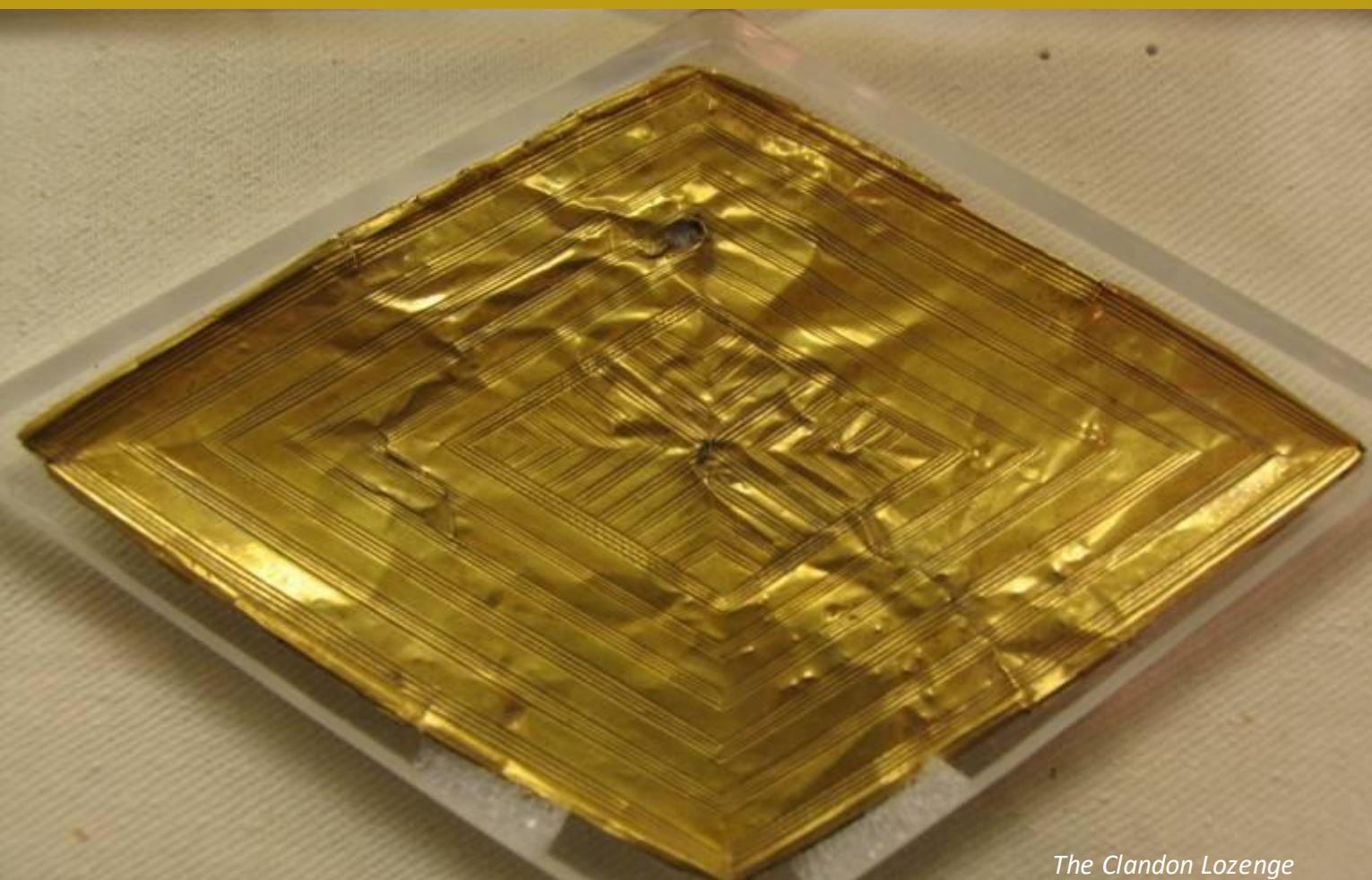
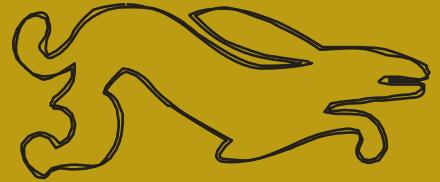


Thumbnail scraper

Scrapers of various sizes and shapes continued to be made.



Bronze Age



The Clandon Lozenge

Bronze Age Gold

In the nineteenth century the lure of this gold drew landowners and amateur archaeologists to excavate Bronze Age burial barrows in the search for treasure. Although some reported their findings, most did not, and much information about the barrows has been lost forever.

However, one of the richest barrow burials was uncovered in this way. Clandon Barrow at Martins town was dug in 1882 and is one of the richest burials of its type in Dorset.

Although the primary burial was not found a secondary burial containing a lozenge shaped

gold plate decorated with detailed lines, shale or jet mace-head inset with five gold studs, a small amber cup, an incense cup and a grooved bronze dagger was uncovered. You can see these artefacts at Dorset County Museum in Dorchester.

Was the person buried in Clandon a chieftain and were these his badges of office? Whether he was or not, he was sufficiently important to have traded or been given objects from far afield. The stone would have come from highland Britain, the amber from Scandinavia and the gold from Ireland or Wales.



Bronze Age



Bronze Age Burials

There was a major, but gradual, change in burial practice from the Neolithic to the Bronze Age.

Round barrows replaced long barrows. Round barrows are much smaller; some contained bones like the long barrows, but later ones contained cremated remains. While long barrows contained multiple burials, round barrows seem to be individual burials or small numbers of remains. There are around 2,000 round barrows in Dorset, many of them dug into during the 1800s; many were basically 'robbed' of the goods they contained and all other evidence cast aside or destroyed.

The tradition of burying a special vessel with the body in the earliest of these burials led to these being named Beaker Burials. The pots, beakers, buried with them are very distinctive in shape and pattern. (See the Bronze Age Pottery notes). These burials could also include daggers and beads and some of the earliest metal objects are found in Bronze Age graves. Some of these burials were very rich and contained small items made of gold.

Many beautiful and enigmatic items have appeared from these particular burials; artefacts from the Clandon Barrow for example include a gold lozenge, an incense cup, an amber cup, dagger, bronze ring and shale mace head with five gold capped bosses. Clandon is highly visible and is dramatically sited on the skyline when viewed from many directions.

In the later Bronze Age new ideas emerged. Cremations, with the remains placed in urns, and burial without a mound became the custom. Examples of the mid to Late Bronze Age burials are associated with a particular form of pottery known as Deverel – Rimbury ware. Rimbury urn field is south of Bincombe Hill and an incense cup from this cemetery gave its name to this type of pottery. Deverel is named for Deverel Barrow (on the A354 between Milborne St Andrew and Winterborne Whitchurch) excavated in 1824 containing 17 cremations in urns.

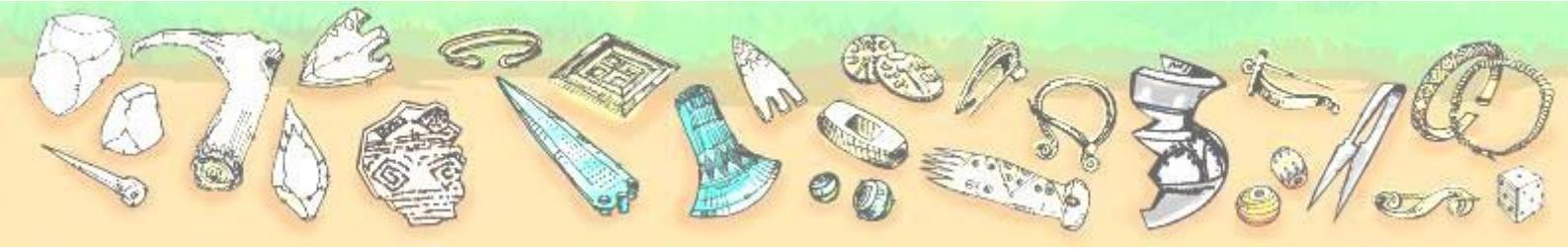
On Ridgeway Hill between October and December 2008 Oxford Archaeology carried out excavations on the Ridgeway to investigate the archaeology which would be affected by the Weymouth Relief road. A number of burials dating to the Bronze Age were discovered. Six skeletons were discovered in a cluster – one of these was in a stone lined pit and another contained a complete beaker. There was also the remains of a Bronze Age round barrow. The mound had long been ploughed out but the ditch remained. In the centre was a single cremation burial with the remains of possibly a dagger. Round barrows were often the focus for later burials and a number of later burials were found in this round barrow (see Romano British)



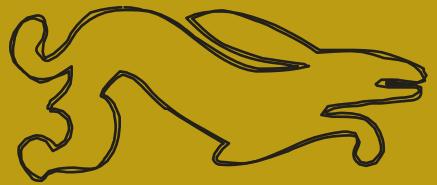
Bronze Age



Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age burial of cremated remains © Wessex Archaeology



Bronze Age



In the Image Bank (www.dorsetaonb.org.uk)



Museum—Bronze Age Axes
(Palstaves)



Museum—Bronze Age
Daggers



Museum—Bronze Age Pottery I
(Beakers)



Museum—Bronze Age Pottery II
(Urns)



Museum—Bronze Age
Arrowheads



Museum—Bronze Age Gold



Museum—Bronze Age Burial Goods I
(Cup, thought to have been used for incense from
a Barrow at Culliford Tree, near Broadmayne)

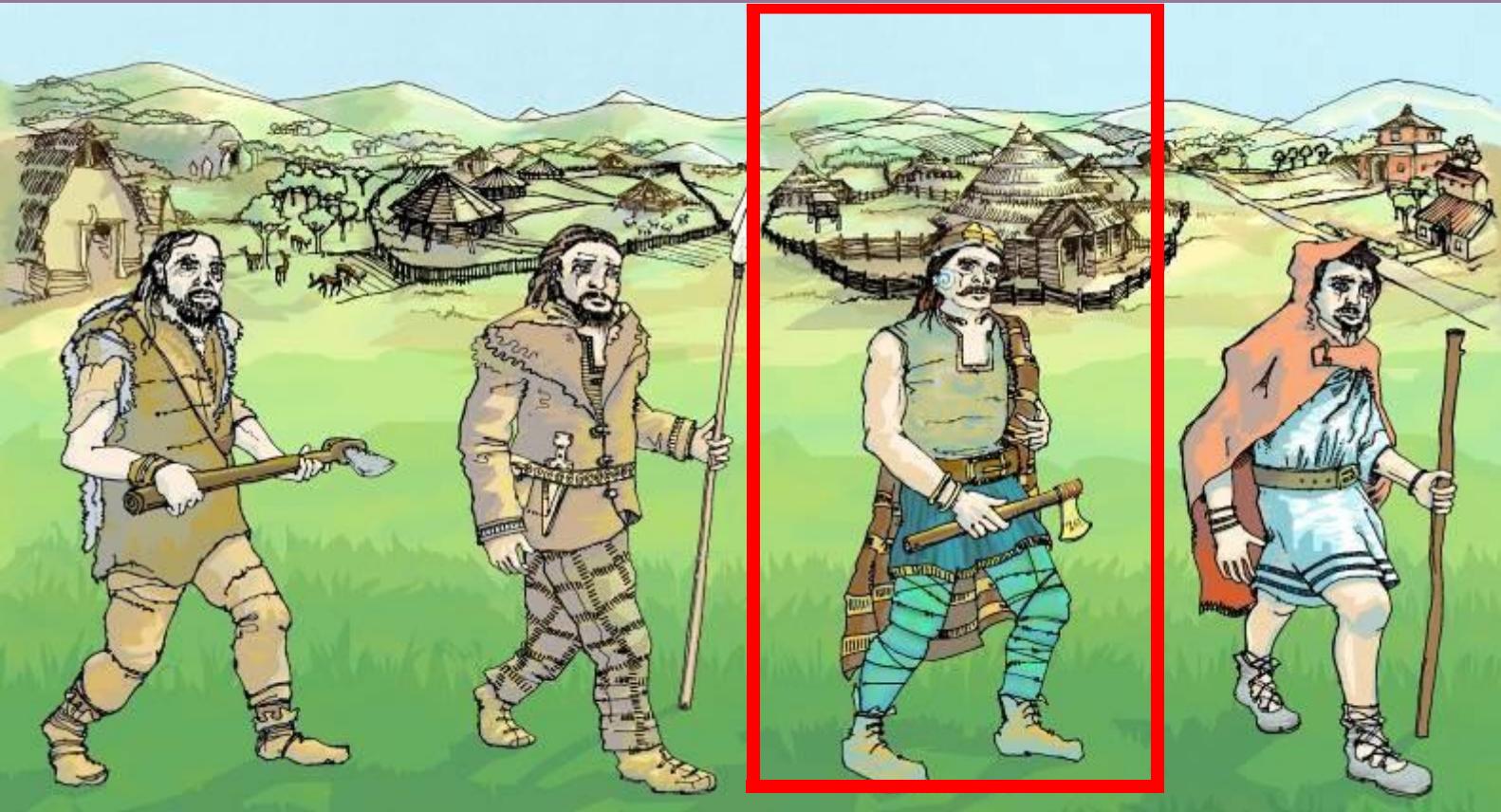
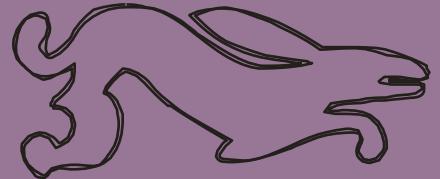


Museum—Bronze Age Burial Goods II

(© Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society



Iron Age



The Iron Age (700BC-AD43)

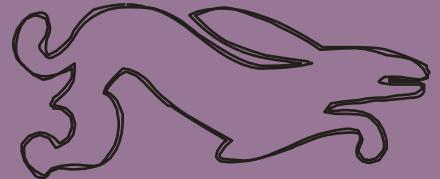
From about 1000BC new styles of pottery appear in Britain. The technology to work iron, a stronger metal than bronze, was developed. Trade increased. Tin and copper were brought from Cornwall and Wales.

Other goods travelled out of Dorset, for example shale from Kimmeridge which was used for bracelets and occasionally for bigger items like trays and even tables. By the end of the Iron Age black-burnished ware pottery, made in East Dorset, was being used by soldiers on Hadrian's Wall. There was increased trade with Europe too; bronze was imported while woollen cloaks and hunting dogs were exported. Industries flourished; as well as pottery, salt was produced on the south coast.

People lived on the chalk uplands and continued to farm the land on the slopes. As the population grew, more and more land was brought into cultivation; traces of these Iron Age fields and even earlier ones can still be seen, for example at Winterbourne Steepleton. Families lived in large round-houses, with daub-caked walls and a steeply pitched thatched roof. A central fire provided both warmth and heat for cooking. You can see a reconstruction of around- house at the Ancient Technology Centre, Cranborne



Iron Age



Weaving comb

Iron Age Bone

Bone continued to be used for many, many items; dice, needles, netting needles, pendants, finger rings, beads, toggles, handles, spindle whorls, pins, potters tools and weaving combs.

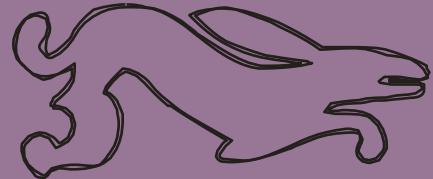
Weaving combs were used to beat down the weft (side to side) threads once they had been woven across the warp (up and down) threads on a loom. Loom weights (to keep tension on the warp threads) of clay, stone, and chalk are known.

Spindle whorls (the weight at the base of the stick or shaft) have been found made of clay, stone and lead. In Dorset County Museum there are two spindle whorls made from the top of human femurs. Very little of clothing from the Iron Age survives.

Tiny fragments of woollen cloth or woollen textile impressions wrapped around corroded iron artefacts give small clues but almost nothing survives of the shape, cut and fastening of garments, or sewing techniques.



Iron Age



Black burnished ware jar

Iron Age Pottery

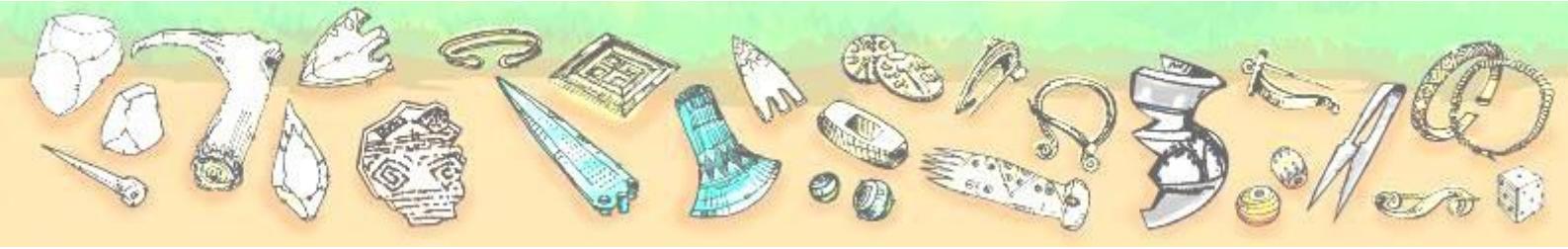
Pot sherds are the most common artefact to be found on any permanent Iron Age settlement. Domestically pots were used for storing, preparing, cooking and eating food, and perhaps for transporting it. During trade or exchange they could be used to measure foodstuffs like grain.

Until the first century BC pots were handmade by coil or slab-shaping with the joins carefully smoothed over, but by the beginning of the first century BC the kick-wheel was introduced.

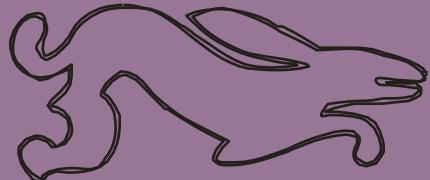
Archaeologists categorise pots by the way they are finished and their possible function into coarse (kitchen) and fine (table) wares.

In Dorset, in the late Iron Age, Black Burnished ware was made. This was divided into two types Black Burnished ware 1(BB1) and Black Burnished ware 2 (BB2). Both were coarse ware primarily for use in the kitchen. BB1 was always made by hand, dark grey or black, gritty and coarse. In the first and second centuries AD the outside was highly burnished or smoothed, later it was slipped then burnished. Jars were only burnished on the outside but bowls were burnished inside and out. Decoration consists of areas of latticed lines; perhaps to provide a better grip.

BB2 was made on a wheel and a dark grey or black to brown or reddish brown. It has a much smoother feel than BB1.



Iron Age



Durotrigian Stater Wreath pattern with upward facing leaves



Durotrigian Stater Triple-tailed disjoined Celtic horse, eleven pellets above, bean behind and large pellet below.

Iron Age Coins

Coinage first appeared in Britain at the end of the second century BC, and by 20 BC coins were found across much of south eastern England. The use of coins never extended into northern and western Britain or Ireland during this period.

Towards the end of the second century BC, Roman influence began to extend into the western Mediterranean and southern France. This led to growing contact between Britain and the Roman world across the English Channel. Initially this contact was confined to the trading of limited quantities of Roman luxury goods such as wine, probably exchanged for slaves, minerals and grain through sites like Hengistbury Head in Dorset and Mount Batten near Plymouth in Devon. After 50 BC and the conquest of Gaul(modern France) by Julius Caesar, this trade intensified and focused on south east England.

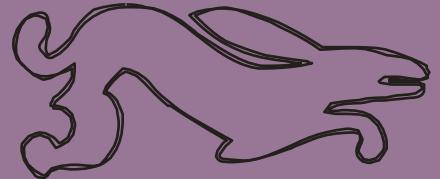
In addition to intensive trade links, Rome appears to have established diplomatic relations with a number of tribes and may have exerted considerable political influence before the Roman conquest of England in AD 43.

At the same time, new types of large settlements called 'oppida' appeared in southern Britain. These appear to have acted as political, economic and religious centres. Many also appear to have been the production centres for Iron Age coins, which often gave the names of rulers, some styling themselves 'Rex', Latin for 'king'.

Durotriges was the name for the Iron Age peoples living in Dorset and part of south Somerset.



Iron Age



Penannular brooch

Iron Age Brooches

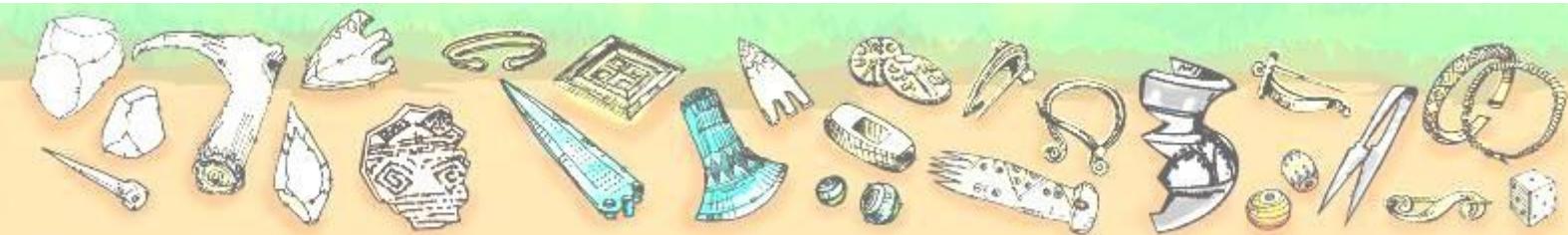
Ring headed pins, in bronze and later in iron, evolved in Britain in the eighth century BC. By the third century BC pins were replaced by bow brooches which were more secure and comfortable to wear. Early brooches with high, humped bows allowed several thick- nesses of cloth to be worn.

Penannular brooches were a very common type and used for over 1,000 years. They consist of an almost complete hoop with a pin folded over the rim that can swivel round.

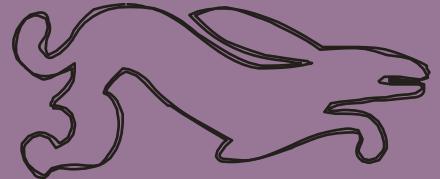
The terminals were sometimes turned over or pinched in with simple designs, or are highly decorated; sometimes with animal heads.

There were cheap and expensive versions; some made of copper alloy others of silver.

Other ornaments worn could be a pair of bangles, necklaces of glass beads and finger and toe rings. Dorset County Museum has a beautiful necklace on display, once worn by an Iron Age girl.



Iron Age



Iron Age Burials

The most common form of burial in the Mid to Late Iron Age was a form of excarnation (exposure), as parts of bodies and isolated bone have been found scattered across the Maiden Castle settlement.

This contrasts quite dramatically with the formal cemeteries which are common in South Dorset in the Late Iron Age, one of which was found in the Eastern entrance of Maiden Castle. In these burials, the position of the body and its orientation were carefully prescribed and almost universally adhered to. Individuals were placed in shallow graves in a crouched position on their right side with their head pointing to the east, though young males of between 20 and 30 years old were often supine (lying on their back) orientated towards the south west.

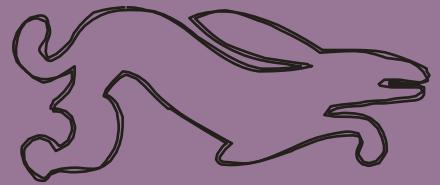
Placed in the grave was a restricted range of objects which appear largely to do with providing food. The most common grave goods were pots, probably used as containers, with joints of meat being second most common. The meat was mainly sheep but also cattle in male graves and pig in female. In many burials there were other objects which indicated the status of the individual – beads, weapons, brooches and rings.

The Whitcombe Warrior was a young Iron Age male buried at Whitcombe just outside Dorchester.

He had probably been buried fully clothed and may have been still wearing his sword; the blade remains and some small metal pieces that might be part of a belt or baldric. There was also a small axe head, spindle whorl and brooch. The man's possessions and the care given to his burial suggest he was of importance in the social group. He was called the Whitcombe Warrior because of his sword – there is no evidence of him having fought in a battle. He can be seen in Dorset County Museum.



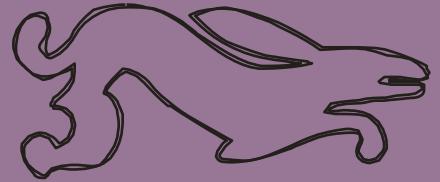
Iron Age



The Whitcombe Warrior © Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society



Iron Age



In the Image Bank (www.dorsetaonb.org.uk)



Iron Age Bone & Antler
(Weaving combs, gouges &
needles)



Museum—Iron Age Bone
(Bone shuttles)



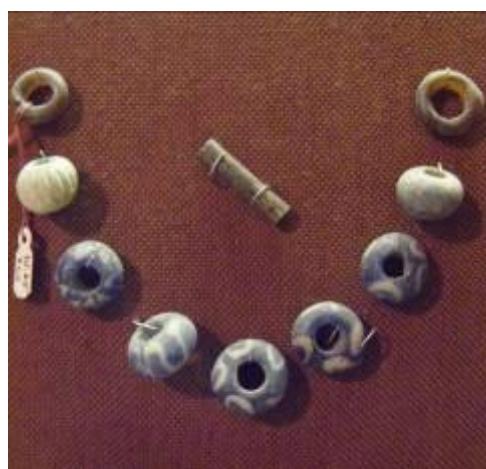
Museum—Iron Age
Brooches



Iron Age Coins



Museum—Iron Age Black Burnished Ware



Museum—Iron Age Necklace
© Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society



Present Day



The Suppliers

Box

Small flint tools and arrowheads

hafted flint axe head and small bone items

Black Burnished Ware

Bronze Age Pottery

hafted bronze socket axe, Wessex dagger,
Durotrigian staters, Bone weaving comb,
Clandon Lozenge

Dan Williams, Bridport

Mike Trevarthen, Dorchester

www.flintknapping.co.uk, Kings Lynn

Andrew Macdonald, The Pot Shop, Lincoln

Bill Crumbleholme, Upwey, Weymouth

www.bronze-age-craft.com, Neil Burridge, Cornwall

What Next?

- Visit some of the archaeological sites on the South Dorset Ridgeway. Please refer to the Teacher's Kit for more information.
- Visit Dorset County Museum (01305 262735 www.dorsetcountymuseum.org) to see some real artefacts, the Whitcombe Warrior. Education Service available
- Visit The Ancient Technology Centre at Cranborne for more hands on experience of pre-history

