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**[Test] Archaeological Fieldwork Opportunity and Newsletter**

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13 April 2022 at 09:15

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Hello again,

We have some good news for you. We can get back out in the field!! We've successfully won funding from the Dorset AONB (Farming in Protected Landscapes Fund) to conduct some non-invasive surveys on the Sarsen Stones of Tenants Hill (South Dorset) and the surrounding landscape. Please come and join in. To book please email me at [hayley@pastparticipate.co.uk](mailto:hayley@pastparticipate.co.uk). You can attend some, or all of the events but please specify when you email. Experience not required and we will cater for all abilities.

When

12<sup>th</sup> January : Training Workshop, Barn at Gorwell Farm (DT3 4JX)

Jan/Feb: Self-guided searching and recording

23<sup>rd</sup> February Workshop, Barn at Gorwell Farm (DT3 4JX)

24<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> February: Recording Days with PP in the field

2<sup>nd</sup> March: Final Workshop, Barn at Gorwell Farm (DT3 4JX)

How

We're going to record and locate potential archaeological sarsen stones. We'll teach you how to understand and record these, and then you can head out in your own time to find them. Once you've tracked them down we'll get back together to accurately record them with the GPS and to collate and analyse the results.

## Why

There are natural sarsen stones in the Valley of Stones and Portesham, and they spread up onto Tenants Hill. On the hill they have been used to build the Grey Mare and Her Colts and the Stone Circles but there are also others in the hedgerows and fields. Are these naturally occurring here? Were they moved in prehistory or in modern times? By recording them in detail we can start to look at distribution and patterns and we hope this will help us continue to piece together the story of the prehistoric monuments on Tenants Hill.

## Covid

As the current situation develops we will have to review our plans but please be assured that we will do our best to ensure the fieldwork is as Covid secure as possible, while trying our hardest to go ahead with it.



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## Tenants Hill Recent Discoveries

We haven't had much chance to get any further with the results from the student dig last summer but we can tell you that the environment samples have now been looked at. We took samples of the soil from all of the post holes and pits and Ellen Simmons has now floated them. This process requires running water over them and washing them through a series of sieves. The heavy stuff sinks to the bottom and the light bits float to the top. The flots (the floating bits) include all the seeds and bits of charcoal and among these Ellen has identified grains such as emmer and spelt, along with a possible celtic bean! Celtic bean would have been similar to the broad bean. Discoveries of them Neolithic and Early Bronze Age periods are rare but those that have been found are often near the south coast! Does this indicate that we have found an early example or that the feature it was found in is of a later date?

We have also been discussing our 'round house' with various archaeologists, and have come to the conclusion that it is large compared to other round houses that date to the Early Bronze Age. Early Bronze Age fits with the radiocarbon date we have, and assumptions about the structures relationship to the stone circle. Does this mean we have another unusual example or that we currently have an incorrect interpretation?

More work is needed and now we have some more funding hopefully we can answer these questions soon. We will look at the features in greater detail and hopefully be able to carry some more radiocarbon dating on a wider variety of features.

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### Research Links

Here is an article on the Celtic Bean in Prehistory.

[www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14614103.2016.1153769](http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14614103.2016.1153769)

#### Historic England Aerial Archaeology Mapping Explorer

This is a really interesting website, which brings together lots of aerial mapping projects across the country. If you've ever used the Dorset Explorer you may have already seen the local data, but you might find this easier to use, and covers much further afield than Dorset. It shows quite nicely some of the field systems

<https://historicengland.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=d45dabecef5541f18255e12e5cd5f85a>

An interview with Tim Darvill, Professor at Bournemouth University and absolute expert at Prehistoric Britain. He has been keeping an eye on our site, and he was able to pay us quick visit to the dig last year. This interview was made 6 months ago but still contains some insights into both Prehistoric Britain and modern archaeology.

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=DVTOOyD\\_6Bw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DVTOOyD_6Bw)

In interview with Dr Tom Booth who specialises in analysing ancient DNA from archaeological human remains, teasing out all manner of information from diet and disease to migrations of people in the distant past. Tom is very good at explaining these complex processes in a clear way.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SuBYTgEpw98>

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We hope that you are all well and look forward to seeing you in 2022! Jim, Anne and myself (Hayley) have all been continuing our work to develop the Tenants Hill project and explore further opportunities for you to learn about heritage further afield. As we're sure you appreciate, since early 2020 we have been negotiating a constantly changing funding and safe working environment. We hope that over the next few months we will be able to consolidate our plans and

provide you with a diary of activities to participate in during the coming year! Very best wishes for the season.



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