

# Council for British Archaeology

Cyngor Archaeoleg Brydeinig

Wales/Cymru



*The Clwydian Range Archaeology Group (CRAG) excavating a Bronze Age ring cairn, Bryneglws. To get involved, turn to page 12.*

## Newsletter 69 Spring 2025

<http://www.councilforbritisharchaeologywales.wordpress.com/>

# Archaeology at Cwmffwrn, Abbey Cwmhir

Abbey Cwmhir Heritage Trust

This summer Abbey Cwmhir Heritage Trust will be continuing their excavation of an intriguing settlement site within the home grange of the Cistercian abbey, set in the beautiful hills of north Radnorshire.



During a preliminary examination of the site in 2023 it became clear that we had discovered a very distinct house platform aligned at a right angle to the hillslope. After clearing of the reeds and bracken it was observed that there were two distinct platforms. The larger platform, on which a

structure may have been built, formed the upper part of the earthwork and at a lower level there was a smaller secondary platform.

In 2024 further work was undertaken at the site and more details came to light. Water management around the platform had obviously been important and the top end of the upper platform area remained very wet. Parallel to the long sides of the platform were drainage ditches and there was great excitement when a shallow, stone-constructed drain was unearthed across the platform which still worked!

Only a small amount of stone was exposed during the excavation, suggesting that the building material was timber. In Radnorshire stone-built buildings began to be favoured over timber framed buildings in the first part of the 18th century so if we have a timber building this could suggest it predates that period.

A small quantity of charcoal was recovered from the make-up of the lower platform and a radio-carbon sample gave a date range 1510 to 1668 AD. Such a date range supports the view that the platform could date from the late medieval to early sub-medieval period.

The site was put to bed for the winter and we are now looking forward to more answers (and questions) this year. Can we push the date back further and find evidence of medieval activity, which would link the settlement firmly with the monastic grange? Was it an upland farm on the monastic grange, or did it appear at a later date, when settlement spread on to the uplands in later centuries?

**You can be involved in the 2025 excavation (12th to 20<sup>th</sup> July) in a number of ways:**

1. Book an [Excavation Experience Day](#) on 12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> July! For £75 you will spend a full day on site (10am to 4pm) getting hands-on experience alongside professional archaeologists to

help uncover more of the site with an option of joining a free guided-tour of Abbey Cwmhir itself at the end of the day.

2. Book an **Excavation Trainee Week** to spend 6 days working closely with professional archaeologists on site. For £450 you will receive training in excavation and recording techniques. Only 4 trainee slots are available, ensuring that you will be at the heart of activity on site whilst being guided and mentored by a professional archaeologist. The week extends from Monday 14<sup>th</sup> July to Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> July. You will need to find your own accommodation and food is not provided, although tea/coffee will be.

3. Book a **tour of the Abbey followed by a site visit** on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> July or Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> July. There is no set fee for this but we'd welcome a donation to help fund costs.

4. **Donate!** We welcome donations to support the 2025 excavation at Cwmffwrn. Individual supporters can donate a sum of their choice. All donors will be listed and thanked for their contribution in the final excavation report.

Go to our website to view these opportunities, as well as updates on the site: [abbeycwmhir.org](http://abbeycwmhir.org)

## BRAG 2025

At the Oriel Môn's Museum, Llangefni, Ynys Môn (Anglesey)

Notice of meeting

Call for papers

16th August Presentations (10am - 5pm)

17th August Fieldtrip: around the island

Contacts:

[Nash@Liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:Nash@Liverpool.ac.uk)

[aron.mazel@newcastle.ac.uk](mailto:aron.mazel@newcastle.ac.uk)

[charlottevg@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:charlottevg@hotmail.co.uk)

The British Rock Art Group (BRAG) conference, now in its 26th year, is an affordably priced, two-day event exploring recent discoveries and innovative ideas in the study of British rock art, as well as the ongoing research of British rock art in international contexts. We looking forward to seeing you there!



# Heneb



## Heneb Secures £238,150 in Funding to Help Safeguard the Archaeology of Wales

Zoe Arthurs, Heneb National Co-Lead for Outreach

Heneb – The Trust for Welsh Archaeology is delighted to announce funding of £238,150 from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to support its transformative project, *Building Sustainability and Resilience: Heneb – the Trust for Welsh Archaeology*. This two-year initiative, starting in January 2025, is set to strengthen Heneb's operations, ensuring a sustainable and inclusive future for archaeology in Wales.

The funding will enable Heneb to enhance its capacity as a newly unified organisation formed from the merger of the four Welsh Archaeological Trusts. The project will focus on five key areas:

- **Strategic and Operational Planning:** Developing a comprehensive five-year strategy to guide Heneb's growth and heritage preservation efforts.
- **Fundraising and Business Development:** Diversifying revenue streams and appointing a Business Development Manager to secure financial resilience.
- **Digital and Public Engagement:** Developing a second phase of a dynamic new website and social media strategy to broaden community involvement and access to archaeology in Wales.
- **Volunteer Management:** Expanding opportunities for volunteers from diverse backgrounds, ensuring inclusivity in archaeology in Wales.
- **Community Outreach:** Engaging schools, local groups, and under-represented communities in archaeological activities, fostering a shared connection to Wales' history.

This initiative builds on Heneb's mission to protect Wales' archaeological sites, preserve the Historic Environment Record (HER), and inspire the next generation of archaeologists. The HER, a cornerstone of Welsh heritage management, supports the assessment of over 20,000 planning applications annually, safeguarding sites from threats such as development and climate change.

Dr. Carol Bell, Chair of Heneb, said: *"This funding comes at an important time for Heneb and Welsh archaeology. 9 months after Heneb was formed from the four heritage Welsh Archaeological Trusts, it enables us to invest in making our operations more sustainable, expand public engagement, and ensure that knowledge of Welsh heritage grows and is protected for future generations. We are immensely grateful to the National Lottery Heritage Fund, and everyone who plays the Lottery, for supporting this vital work."*

Andrew White, Director of The National Lottery Heritage Fund in Wales, added: *"It's hard to think of a more unambiguous link to Wales' heritage and history than through archaeological discoveries. So, I'm delighted to award Heneb with this funding which will help the field to thrive for years to come; and the pleasing balance that it is the people, the National lottery players, that are driving this reconnection with our past."*

This funding underscores Heneb's commitment to heritage preservation, environmental sustainability, and inclusive participation. By leveraging digital tools and fostering community connections, the project will leave a lasting legacy, ensuring the resilience and relevance of Welsh archaeological heritage.

For further information or to get involved in Heneb's work, please  
contact us: [hello@heneb.org.uk](mailto:hello@heneb.org.uk)

# ARCHAEOLOGY

Wales/Cymru

## Pembrokeshire Fieldtrip The Archaeology of Whitesands Bay



Join archaeologists George Nash and Tomos Jones to explore the archaeology of Whitesands Bay. Evidence of the area's prehistoric past includes the submerged landscape of the Mesolithic, Carn Llidi and Coetan Arthur Neolithic Burial Chambers (above), St David's Head Iron Age promontory fort, outer ramparts and the ancient field system. Whitesands is also home to the remains of St Patrick's Chapel, a site recently excavated revealing early medieval origins and hundreds of burials. Near the summit of Carn Llidi, there is evidence of the radar station that helped defend against a potential western invasion during the Second World War. The area is also within the designated historic landscape of St Davids Peninsula and Ramsey Head.

**Date:**  
**26 April, 2025**

**Cost:**  
**£5**

St Paul's Chapel (reconstruction)



For more information and to book, visit  
<https://cbawales.org/2025/03/pembrokeshire-field-trip-the-archaeology-of-whitesands-bay/>

# Telling a Project's Story through Evaluation

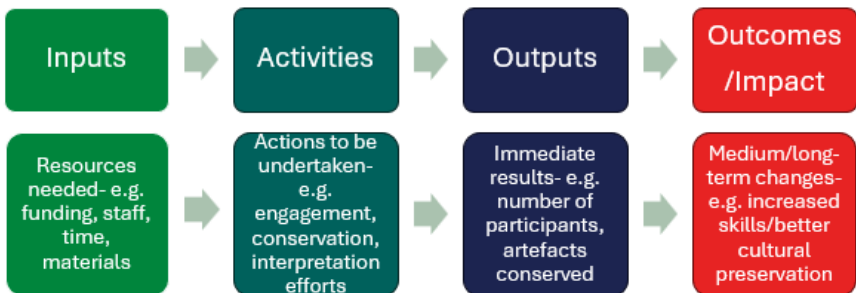
Dr Nikki Vousden, Wavehill Social and Economic Research

Every archaeology-focused project has a unique story to tell, whether it revolves around material culture, cultural heritage, or any other theme. Evaluation is crucial for uncovering and sharing that story and is becoming an increasingly important element of project design, with funders often stipulating built-in evaluations from the outset.

Documenting and sharing lessons learned, best practices, and challenges can not only benefit your future projects, it can contribute to a collective pool of knowledge that others can draw from.

## What is evaluation?

A systematic process of assessing a project's activities, outputs, and outcomes to determine its effectiveness and overall impact. It involves collecting and analysing data to provide insights that can guide decision-making, improve a project's performance and reveal its true impact. A logic model or Theory of Change is a tool used in evaluation to map out the pathway from a project's inputs and activities to its intended outcomes. Here's a simple explanation of how it works:



## What are the different types of evaluation data?

**Quantitative data** consists of measurable information that tracks a project's progress and achievements. This includes specific activities carried out, such as conservation and interpretation of artefacts, as well as targets met, like the number of volunteers who participated.

**Qualitative data** can provide rich, detailed insights into the experiences, perceptions and motivations of individuals involved. For example, understanding changes in wellbeing or educational outcomes. This type of data is often gathered through interviews, informal discussions, or observations, to capture the nuanced stories and personal perspectives that quantitative data might miss. By incorporating qualitative data into the evaluation, we can uncover deeper, more meaningful insights and paint a vivid picture of a project's impact.

## Why capture the beginning and middle of your project's story?

Evaluations that are added as an afterthought at the end of a project miss out on valuable opportunities for gaining insights.

**Identifying Strengths and Weaknesses:** By evaluating a project from the start, it is possible to pinpoint what aspects of the project are working well and which areas need improvement. This knowledge allows you to build on strengths and address weaknesses as the project progresses.

**Optimising project resources:** Monitoring a project's progress can help you understand how resources are being used and identify opportunities for more efficient allocation. This can help ensure that time, money, and effort are directed towards the most impactful activities.

**Funder Confidence:** Continuous monitoring also helps reassure funders that the project is progressing and generating tangible results.

## Telling the end of your project's story – capturing impacts

By impacts we mean the difference your project has made. Impacts might be medium-term (for example volunteers may report improved wellbeing from spending time working on a project) or longer term (for example people who live in the area may report an increased sense of ownership or

pride in where they live as a result of valuing their heritage more).

Impacts can be captured using traditional qualitative methods (such as interviews or survey questions) or through more creative methods (such as vox pops, photography or artwork). It can often be difficult to attribute impact exclusively to your project, as it might be part of a bigger picture that includes a number of actions and initiatives. That doesn't matter as long as it is acknowledged as part of the story.

Capturing impacts can benefit your organisation in the following ways:

**Informed Decision-Making:** Demonstrable, data-driven insights can guide future decisions. By understanding what strategies are effective, you can make more informed choices that enhance the sustainability and impact of future projects.

**Stakeholder Confidence:** Demonstrating the value and impact of projects builds trust and confidence among stakeholders, including funders, partners, and the local community. This support is often crucial for long-term organisational resilience.

**Adaptability:** Regular evaluation encourages a culture of continuous learning and adaptation. By staying responsive to feedback and changing circumstances, your organisation can remain agile and resilient in the face of challenges.

**Enhanced Reputation:** A strong track record of successful evaluations, with actionable learning points, can enhance an organisation's reputation and make buy-in from funders and collaborators more attractive. This can lead to increased opportunities and support for future projects.

Allocating the right resources during the project design phase is crucial, whether you choose to conduct the evaluation yourself or enlist an independent expert. A comprehensive evaluation can capture the rich details of your project's story, showcase its worth, and strengthen organisational resilience for the future. When shared widely, evaluations can also enhance the collective knowledge base of practitioners working in the same field.

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## CBA Wales Logo Redesign Competition

Our logo (above) needs a refresh! We are inviting all our members to contribute designs for our new logo. The winning concept will be selected by the CBA Wales Committee and refined by a professional designer. If we use your design, you will receive full credit in the newsletter and on our website.

### Submission Guidelines

- The design should reflect the **archaeology of Wales**, drawing inspiration from heritage, archaeology, landscapes or historic typography.
- Welsh and English text should be equally prominent and readable.
- The design must work in black & white and colour.
- Keep it clear and scalable—avoid intricate details.
- We will accept either hand-drawn sketches or digital concepts (JPEG, PNG, PDF).

To enter the competition, email your design to [membership@cbawales.org](mailto:membership@cbawales.org) with the subject "**Logo Redesign**" by **Saturday, May 3, 2025**, including a short (100-word max) description of your idea.



# Investigation of a Prehistoric Site in North-East Wales July-August 2025

Philip Culver (for CRAG)

Photographs (including cover) courtesy of Dr. Ian Brooks & Karen Lowery

Excavations on the hillside above Bryneglwys in Denbighshire by the Clwydian Range Archaeology Group (CRAG) in 2022-2024, revealed a ring cairn of Bronze Age date with pottery and cremated human remains (see CBA Wales Newsletters Nos. 64, 66 and 68). Further geophysical survey has revealed more features which merit investigation, so CRAG, under the direction of Dr. Ian Brooks, plan to return to the site in July-August 2025 to carry out further geophysical surveying and excavation.

CRAG welcomes the participation of volunteers during this month of excavation. Training for all volunteers, including those new to archaeology, will be available. However, prospective volunteers should note that the site is hilly and exposed, and facilities are restricted!



Carrying Out Resistivity in 2024.

More details may be obtained from Karen Lowery (CRAG Chair) or Hilary Lidbury (Secretary). Their contact details are as follows:

[karen@moriamedia.co.uk](mailto:karen@moriamedia.co.uk)

[info@cragnorthwales.co.uk](mailto:info@cragnorthwales.co.uk)

[hilary.lidbury@gmail.com](mailto:hilary.lidbury@gmail.com)

Further information will be available on the CRAG Facebook page.



## CBA Groups

### How to get involved in this year's Festival of Archaeology

The Festival of Archaeology takes place from the 19th July to the 3rd August 2025. The theme this year is "Archaeology and Wellbeing".

It is a fantastic opportunity to participate by attending or organising an event, or providing a resource for year round viewing. Please encourage your members to take part.

You can find an event [near you](#). There are also plenty of on demand activities to look through, including talks and walks which you can access via our [resources area](#).

### Organise your own event or submit a resource

We have lots of [guides](#) on how to organise an event which include, planning, marketing, health and safety and involving young people. You can also sign up for our [newsletter](#) about the latest Festival ideas and training.

We would welcome additional events and resources about the built environment, for example a local trail focussing on interesting buildings or a history of a building. You may even have a talk that has been recorded that could be shared to a wider audience as a resource.

We also love to hear about the different ways people engage with heritage so why not submit a blog/vlog for our "A Day in Archaeology." event.

**If you require further information please contact our Festival Coordinator**  
[debbiefrearson@archaeologyuk.org](mailto:debbiefrearson@archaeologyuk.org)

Council for  
British Archaeology

@archaeologyuk  
[archaeologyuk.org/festival](https://www.archaeologyuk.org/festival)  
#FestivalofArchaeology



## **The Revival of Nautical Archaeology**

The Nautical Archaeology Society are pleased to announce the relaunch of their in-house publication ***Nautical Archaeology*** containing articles, views and reviews of events and activities, including research and fieldwork carried out by the society's members.

The very first edition was called ***NatNews***, and appeared back in 1976, when it took the form of a few typed pages which were circulated to supporters of the Nautical Archaeology Trust (the original name of the NAS). Over the years, the newsletter underwent numerous makeovers under successive editors, eventually evolving into the multi-page, full colour magazine ***Nautical Archaeology***.



The Spring 2016 edition however, saw the last hard copy, print run, with subsequent versions being made available via the NAS website. These ultimately developed into the ***Members' Weekly Discoveries***, which were circulated to the charity's membership by email.

Following a survey of the society's members last Autumn, there was strong support for reviving the old newsletter, and February 2025 saw the return of ***Nautical Archaeology*** as the new quarterly publication, which is

available in both hard and digital formats.



This initial edition features a review of the society's annual conference which was held last November at Durham University, and had the theme of *The Archaeology of Waterways*. Many of the weekend's speakers have contributed articles to this Winter 2025 edition which is now available to members in a pdf format via the NAS web site, or as a hard copy by adding the quarterly to their annual membership.

Individual copies are also available through the NAS on-line shop at:

<https://www.nauticalarchaeologysociety.org/shop>

While none of the articles in the Winter 2025 edition of the NAS quarterly relate directly to Welsh sites, there is one that CBA Wales members may find of interest: *Paddling into the Past: Kayak-based archaeological prospection on the upper Severn and its tributaries*, which focuses on areas close to Shrewsbury. Looking ahead, there will be a couple of articles that relate to Wales in the Spring edition of the NAS quarterly, due out in May.

As part of Heneb's on-line lecture series, Ian Cundy, the Nautical Archaeology Society's regional co-ordinator for Wales, will be providing an evening talk on **Maritime Archaeology, on Thursday 8th May, at 7:00 pm**. Ian will be highlighting some of the differences associated with investigating Terrestrial and Maritime sites, concluding with the case study of an underwater Welsh site.

## **M**embership Update

I would like to say a big thank you to those of you who revised your subscription payments to the new rates last year. I am in the process of following up with those who have yet to update their payments and ask that everyone check that they are now on the correct payment rate. The new rates are as follows:

***Ordinary membership £15***

***Joint/Family membership £20***

***Institutional Membership £25***

***Student membership £5 (digital copy only of Archaeology in Wales)***

Currently our website is being updated to allow for direct payments via the website. This will make it easier for new members to join and for those who renew on a yearly basis, i.e., do not have a standing order set up, to make a payment.

Maintaining our membership is important to allow CBA to continue its work and in particular meet the printing costs of Archaeology in Wales.

If you are receiving this newsletter by post, you either do not have or have not given us your most recent e-mail address. If you would now like to provide us with an e-mail address which you are happy for us to use for CBA Wales mailings, please contact the Membership Secretary: [membership@cbawales.org](mailto:membership@cbawales.org)

## **Newsletter**

We welcome items up to 600 words in length, with up to 3 illustrations, for inclusion in the newsletter! Please send your contributions to Emma Wager: [newsletter@cbawales.org](mailto:newsletter@cbawales.org)

## **Archaeology in Wales**

Items for inclusion in the journal should be sent to: [aiw@cbawales.org](mailto:aiw@cbawales.org)

**ARCHAEOLOGY**

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