

See it, Visualise it, Engage in it !!



Here is an update on what has been happening on the Dorstone Hill Archaeological Excavation 2014. The excavation so far has been very exciting, with the team coming together and working hard to uncover the secrets that the Neolithic site has to offer. This update will give you the opportunity to gain a better understanding on what is happening in each area of the trench.

Dr Ray has described the excavation as showing “Good progress, but [there is still] a long way to go”.

The first couple of weeks have been used to try and understand the shape of the mound, and they have now gained a good understanding about what is happening. They are working out how to excavate the burnt material and the ground surface to find out more information of the occupation of the residents during the use of the building. Chemical traces which were left will help to try and figure out which parts of the building was used for what. Not only will we look at the chemical evidence in the building material, but also what can be found in the soil that was there before the building was erected, giving a much better understanding of the people during the early Neolithic with the strong possibility of Mesolithic activity also being found in the land surface.



Dr Irene Rovira Garcia and her magnificent team have been working on the west side of the mound trying to get rid of all the colluvium, so that the mound can be exposed. Irene has explained that this task has been proving difficult due to the site being bulldozed in the 1960s, leaving the

mound very disturbed. In turn it has made it difficult to take a stratigraphical approach when excavating. The team have found and followed the edge of the mound on the Southern part of the trench. They have now progressed towards the middle of the mound looking at more areas that will need more colluvium removed as this is at the stage of revealing rather than digging at the moment.



Katie, Dominic and Samantha are working on the North-West side of the trench. Here they are cleaning and prepping the stones which form the mound. They have been looking for the edges of the stones, where they begin and end, so they can be photographed and planned. Samantha explains “Going well, progressing well, and working hard as a team”.

Supervisor Lara Bishop and her fantastic team, have been finding the edge of the mound all along the South side, attempting to join all the sections that were previously worked on. It has now become their main focus and are feeling a sense of achievement seeing it through to the end.



Professor Julian Thomas and Supervisor Ellen McInnes together with the team have been working to find the edge of the mound on the South-East corner of the trench. This task took an exciting turn when he revealed some kind of feature that was cut into the edge of the



mound. He realised this was something peculiar, due to the clay on the edges of the feature being very claggy and sticky and rather sandy in the middle of the feature. This resembled a big pit, and as Julian said “we like big pits”. Although through further investigation it was found to have been the remains of where the stone wall/revetment would have been, but were robbed, perhaps during the Medieval Period?



The East side of the trench is thought to be a cist or filled pit. Cameron and Al have been working together to get rid of the rubble and colluvium to try and expose the stones that are in situ; which has to be done before further investigation of this area can proceed. Once the stones have been planned and photographed, they can then be removed to find out what is lying beneath.



Jade’s responsibility and role within the excavation is Outreach, with the main aim of getting the public involved.

“Personally I find it important to engage with the public as I am very interested in community archaeology. Archaeology belongs to everybody and it is my wish to get everyone involved. It has been a privilege to work with the members of the wider public and also the local residents and schools.”

We would all like to thank you the landowners of the field in which we are digging for giving us this fantastic opportunity.

If there is anyone that would like to volunteer and join us in uncovering the past, please get in touch or show up to the excavation throughout the next two weeks between 9-5:30 Sunday to Friday.

