

<p><b>Institution:</b> University of Liverpool</p>
<p><b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 17B - Archaeology</p>
<p><b>Title of case study:</b> Castell Henllys and the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park</p>
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b></p> <p>Mytum’s research excavation and extensive reconstructions at the Iron Age archaeological site at Castell Henllys benefitted Pembrokeshire Coast National Park through integration of the research results into their visitor resources, educational programmes and management plans, developed with the Castell Henllys project’s guidance. In particular, because the ‘Celts’ are a key part of the Welsh National Curriculum at Key Stage 2, Castell Henllys features both on the National Park website provision and as an important element of their schools visit programme. This previously unvisited site has become a major educational centre and significant local tourist attraction only because of the project’s long-term excavations and reconstruction.</p>
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b></p> <p>Mytum excavated and conducted on-site building reconstructions from 1982 until 2008, first from University of Newcastle, then York and finally Liverpool (from January 2008). This resulted in the complete excavation of the fort interior and annexe, and extensive excavation of the enclosing earthworks. Mytum designed and saw to completion three archaeologically supported reconstructed roundhouses (including the longest standing reconstruction in UK) and one four-post structure. The longitudinal study of the on-site reconstructed buildings continues. Thus Liverpool based fieldwork was conducted in 2008 and then Liverpool based post-excavation analysis from 2009-2012, and final writing up, in effect the conclusions upon which the impact is based, have been undertaken at Liverpool, as is continued research on the experimental structures and on the ongoing site interpretation strategies and practices. Chronology of the fort (c. 450 BC – c. 100 BC) established by C14 dating funded by Pembrokeshire Coast National Park and NERC.</p> <p>The research findings include key original work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• first extensively excavated <i>chevaux-de-frise</i> in Britain, preserved under annexe rampart</li> <li>• first extensively excavated inland promontory fort in England and Wales</li> <li>• first extensively excavated fort annexe in UK</li> <li>• completely excavated complex double-guard chamber gateway and later gateway phases</li> <li>• long lengths of rampart fully excavated to reveal 3D complex construction of the dump rampart for the first time, and differences between one rampart and another</li> <li>• identified role of ritualised activity during the construction of the ramparts</li> <li>• reconstruction of one double-ring roundhouse, none of which could be discerned from traditional trench sections</li> <li>• reconstruction of two other roundhouses with no interior posts and wall plates</li> <li>• reconstruction of one four-post structure with the unique interpretation of a circular structure on the platform supported by the four posts</li> <li>• these are now the longest-standing Iron Age experimental structures in the UK (others have been moved); these building reconstructions are the only ones on their excavated sites in the UK which provides particular value for longitudinal studies</li> <li>• research into the role of Castell Henllys in education and in public perceptions of the past began in the 1980s and is ongoing, as longitudinal data provides unique insight into changes in public perceptions, as well as studying the building reconstructions over time.</li> </ul> <p>The research is the most extensive in Britain on a small Iron Age fortified settlement, and provides an important highly contextualised case study linked to excavation and survey of other settlement types, notably enclosed farmsteads, allowing interpretation of settlement hierarchies and shifts (Mytum Output 3). This provides important interpretive opportunities in public engagement at Castell Henllys, but also informs wider management policies by Cadw, Pembrokeshire Coast National Park, and Dyfed Archaeological Trust. The research on the ramparts, whilst building on</p>

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that at the Breiddin and Crickley Hill, has been able to investigate construction methods and social implications of fortified sites much more substantively than previously

This work has been published in some of the best peer review journals such as *Antiquity* and resulted in a high quality definitive monograph submitted to REF2014 (Mytum Output 1).

**3. References to the research**

Mytum, H, 2000 Archaeology and History for Welsh primary classes. *Antiquity* 74, 165-171.

Mytum, H, 2003 Evoking Time and Place in Reconstruction and Display: The Case of Celtic Identity and Iron Age Art. In J.H. Jameson Jr., J.E. Ehrenhard, and C.A. Finn (eds.) *Ancient Muses. Archaeology and the Arts*, 92-108. Tuscaloosa, University of Alabama Press

Mytum, H, 2004 Policy and Purpose in Reconstruction at Castell Henllys Iron Age Fort, Wales. In J. Jameson Jr (ed.) *The Reconstructed Past. Reconstructions in the Public Interpretation of Archaeology and History*, 91-102. Walnut Creek, AltaMira Press.

Mytum, H, 2012 Rebuilding the past: challenges in education and public interpretation at Castell Henllys Iron Age fort. *Arqueomediterrània* 13

Mytum, H, 2013 *Monumentality in Late Prehistory: Building and Rebuilding Castell Henllys Hillfort* (REF output 1)

**4. Details of the impact**

The beneficiaries of our research project at Castell Henllys include 1) the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park, 2) the schools and teachers that visit the site and visitor centre, in particular those that use materials in their learning and teaching and 3) the general public. Castell Henllys is the only hillfort in the UK where the public interpretation is so intensive and includes on-site interpreters and on-site reconstructions informed by substantive on-site research. The public can experience the physical character of the site and structures, and the landscape, which they can then take with them to make sense of other hillforts, many of which have public access but have no on-site interpretation.

In relation to 1) the National Park, the excavation and post excavation analysis of the evidence from the site allowed the development of an accurate and informative Iron Age fort reconstruction. Prior to Mytum's research, the site was a scheduled ancient monument in private ownership with no public access or interpretation. Mytum played a key role in the translation of the archaeological findings into the reconstruction and public interpretation, commenced under private ownership and subsequently through the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park. Mytum has ensured that the associated knowledge set has been communicated to Park guides and integrated into educational resources, and continues to provide regular refresher CPD to site staff on the archaeological research and its interpretive potential. The reconstructions are specifically designed to inform visitors of a number of distinctive aspects of the experience of Iron Age life, of the challenges for those living in this period and their sophisticated architectural achievements, but also their distinctive ideological and social worlds. Mytum's team also provided detailed materials aimed at both school groups and the general public for the Castell Henllys visitor centre, aimed to inform those visitors more broadly about the Iron Age past and the nature of the Iron Age landscape based directly on results from the excavations. In addition, Mytum had a significant input into the Park management plan based on the outcomes of the project, including location and size of structures, location and form of the complex entrance, the *chevaux-de-frise*, and the earthwork defences, visitor routes and information on interpretive panels. This input has been regular and ongoing since the opening to the public in 1982, and continues until today. A major restructuring of the visitor centre is being planned at present as one of 9 Cadw and EU-funded Heritage Tourism Projects with Castell Henllys acting as a regional hub. Artefacts and results from Mytum's excavations will be central to this new design, with Mytum's expert input.

2) Based on the excavations and the subsequent post-excavation work (2008-2013), the materials

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designed especially with Key Stage 2 module on the Celts in mind, are integrated into the schools visit experience in the form of activities and narratives led by in-role costumed interpreters, as well as pre- and post-visit educational resources available from the site's Education Officer. There have been 732 school visits exploiting the specifically designed education programme during the census period, many visiting several times 2008-13, mostly from Wales but also many from west England and as far as Canterbury and Lincoln. Numbers of school children range from 6,366 in 2008 to 4,948 in 2012. The quality of the education experience created with the input of the project is high as evidenced by the fact the visitor centre and site were three times winner of the Sandford Award for Heritage Education (1999, 2004, 2009). It is also attested by the education evaluation questionnaire, filled out by 13 schools in the 12/13 school year. On a scale of 1-10 with 10 indicating maximum agreement, all 13 schools gave scores of 9 or 10 on the benefit to the curriculum delivery, meeting teaching objectives, indications that the children benefitted, and understanding of the Iron Age Fort at Castell Henllys. The areas of the curriculum benefitted included History, Geography, Welsh, Science, English and Art. The transformational effects are clearly indicated by teachers' comments on the education evaluation questionnaire. Teachers at St Mary's Primary School (16/11/12) commented: "The children absolutely loved the experience and really gained and furthered their learning of Iron Age Celts". Teachers at Morrision Primary School (5/10/12) "A great day. The children thoroughly enjoyed the experience as they have never encountered anything like it before. It gave them a deeper understanding of the Celts." A typical online review from 27 November 2008 "Castell Henllys is the ideal place to visit if you're a teacher teaching about the Celts. ....All the staff are very knowledgeable, and can answer any tricky questions thrown at them by the children. The roundhouses are amazing, they look (and smell!) totally authentic. ...It's reasonably priced, therefore an ideal family educational, but not boring, day out!"

A number of school websites testify to the significant positive impact on the children. The impact of the resources influenced by the project is indicated by the way in which a specific focus on Pembrokeshire is included in the history component of the new curriculum for Wales. The BBC Wales Iron Age Celts web site for key stage 2 features Castell Henllys as a case study, and it is one of only 3 sites explicitly mentioned on the RCAHMW Iron Age Celts web page (where 5 of the 12 images are all of Castell Henllys). Castell Henllys is also used as a case study in the A level text book *The Archaeology Coursebook* (2008).

3) The visitor centre and reconstruction attracts between 20,000 and 30,000 non-school visitors a year (e.g. 23,575 in 2009, 20,689 in 2012). A recent sample indicated that the majority of these non-school visitors were from the UK outside Wales and a significant minority were from overseas (between May 12 and May 13, c. 7% recorded were from other continents including Americas, Australia and Africa, out of 112 individuals who filled in the Visitor Book in this period). The impact of this is reflected in the 57 non-academic websites since 2008 dealing with Castell Henllys, commentary referring to the informative nature of the visitor centre and site material, the degree to which awareness of the local heritage has been increased and the positive educational impact of the experience on visiting families, youth groups and individuals.

14 of these non-academic websites since 2008 are media sites including those of The Guardian, Telegraph, BBC news and Countryfile. Countryfile lists the site amongst the country's top Heritage attractions and the Guardian extols the teaching opportunities.

Castell Henllys is one of 8 case studies in Cadw's *Valuing the Welsh Historic Environment* (2010). Mytum was an archaeological advisor for the BBC series *Surviving the Iron Age*, set at Castell Henllys, and he featured at the site on the Timeteam special Hillforts TV programme. Artefacts recovered in Mytum's excavations and interpretive panels based on the results are displayed in the Castell Henllys Education Centre; an iron meat hook is displayed at the National Museum Cardiff, following conservation there. 6 websites carry reviews of the Centre. On those sites relating to the census period there are at the time of writing 37 positive reviews and 20 that specifically mention the informative nature of the Centre.

A recent sample of 263 questionnaires distributed by the Visitor Centre recorded the most common

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reason for the visit was to learn about history and all except 3 responses indicated that these expectations had been met or exceeded. In the Visitor Book for 2012 and 2013 63% of visitors commented that they found the visit informative.

**5. Sources to corroborate the impact**

1. [Llandovery College Prep School's website](#) and [Pontybrenin Primary School's blog](#) (year 4 visit 22/04/2013) are two examples of school websites which corroborate that the results of the excavations and reconstructions informed and inspired the children and stimulated their learning (2).
2. A selection of [evaluation forms from schools](#) (in English and Welsh) which visited Castell Henllys (October 2012 to March 2013) demonstrate the influence of visits to Castell Henllys on the school curriculum.
3. A [collection of comments](#) from Castell Henllys' Visitors Book corroborating visitors' views of the informative nature of the site.
4. [BBC Wales Iron Age Celts website](#) for key stage 2 corroborates that Castell Henllys is used as a key site across Wales in schools teaching (2).
5. [Iron Age Celts web page](#) from the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales corroborates claims that Castell Henllys is acknowledged as a national centre of excellence in excavation, reconstruction and interpretation by the heritage industry (3).
6. [Valuing the Welsh Historic Environment](#) (2010) from Cadw corroborates claims that Castell Henllys is acknowledged as a national centre of excellence in excavation, reconstruction and interpretation (3)
7. Examples of visitor reviews on line:
  - a. <http://www.gype.co.uk/place/199160-Castell-Henllys-Iron-Age-Fort-Crymych>
  - b. <http://wordhoards.blogspot.co.uk/2010/06/castell-henllys-and-journey-into-iron.html>
  - c. <https://plus.google.com/101313925265499577937/about#101313925265499577937/about>

These comments on the internet indicate the positive effects of the experience of visiting Castell Henllys on the general public and teachers, both in terms of quality of life and increasing awareness of the local heritage.

8. The Senior Archaeologist and Public Interpretation and Outreach Lead at the Southeast Archaeological Center, US National Park Service, is an international heritage expert (with particular expertise in public site interpretation and the role of on-site reconstruction) who has also visited Castell Henllys and can be contacted to corroborate that Castell Henllys is an international leader in on-site reconstruction and public interpretation (3)
9. The former Education Officer at Castell Henllys (now Manager of Castell Henllys & Newport Visitor Centre), Pembrokeshire Coast National Park, can be contacted to corroborate the claims that Mytum's research through excavation, reconstruction and interpretation has been essential for past and continuing Pembrokeshire Coast National Park management and staff training, and in the design and construction of educational resources. She can confirm that Mytum continues to input his ongoing research into the developing CPD and interpretive programmes at Castell Henllys (1, 2)