

# LANDSCAPE SURVEY GROUP

## PRODUCTIVE LANDSCAPES: NEW PERSPECTIVES FROM ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Shire Hall, 3 Agincourt Square, Monmouth NP25 3EA

### CONFERENCE PROGRAMME (Provisional)

#### Friday 15<sup>th</sup> September

9.30 Registration; Tea and Coffee

10.00 Session 1, chaired by Mark Bowden

11.10 Tea and Coffee

11.40 Session 2, chaired by David Field

13.00 Lunch (provided)

14.00 Session 3, chaired by Alice Thorne

15.00 Tea and Coffee

15.30 Session 4, chaired by Angela Gannon

17.15 Optional Tour of the Shire Hall and Walking tour of Monmouth

19.00 for 19.30 Conference Dinner at the Shire Hall

#### Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> September

Meet at the Shire Hall for an 8.30 coach departure to Brecon Beacons and Blaenavon. Lunch (not provided) at the Big Pit, Blaenavon. Drop-off at Abergavenny station by 16.00, followed by return to Monmouth.



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# PRODUCTIVE LANDSCAPES: NEW PERSPECTIVES FROM ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Friday 15<sup>th</sup> September

**10.00-10.10**            **Mark Bowden , Historic England**

*Welcome and Introduction*

## **Session 1 chaired by Mark Bowden**

**10.10-10.30**            **Chris Atkinson, Celebrating Our Woodland Heritage Project**

*Celebrating Our Woodland Heritage: Investigating Woodlands of the South Pennines*

The South Pennines, located between the Yorkshire Dales and Peak District, is characterised by its high elevation and often steep clough valleys with high density urban areas to the east and west within Lancashire and West Yorkshire respectively. Woodland across the region represents only 4% of the land coverage, a quarter of which is recognised as Ancient Woodland.

The three year Celebrating Our Woodland Heritage project has been established by Pennine Prospects (a rural regeneration company created in 2005 as a champion for the South Pennines) and is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Yorkshire Water, Green Bank Trust and Newground Together with the aim of enhancing the historic record, understanding and awareness of the historical development and management of woodlands.

Led by the appointed Woodland Heritage Officer, landowners (including borough councils, Woodland Trust, Yorkshire Water, United Utilities and National Trust), members of the public, and youth organisations have been actively involved and trained in the techniques of archaeological walkover survey, map regression, lidar and GIS to investigate and record woodlands across the South Pennines. Though it is only the first year of the project, the seventeen surveyed woodlands, along with three excavations, have begun to shed light on the rich heritage of woodlands. From pre-industrial treescapes to industrial coppiced woodlands, charcoal production, mineral extraction and leisure activities, the woodlands of the South Pennines have a varied history, which until now had been largely unexplored.

**10.30-10.50**            **Vivienne Blandford**

*Pillow Mounds to Pill Boxes*

The Weald Forest Ridge Landscape Partnership Scheme was delivered between 2009 and 2012 and part of this project included a lidar Survey.

The lidar evidence provided evidence from the late medieval to the 19th century of a well-used landscape that had been modified by the Iron Industry, deer parks and rabbit warrens. This evidence was most obvious in the remnants of the forested areas that had made up St Leonards, Tilgate and Worth in West Sussex and Waterdown and Ashdown in East Sussex.

One deer park has survived well into the present time and could be one mentioned in Domesday but not credited as such. This is Rotherfield, East Sussex, where a warren was inserted at some point within the deer park. It still is a largely wooded area with some farmland and has a steep valley running roughly north south through it. Alongside this valley, the Uckfield to Tunbridge Wells railway was inserted in the 1860s, cutting the once deer park in half. Later, as is common with these woodland and heathland areas, the army had a presence from the French Wars of Independence to the GHQ stop line alongside the above railway. Hidden in the woodland valley are around ten pill boxes and some anti-tank ditches that survive in good condition.

This presentation will cover the survival of evidence of a relatively unknown deer park, remnants of the iron industry, the astonishing number of pillow mounds to the GHQ stop line pill boxes, also somewhat indestructible.

**10.50-11.10 David Knight, Historic England**

*Reclaiming Roman Birdoswald*

The name of Birdoswald is as synonymous with Hadrian's Wall as Vindolanda and Housesteads. Tactically positioned on a high spur, commanding an aspect overlooking the Irthing Valley to the south and marshland to the north, the Roman fort of *Banna* dominated the landscape in which it sat.

As the centuries passed since the abandonment of the wall, subsequent land-use altered this landscape to suit its own purposes. Quarries were dug, drainage was cut and the land was ploughed. Farmsteads and settlement sprang up throughout the medieval period, and the enclosure act was implemented in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Despite all this, the landscape has only reclaimed some of that that was conquered; the Roman archaeology still dominating the area today.

The English Heritage Trust aims to enhance the presentation and interpretation of the Roman Fort in its wider landscape. To aid this, Historic England's Historic Places and Investigation team have carried out new aerial reconnaissance over an area of 8km<sup>2</sup>, which has been photogrammetrically processed through Structure from Motion (SfM) to create a high resolution digital elevation model (DEM) and orthomosaic photograph of the region. This has been used to record and interpret the archaeology to a new level of detail, enhancing the data previously captured by the Hadrian's Wall Project (1988-1990) and the Hadrian's Wall National Mapping Programme (NMP) (2002-2008).

**11.10-11.40 Tea/Coffee**

**Session 2 chaired by David Field**

**11.40-12.00 Stratford Halliday**

*What's in a field?*

The understanding of the farming landscape in Britain has become polarised by the interpretation of patterns perceived in survey data. Bronze Age farmers in the Deep South tilled and grazed enclosed landscapes, which are themselves considered evidence of the intensification of production in a prestige goods economy founded on cattle. The absence of these same fields in the North is presented as the marginal counterpoint to this southern core in an international system of trade and exchange. The footloose Celtic Cowboys, a creation of Stuart Piggott's based on a similar set of negative northern values some 60 years ago, are apparently back in the saddle. But how do any of these systems work in practice and to what extent are the field patterns detected in the survey data no more than a myopic illusion in pursuit of simplistic explanations that owe more to the observation of the historic landscape than any more distant past. For if the integration of survey and excavation data in Scotland has anything to tell us, the Bronze Age landscape was a dynamic place in which the patterns of occupation, cultivation and grazing were probably constantly changing in long and short cycles.

**12.00-12.20 Judie English, David Lea and Dick Tapper**

*Field systems and cross dykes on the South Downs*

The advent of large, rectilinear field systems during the Early/Middle Bronze Age led to a situation in which the vast majority of the land was enclosed. Whilst it is far from certain that all the fields were in use at the same time, their boundaries were inscribed on the landscape apparently leaving only narrow strips along ridges for movement of people and stock.

Probably about 1000 – 800 BC smaller systems developed, often overlying the earlier fields (suggesting the land was still in good heart) but seldom re-using the same boundaries. Houses often overlie or were cut into earlier lynchets perhaps as an expression of continuity or remembrance.

Very poorly dated, but possibly contemporary with these later field systems are the cross dykes, bank and ditch monuments draped across ridges and spurs. Unlike the linear ditches seen elsewhere these do not

physically enclose areas of land suitable for grazing stock. One concentration occupies the ridge at the eastern end of the downs overlooking Eastbourne and its east-facing spurs. A number cross only the top and eastern side of the ridge and the entire complex seems to address the levels to the east including the Late Bronze Age site at Shinewater (Greatorex 2003). Similarly positioned examples are found along the northern scarp of the downs overlooking the Low Weald with its greensand barrow cemeteries and settlement sites.

Further examples, particularly towards the western end of the downs either enclose high ground as at Bow Hill with its linear barrow cemetery (Bradley 1971) or limit the access to high points by occupying each of the surrounding spurs.

This work is ongoing and any explanation made now may be changed in light of further knowledge but one reason for the construction of cross dykes would seem to be to monitor movement.

**Bradley, R 1971** Stock raising and the origins of the hillfort on the South Downs, *Antiq J* 51, 8-29

**Greatorex, C 2003** Living on the margins? The Late Bronze Age landscape of the Willingdon Levels, in *The Archaeology of Sussex to AD 2000*, Brighton: Heritage Marketing & Publications Ltd, 89-100

#### **12.20-12.40                    Adrian Chadwick, University of Bristol**

*Productive practice – new (and not so new) perspectives on prehistoric and Romano-British field systems and trackways in South Wales and beyond*

During the past 30 years, the analytical survey of earthworks, aerial photographic analyses and lidar data have all made enormous contributions to the mapping and study of later prehistoric and Romano-British field systems and trackways. Such work has sometimes demonstrated wide-scale cohesion and symmetry, but also subtle, localised responses to landscape and topography. Despite recent large-scale research projects that have examined such rural landscapes, field systems and trackways are all too often relegated to the dull agrarian 'bits in-between' settlements. They are not considered as places in and of themselves. This perpetuates the marginalisation of fields and trackways within wider period syntheses and theoretical discussions. It also means that they continue to be devalued in developer-funded investigations.

This paper reconsiders ancient field systems, and productive practices in the past and present, beginning in South Wales but touching upon many parts of Britain. Later prehistoric and Romano-British field systems and trackways structured people's lives – their embodied movements and daily practices (tasksapes), their notions of tenure, identity and community, their individual and social memories, and their wider cosmological understandings of the world. The routine movements of animals and their own non-human agencies and memories were also key to the creation of these landscapes. Examining past field systems and trackways and how these were inhabited is thus not merely important from economic and functional perspectives, but is key to understanding the living fabric of these past human and animal communities.

#### **12.40-13.00                    Discussion**

#### **13.00-14.00                    Lunch (provided)**

### **Session 3 chaired by Alice Thorne, Brecon Beacons National Park**

#### **14.00-14.20                    Graeme Kirkham, independent**

*'Then doe they bring in Sea sand . . .': keeping farming landscapes productive in medieval and post-medieval Cornwall and Devon*

Sea sand was a crucial constituent in achieving notably high yields on arable land in Cornwall and much of Devon from at least the mid 13<sup>th</sup> to the later 19<sup>th</sup> century. Sand was also widely used in reclaiming rough ground. It was transported in large quantities along rivers (and latterly canals built for the purpose) but primarily by land – for much of the period by pack animals – over considerable distances from the coasts. Harold Fox has highlighted the 'sanding ways' which carried this traffic as a 'research topic crying to be taken up' (2001, 68).

With this starting point, the paper reviews (briefly) the field evidence for this very important trade. This approach reverses the usual progression in landscape work which begins with identifying and analysing

field evidence and moves to developing an understanding of historical context. In this instance the clear past significance of marine resources for agriculture prompts a quest for surviving archaeology in the landscape.

**Fox, H, 2001** *The evolution of the fishing village: landscape and society along the south Devon coast, 1086-1550*

**14.20-14.40**                      **Mark Bowden, Historic England**

*Waste is not wasted: productivity of lands managed in common*

Common land is often referred to by apparently pejorative terms such as ‘wastes and strays’ but this is the language of big landowners and ‘improvers’ who wanted the excuse of idleness to justify taking over such lands for their own profit. In fact common lands provided much needed resources for the rural and urban poor – peasants, smallholders, cottagers, craft workers, tradespeople and wage labourers. The commons provided not only grazing and many of the necessities of life but raw materials for crafts and opportunities for recreation and sport.

This paper will explore this diverse use of common land and discuss the archaeological visibility (or lack of it) for such fundamental aspects of life.

**14.40-15.00**                      **Angela Gannon, Historic Environment Scotland**

*‘Cultivation, like the gradual spreading of a garment, has changed the external face of the earth, and every locality wears a new appearance’*

So wrote the minister of the parish of Logie-Buchan in his entry for the New Statistical Account describing the impact of the agricultural Improvements across Aberdeenshire in the first four decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This was a period of dramatic and sweeping change that transformed the rural landscape, introducing the pattern of enclosed fields and plantations much of which can still be recognised today. Hundreds of acres of waste ground were reclaimed into productive arable land, vast areas of woodland were established, hedgerows and walls were laid out and the buildings of the countryside were replaced with farmhouses and steadings. This paper draws on the accounts of landowners and their estate records and plans, parish commentaries by local ministers, Ordnance Survey maps, aerial photography and archaeological field survey as testimony to this agricultural ‘revolution’.

**15.00-15.30**                      **Tea/Coffee**

**Session 4**                      **Chaired by Angela Gannon, Historic Environment Scotland**

**15.30-15.50**                      **Andrea Goodison, Masters student, University of Sheffield**

*Peak District Lead Mills and their Context in the Landscape: Bar Brook Mills*

This paper aims to illuminate the 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century lead mills and the landscape near Baslow, Derbyshire. Using existing survey plans, measured survey and archival research, a clearer understanding of the mills function and chronology emerged. The landscape’s context bridges a relationship between the mills, the lead industry and the land. The findings address scheduling complexity and survey work by the late L H Butcher. The chronology shows Site 1 (smelt mill), followed by Site 2 (slag mill) and a corn mill and pumping station adopting Site 1. Transport and levelling are seen as the main source of impact on the landscape. The study suggests that scheduling is clarified and extended to include Site 1, and the work of L H Butcher is digitised to aid future research. Research is also recommended to strengthen chronology, the environmental and landscape impacts.

**15.50-16.10**                      **Harry Manley, Bournemouth University**

*‘Winning the ground’: recording a ‘lost’ mining landscape in Cornwall*

The County of Cornwall is synonymous with tin production from prehistoric times through to the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, so much so that in 2006 ten distinct areas were inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site (WHS). These sites were considered to have outstanding universal value in the form of the mine workings

themselves, their allied industries (such as foundries & tin smelters) and the mining communities' social infrastructure (such as cottages and non-conformist chapels). This productive landscape is typically characterised, especially in popular culture, by the iconic Cornish engine house, stamping mills and waste tips.

But can studying smaller, more ephemeral mines, particularly those outside of the WHS areas, add further detail to our understanding of the day to day activities of the itinerant miner and the processes involved in 'winning ground'?

This paper explores the archaeological signature of the Princess Royal mine, located in a wooded, rural valley on Cornwall's north coast. Using field observation, survey and documentary research, the position of a new, undiscovered shaft, together with a series of adits and ore processing areas has been identified and suggests that the mines' extent can be seen over a much greater area than previously thought. This initial research highlights that, despite the wealth of documentary evidence relating to specific mine buildings and shafts, there is still much information to be gleaned from the archaeological record that can inform us of the process of Tin mining in Cornwall.

#### **16.10-16.30 Amelia Pannett, CADW**

*Such are the wonderworking powers of industry when directed by judgement! The making of an industrial landscape at Blaenavon, 1787-1836*

The landscape around Blaenavon, which encompasses much of the World Heritage Site, epitomises the dramatic and lasting changes that were seen on land rich with resources of coal and ironstone during the industrial revolution. The town of Blaenavon and the surrounding landscape occupy areas of former upland moorland where scattered hill farms made way for iron works, forges, mines, tramroads and housing at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> and start of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The methods employed by the Blaenavon Company to extract, transport and process resources around the landscape were innovative, sometimes ground breaking, highly celebrated by observers, and coveted by competitors.

This paper will draw on maps, images and contemporary descriptions to chart the development of the Blaenavon Industrial Landscape from the inception of the iron industry on the mountain in the 1780s to 1836 when the Blaenavon Company became a joint stock company. The construction of industrial infrastructure in these first 50 years had the greatest impact on the landscape, transforming it from a 'dreary moor' to a bustling manifestation of human accomplishment. Many of the remains of these early years of pioneering industry survive on the mountain, a legacy of the ambition and determination of a small group of individuals who realised the potential of this productive landscape.

#### **16.30-17.00 Summary and Discussion**

### **Friday Evening Social:**

#### **17.10 Optional tour of the Shire Hall and historic Monmouth**

#### **19.00 for 19.30 Conference Dinner at the Shire Hall**

### **Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> September Fieldtrip to Brecon Beacons and Blaenavon, with Abby Hunt, Alice Thorne (Brecon Beacons National Park) and Amelia Pannett (CADW)**

Meet at the Shire Hall for an 8.30 coach departure to Brecon Beacons and Blaenavon. Lunch (not provided) at the Big Pit, Blaenavon. Drop-off at Abergavenny station by 16.00, followed by return to Monmouth. Further details to follow.

**NOTE: THIS PROGRAMME IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE AND WILL BE UPDATED WITH ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**