

The Hillfort Glow



An experiment to explore the intervisibility between ten hillforts across north east Wales and Cheshire and their connection with their local communities

Erin Robinson and Ellie Soper, 2011



Bryniau Clwyd
Ciwydian Range
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Cefnogwyd gan
Y Loteri Genedlaethol
trwy Gronfa Dreftadaeth y Loteri

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Introduction

The Heritage Lottery Fund currently supports two Landscape Partnership Schemes in the area.

The Heather and Hillforts Project began its implementation phase in January 2008 and covers the Clwydian Range and Llantysilio Mountains in north east Wales. The project area spans the two counties of Denbighshire and Flintshire and it aims to conserve and preserve the heather moorland and six hillforts within the project area.

The Habitats and Hillforts Project began in October 2008 and covers the Cheshire Sandstone Ridge. It aims to conserve the six hillforts on the ridge and any associated features in the vicinity and also to restore and increase natural habitats in the vicinity of the forts.

Both projects also aim to reconnect people to the uplands and to increase their enjoyment of its heritage, through education, interpretation, events and audience development initiatives.

Inspired by the 'Illuminating Hadrian's Wall' Event in Northumberland in Spring 2010 and recent research into intervisibility between hillforts in the mid-Marches by David Matthews, an event was proposed to take on a theme of involving local people within the vicinity of each hillfort in a mass experiment to try and communicate between the hillforts using light.

Aims

The event was to focus on raising the profile of the projects and their hillforts/areas with the following themes:

- Intervisibility between hillforts
- Community involvement
- Historical relevance
- Communities past and present- connecting people with their ancestors

Questions to be answered following the experiment were:

- How many hillforts were intervisible with each other?
- Did this show a connection (physical or otherwise) between the hillforts?
- Did the public feel more aware of their local hillforts following the experiment?

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Preparation

Initial steps

The initial meeting for the event took place on 29th July and included expertise from Cheshire West & Chester's Events team, Denbighshire County Council's Tourism and Marketing department, the Clwydian Range AONB, both HLF projects and Cheshire Shared Services GIS Team and archaeologist David Matthews.

The event agenda, health and safety, logistics and promotion was discussed and the main outcomes were:

- The event would take part at dusk and would involve flashlights to locate the hillforts within the landscape. The use of a flare would help identify the hillforts' locations due to the issue of light pollution, but the event taking place at dusk rather than nightfall would allow for ascent in the light and orientation of the hills before nightfall. Dusk should also limit the amount of light pollution from the towns overlooked.
- The hillforts to be used needed to be relatively accessible and should be chosen so as to create a 'circle of light', which could link to using a night of a full moon.
- As the event will be at night, participant numbers would have to be limited due to the steepness of the hills and the narrowness of the pathways as well as limited parking onsite.

Which hillforts to use?

It was agreed that ten hillforts, with support from partner organisations, would be a manageable amount for this initial event. Four hillforts from each of the two projects were chosen.

South Denbighshire was noted as a priority to involve, therefore Caer Drewyn, Corwen was chosen due to its accessibility and being associated with a large community. There were, however, concerns about its intervisibility with other hillforts taking part in the experiment and that the group may only witness 'half' of the event. However, it was agreed that testing the amount of intervisible hillforts within the experiment with Caer Drewyn would be an interesting test in itself due to its location.

Moel y Gaer hillfort, Llanbedr, on the Clwydian Range was not chosen as it was obvious that it would have a low intervisibility rate due to its location and there is limited access to the site. Information on this hillfort can be found by following this link: <http://www.heatherandhillforts.co.uk/index.php/en/about/hillforts/moel-y-gaer-llanbedr>

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Moel y Gaer, Rhosesmor was chosen due to its extremely good accessibility, a good knowledge of the site due to excavation in the 1970's and also being associated with the large community of Halkyn Mountain. This hillfort's position was also interesting for the experiment due to its siting lower than the Clwydian Range and its location being in between the two project areas. The hillfort is managed by Flintshire Countryside Service.

Burton Point was chosen due to a third HLF project here led by the RSPB and a great amount of research into the site by local archaeologist Gary Crawford-Coupe. The site is the only known hillfort site on the Wirral and would benefit greatly from community awareness of the site in conjunction with the work currently being done by the RSPB at Inner Marsh Farm, Burton.

Woodhouse hillfort, Frodsham, was not chosen to take part in the experiment due to its tree cover. Pollen analysis by the Habitats and Hillforts Project suggests that there would have been a heathland habitat on the hillfort in the Iron Age and you can see more information on this by visiting this webpage:

http://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/microsites/habitats_and_hillforts/hillforts/woodhouse.aspx

Eddisbury Hillfort also has little known intervisibility with any of the Cheshire or North Wales hillforts, it was therefore chosen not to include this site primarily for this reason but also due to accessibility difficulties. More information on Eddisbury hillfort can be found at this link:

http://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/microsites/habitats_and_hillforts/hillforts/eddisbury.aspx

Beeston was a prime site to be involved in the experiment due to its accessibility and natural prominence in the landscape. In fact it turned out to be quite a difficult site to signal from due to the medieval walls on the hill top. English Heritage who manage the site and also a project partner to Habitats and Hillforts were very supportive to involve the site.

Maiden Castle, Bickerton Hill was the most southerly of the Cheshire hillforts. Owned by the National Trust it was one of the most accessible hillforts and a key link in the southern part of the experiment.

The team were contacted by the Oswestry Landscape and Archaeology Project to suggest involving Old Oswestry hillfort. The group were able to witness the event from the hillfort at Oswestry to test whether they could see any of the ten hillforts to the north. The group also let off a final flare after the main event had finished at 7.30pm.

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When should the event take place?

When the event was first being organised the extension for the Heather and Hillforts Project had not been confirmed so it was assumed that the end date for the three year project would be 31st December as authorised by the Heritage Lottery Fund. It was agreed that the event should take place after the clocks went back so the event would not take place too late in the evening.

It was agreed that the event should take place on a weekend and a Sunday was preferable as this was usually a quieter day for families. It was also noted that December would be busy for Christmas festivities.

Due to other commitments in the diary, the night of a full moon could not be accommodated although this was hoped for.

It was decided that Sunday 5th December would see the event take place.

Questions and Concerns

Numbers of participants- Due to the event taking place at night with narrow, steep footpaths, and dangerous cliff edges, it was decided that numbers would be limited and strictly bookable, but all agreed that staff had a duty of care for any persons who decided to join the event without booking.

Fires- Many discussions were had as to whether pyres could be lit as part of the experiment as there is a tradition for this in the area, especially Moel y Gaer Rhosesmor (special thanks to Sheilagh Roberts for her fascinating insights into this history).

The use of bonfires was suggested, but due to the internationally rare habitat on most of the hillforts, only controlled burning in specific weather conditions takes place and an accidental burn could have destroyed this habitat and many of the species it is home to, as well as being a large health and safety risk.

Beacons such as the ones used for the Hadrian's Wall event were discussed, but the logistics of carrying them to the tops of the hills would not have worked. The hillforts are Scheduled Ancient Monuments, so vehicular access is prohibited, and the gas beacons are extremely heavy, most of the hillforts being quite long climbs, uphill.

A suggestion of using lasers was also raised, but it was felt that the glow of torchlight would be nearer to any activity that would have taken place on the hilltops 2,500 years ago.

Expectation- There were concerns that a media boom into the experiment, if worded wrongly, could raise expectations too high. As the experiment included a steep walk,

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a cold wait on a hilltop and little movement apart from flashing a torch, it was felt that careful wording was used on all communication and promotion for the event so participants knew what to expect.

It was also a concern that organisers were asking for volunteers to help them spot a small light on a hill in the distance and were unsure what the reaction to this would be and if people would want to participate in such a thing...

Difficulties

The logistics of such an event was always a concern to organisers. Timings would be key to ensure the event was a success and all volunteers would enjoy the experience and get something out of the evening.

The acquisition of newt torches was a regular difficulty; they are an expensive commodity and mostly in use by their respective owners. The event could not have gone ahead so successfully without the good nature and donation of the newt torches on each site.

We were also concerned that volunteers were being asked to bring their own torches, and whether they would feel they were making a difference if we had very high powered torches.

Many ideas were discussed on how we could make this event an enjoyable experience for all the volunteers we needed to be involved. Re enactors were discussed, where a story would be told on each of the hillfort. This idea was abandoned due to cost, logistics and timescales.

Test runs

An initial test with some of the hillforts to test how well the high powered torches could be seen from afar and the relevance of the flares was organised in November. Due to thick fog, visibility was poor, although Moel y Gaer Rhosesmor was able to see a light on Moel Fenlli during a brief heightening of the cloud. The flare was not seen. The need for a flare to help locate the hillforts within the landscape was proven when trying to spot Burton Point due to its low lying topography, sitting within surrounding village lights, as their light could not be differentiated from other lights within the vicinity.

It was found that having compass bearings of all of the hillforts made it easier to both orientate yourself before dark and also to look for the lights. An added help was to spray the lines of direction on to the ground with line marker paint to guide where to look.

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A second test run was undertaken on an exceptionally clear night and this highlighted the need for communication with participants on the lead up to the event to reiterate the need for very warm clothing and winter woollies as temperatures plunged on the summits due to nightfall and their height.

Final Plans

Promotion

A basic marketing plan was written to ensure full coverage was sought. (See Appendix A)

Volunteers needed- A press release was issued(see Appendix Ai), along with a dedicated web page on both project's websites to call for volunteer help with the event. The webpage allowed for extra information about the event to be explained, but specific details, such as meeting times, were not issued to encourage people to register. It was decided that there should be one contact for the public to register with, to avoid confusion. The Heather and Hillforts Administrative and Finance Officer agreed to be the contact for the public and all enquiries were sent to this email address and phone number.

A poster was also printed which was designed in house, to promote the event and to call for volunteers. These were distributed across the two counties, in visitor centres, Tourist Information Centre's, local libraries and also laminated and displayed at hillfort sites and their car parks. *See Appendix B*

Denbighshire Council's Countryside and Leisure Modern Apprentice collated contact details for all community groups near to all ten hillforts and these were emailed information to promote the event.

Awareness of the event- A second press release was issued on the week of the event to encourage people who hadn't registered or were not aware of the event to look to the hills on the evening of the event. *See Appendix C*

A Facebook event page was also set up which included information, press stories and an opportunity for the public to share their thoughts on the event. This proved very useful for keeping in direct contact with people leading up to the event and also to collate feedback after the event. *See*

<https://www.facebook.com/home.php#!/event.php?eid=101230793282943>

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Registration

Prospective volunteers were asked to contact Ann Roberts to register to be involved with the event. Their details were kept on a database along with the hillfort they wanted to volunteer on.

As numbers were limited, many of the more accessible hillforts were at their quota very quickly, so other hillforts were suggested to them so they could still take part in the event.

Other hillforts struggled for numbers so extra time was spent on marketing these sites. Caer Drewyn, for example, had posters put up on site, in the local leisure centre, the library/One Stop Shop and information was also sent to the local Business Group.

Once registered, participants were sent a confirmation email which stated that more information about the event would be sent nearer the date of the event.

Closer to the event, an information pack was emailed out to all participants, each enclosing information relevant to the hillfort they were registered on to. At this time, timings were still to be announced so this was stated within the pack and the cover email and participants were asked to check their emails on the Friday before the event. *See Appendix E*

Postponement

On the fortnight leading up to 5th December, the United Kingdom saw an unprecedented amount of snowfall. Temperatures plunged and snow on the higher ground turned to ice.

Although the weather improved slightly as December began, the freezing temperatures and ungritted roads, especially the small lanes to the hillfort car parks on the Clwydian Range, there was no option but to postpone the event until the weather improved.

An email was sent out to all participants with an apology and an explanation for the postponement. *See Appendix F*

A New date

When making the decision on the new date for the experiment it was decided that the event should take place before the clocks went forward to enable the event to take place earlier in the evening, when dusk would still be early. The date of 19th March was decided due to it being a full moon. It was soon discovered that the weekend was also the date of the Spring Equinox and the evening the date of the 'Super

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Moon', which we hoped would add to the ambience of the event. These celestial events were used in the marketing of the Hillfort Glow.

Further to confirmation of a new date, a crib sheet was sent to each staff member for their site with contact details, risk assessment, details of first aiders and instructions. A video with instructions for releasing the flare was also sent via email. Cheshire and Welsh cakes were also distributed to be given to participants on the evening and it was suggested that hillfort coordinators also took along hot drinks to share with the public. (See Appendix G).

Emergency Services, such as the Police, Search and Rescue Teams and Coastguard were contacted to explain the event and sent an information sheet with timings and an agenda due to the use of flares and the large scale of the event. For an example of this crib sheet, please see Appendix H.

The Event

Flares were sent up from the top of 10 Iron Age hillforts along the Clwydian Range in North East Wales, Burton Point and the Sandstone Ridge in Cheshire. These were followed by using torch light to communicate between the hillforts.

The public were invited onto each hillfort – there was a booking system in place with a maximum of 20 people of each site. Due to most hillforts being booked up fairly quickly, a decision was made to increase numbers for those hillforts that were more accessible for example, Moel y Gaer could easily take more volunteers due to easy parking, easy access and a flat area to gather.

At the meeting place, the coordinators, wearing high vis jackets, introduced themselves and the projects. Extra time was given to ensure participants would safely scale the hills with further time to orientate themselves on the hilltops prior to the experiments taking place.

Hillforts took turns in being signalled to from the other hillforts. The hillfort sent up a flare to notify participants that their turn had begun and then looked for other hillforts flashing torches towards them. Five minutes were allocated per site.

Caer Drewyn began the event, followed by the Clwydian Range hillforts heading north, then Moel y Gaer Rhosesmor, Burton Point and then travelled south down the Sandstone Ridge.

Once all ten hillforts had been signalled at by other hillforts, the chain reaction of flares started in the opposite direction. The event lasted one hour from the first flare being released.

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During the event, and prior to the release of the flares, Liverpool Air traffic control needed to be contacted to ensure clearance for the flare release.

Directional light was also an important part of the event. Torches strictly needed to be pointed and shone in the right direction, in order to ensure connection.

During the event, staff on the Cheshire side communicated via radio's which was thoroughly successful considering the distance that needed to be covered.

During or after the event had ended, staff members offered hot drinks and cake to participants. Each participant was presented with a certificate of participation in the event. For a copy of the certificate, please see Appendix I.

Intervisibility Results

The below chart shows which of the hillforts were able to confirm sight lines between the hillforts by the **torchlight**:

	Caer Drewyn	Moel Fenlli	Moel Arthur	Penycloddiau	Moel y Gaer	Burton	Helsby	Kelsborrow	Beeston	Maiden	TOTAL
Caer Drewyn	-	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	3
Moel Fenlli	Y	-	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	9
Moel Arthur	Y	Y	-	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	7
Penycloddiau	Y	Y	Y	-	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	8
Moel y Gaer	N	Y	Y	Y	-	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	8
Burton	N	Y	N	N	Y	-	N	Y	Y	Y	5
Helsby Hill	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	-	N	Y	Y	6
Kelsborrow	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	-	Y	Y	7
Beeston	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	-	Y	8
Maiden	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	-	8

Pros and cons

There was concern about involving Caer Drewyn as it was likely that participants would see nothing of the experiment, after the Clwydian Range hillforts had signalled. However, the pros outweighed the cons, there was good vehicular access near to the hillfort so during the time in between Penycloddiau's first and second flare, the group were able to gather around the vehicle to keep warm and enjoy a snack and a hot drink.

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The weather was always a make it or break it factor for the event. In the end, the evening of the 19th March, was perfectly clear. However, a decision was made that the event would continue whatever the weather. It would still be an interesting experiment.

The decision to postpone the event due to snow in December was purely a health and safety decision.

There were also concerns about the length of walk for some hillforts, a site based decision was made for each hillfort by the respective coordinators to ensure enough time to get to the hilltop without having too much time getting cold, waiting for the start.

Extra people arriving on site was expected, however, far more people arrived on both Helsby and Moel y Gaer than was anticipated. It is thought there were nearly 50 people on Helsby as the event came to a close. Moel y Gaer hosted the pub walk which in turn brought approximately an extra 70 people to watch the event unfold.

The 'witness walk' by the Blue Bell Inn, Halkyn, was organised by the establishment due to the high demand to be involved with the event on Halkyn Mountain on Rhosesmor. Many thanks are given to the organisers who were able to ensure even more people were able to take part in the event.

Refreshments were difficult to roll out, but we hope a happy medium was achieved, with the provision of welsh cakes and Cheshire 'Honesty' Cake. We asked people to bring their own hot drinks. Feedback suggests this was a nice touch.

At the end of the event, feedback from coordinators suggests that volunteers filtered off the hilltops. It was discussed asking people to sign out at the end of the event, but this proved problematic due to darkness and number of people. Staff ensured that they were the last ones to leave the car parks.

Partnership working was a key objective for the event, we wanted to include any organisations that wanted input but at the same time did not want to be a burden to other organisations with extensive organisation issues.

It was noted, that there was a lack of press acknowledgement in England. The press on the welsh side picked up the event far more than in England, which in turn led to other forms of press interest which all came through to the Heather and Hillforts office.

As organisers of the event, we were very keen to get feedback out following the event to all volunteers who kindly gave up their time to be involved. Feedback from each of the site coordinators were gathered and promptly sent out within 2 weeks of

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the events, see appendix J. Feedback shows that some people did not receive this information.

The feedback forms which were also sent out did not work properly and not many people replied using forms, but those who did were collated and other feedback ie emails and Facebook posts have been collated.

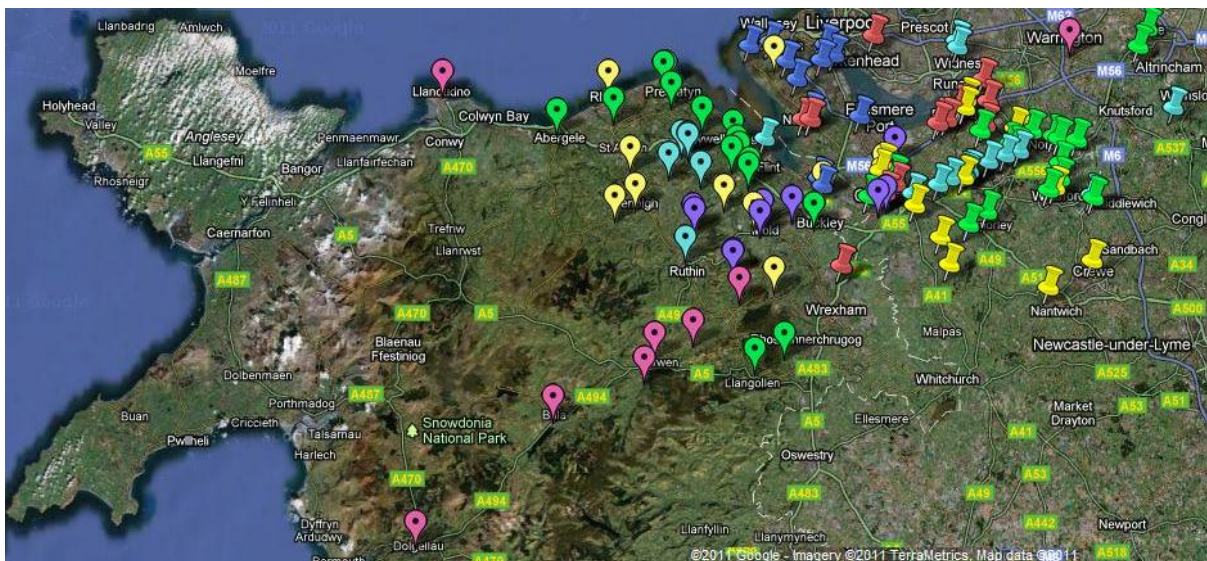
Event Costs:

The total cost for the full event equated to £950. This included refreshment costs, printing costs and purchasing flares. Considering the number of people involved, it is felt this was a highly cost effective event.

Participant Feedback:

Over 350 members of the public were involved in the event across ten hillforts, over five counties, two countries.

The two maps below show postcode analysis from participants on each hillfort (bonfire symbol).



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Dots:

- Pink – Caer Drewyn, Corwen
- Purple – Moel Fenlli, Ruthin/Mold
- Yellow – Moel Arthur, Llandyrnog
- Aqua – Penycloddiau, Nannerch
- Green – Moel y Gaer, Rhosesmor

Pins:

- Blue – Burton Point, Wirral
- Red – Helsby Hill, Helsby
- Green – Beeston Castle, Beeston
- Aqua – Kelsborrow, Kelsall
- Yellow – Maiden Castle, Bickerton

86% of people were aware of the hillfort they were participating in the event on. Of these, 25% of participants were not aware of any of the other hillforts in the area. Of the 14% of people not aware of the hillfort they were on, half were aware of one of more of the other hillforts, half were not aware of any.

Overall, 93% of people were aware of either the hillfort they were participating on or another hillfort which was taking part in the experiment prior to the event.

From the feedback received 96% of participants felt that the event increased their knowledge of hillforts in general

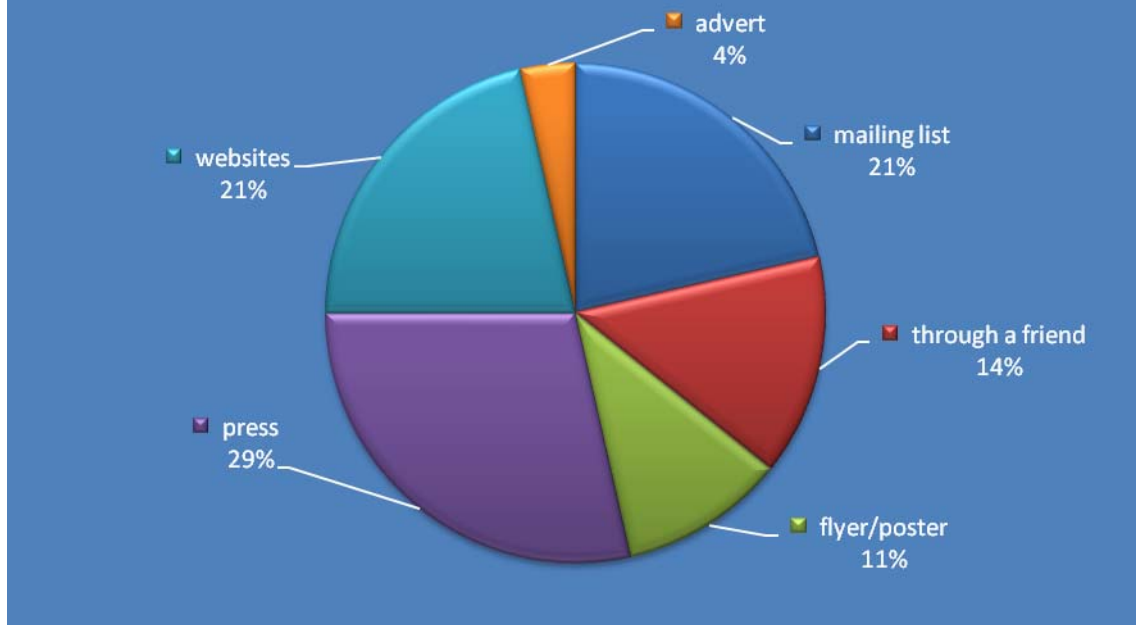
100% of participants said that they had enjoyed the event.

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How did participants hear about the event?



Newspapers listed within the feedback included the Denbighshire Free Press, the Daily Post, the Chester Chronicle and the Northwich Guardian.

Two participants posted videos on Youtube which recorded the event at Moel Arthur and Kelsborrow, which can be seen at the below links, respectively:

http://youtu.be/69WGFNbe_Wg

<http://youtu.be/rBbb6g7-o84>

A selection of quotes from the participant feedback are listed below. For a full account of the feedback, please refer to Appendix K.

Additional feedback gained from the Facebook Event Page and the Heather and Hillforts Facebook Fan Page are available in Appendices D and L respectively.

Caer Drewyn

- *Well organised. Marshals/supervisors helpful and informative. Could have been better advertised*
- *we all enjoyed it, was a great family outing, educational as well as fun!*

Moel Fenlli

- *It was well organised and the staff on the night were well-prepared and friendly*

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- *This was really interesting and also tremendous fun! It was very well organised: not just coordinating the flares etc but also getting that number of people up and down Foel Fenli safely. It was a lovely touch that they'd brought cake and hot chocolate, please pass on my thanks and appreciation to our stewards*

Moel Arthur

- *Thank you for including me in the group on Moel Arthur this weekend. It was not only a wonderful project to be part of, but an amazing experience. The flares, lights and the super moon and the lovely people. It was an experience not to be missed. Thank you*
- *Maybe too much walking time- it was somewhat chilly up there!*
- *This was a thoroughly enjoyable experience in every way- well organised by friendly yet efficient folk!*

Penycloddiau

- *Thoroughly enjoyed this event but wished we'd taken your advice and had a hot drink with us! The event was well organised and well coordinated with a good mix of ages taking part and it was great to see the Scouts involved!*
- *I would like to express our thanks to the organised of the hillfort glow event, especially to Helen and Rachel on the Penycloddiau site. We had a really interesting evening- if a little cold! We learnt lots about the hillforts in general, and penycloddiau in particular and it was great to join in with the signalling to the other forts. Thanks very much for allowing Denbigh scouts to be part of this experience.*

Moel y Gaer

- *We really enjoyed the event- we've been up this (and several other) hillforts many times but this felt very special and unique.... I feel very lucky to have been part of such an experiment- right on our doorstep! Part of my family has lived on the mountain for many generations and I couldn't help wondering if my ancestors had seen similar lights! Thanks for a well organised and interesting event.*
- *A great pity bonfires not allowed. Rhosesmor has a tradition of bonfires ...*

Burton Point

- *I thought the event was excellent due to the knowledge of the archaeologist and the RSPB warden. It was wonderful to imagine back in time people with their fires able to signal each other. We would both love to volunteer for anything else.*

Helsby

- *I knew very little about hillforts before this event which obviously was a great success. Had the weather been rainy or overcast the outcome would have been very different!!*

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- *I really enjoyed this very well organised event. Thanks for organising it. It was good to feel part of something historic.*
- *I would like to thank you so much for letting me be a part of the event. It was a really enjoyable experience as well as being informative.*

Beeston

- *Very well organised an enjoyable event. Good information supplied. Staff for the event were very knowledgeable. Good crowd of people, would like to be involved as a volunteer in any future projects.*
- *Thank you for arranging the experiment. You couldn't have organised any better night, the weather was great and the excitement of seeing all the other sites winking their torches at each other was magical*
- *I thoroughly enjoyed the evening and was much more interesting than I expected. We were lucky to have such a spectacular view of the moon. A great sense of history!*
- *I was fortunate enough to take part in the hillfort glow at Beeston Castle last night- and what a wonderful and memorable event it was! It felt thrilling to communicate successfully by light with seven of the other nine hillforts, just as our ancient ancestors might have done, and an experience that will stay with me for a long time. My sincere thanks for making this such a memorable occasion. Wishing I could do it all again!*

Kelsborrow

- *There had clearly been a lot of preparation work for the event and we were impressed at how smoothly it went. The gentleman who coordinated our event was excellent and very informative. Many thanks for an enjoyable evening!*
- *Thanks for organising the hillfort glow event, which was brilliant to be a part of. David Matthews who coordinated our site at Kelsborrow proved to be a wealth of information and really put the various sites and the experiment in general into context for us. Thanks again to you and to all those who helped make the evening possible. It was really something to remember.*

Maiden

- *A big thank you to Colin Slater and Dave Morris for their help in escorting me and hubby down to our car after the hillfort glow at Maiden Castle. We really enjoyed it.*

A young lady called Emma joined us on Moel y Gaer Rhosesmor for the Hillfort Glow with her primary school's cuddly dog 'Scamp', who she was looking after that weekend. Scamp had to keep a journal of what he had done that weekend. Emma's mother sent this message following the Hillfort Glow:

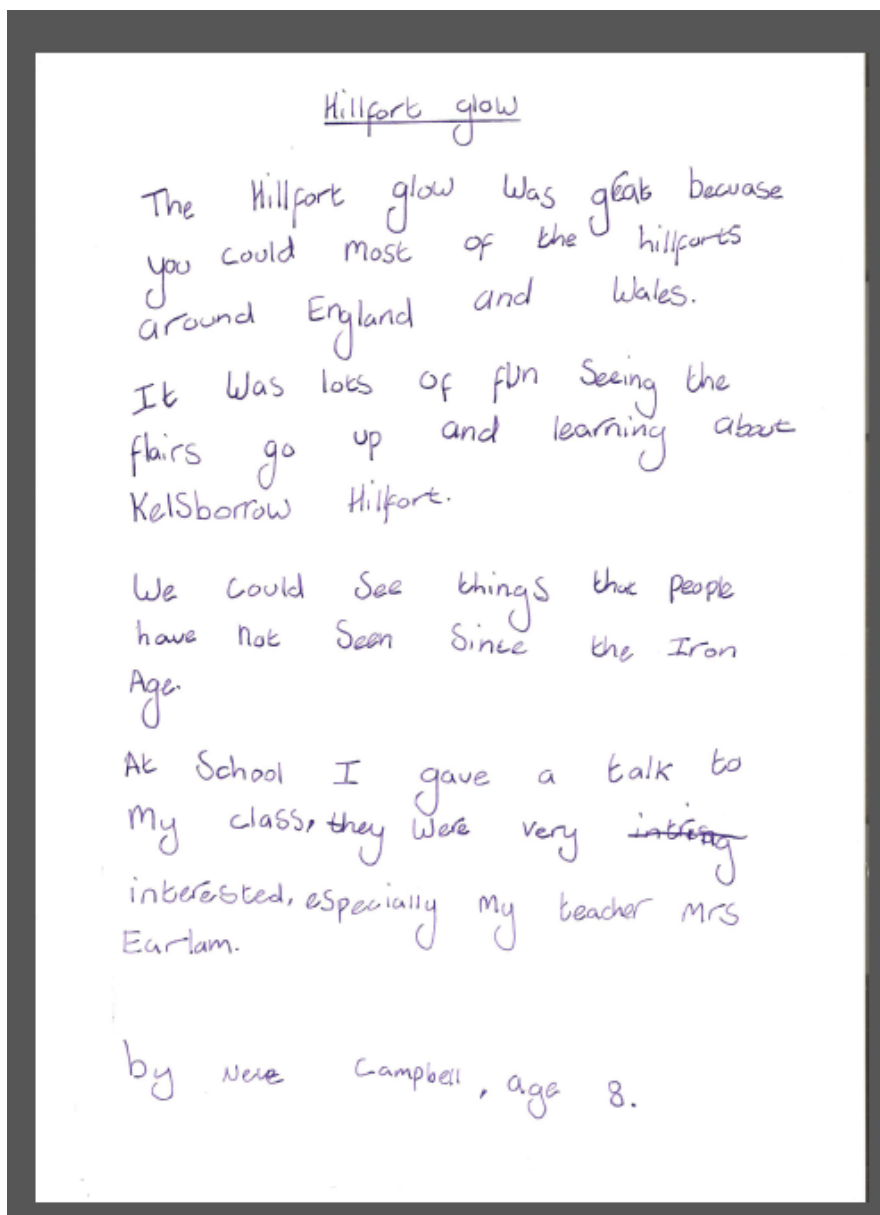
www.habitatsandhillforts.co.uk

www.ygrugarcaerau.co.uk

www.heatherandhillforts.co.uk

Thanks for the great time at the Hillfort Glow last night. We promised we would send you a copy of what was written in "Scamp's" diary after the event last night.

"After tea we drove to Rhosesmor and met up with some archaeologists there. One of them Emma had met a few times before with her Mum - Fiona. We walked up the Moel y Gaer hillfort there and took part in an experiment called 'The hillfort glow'. It was very exciting and amazing to see how far away we could see people shining torches. We got cold up there but it was well worth it. Emma and I made friends with a lady called Erin who was organising most of the event. We had a torch which we had to flash at other hills when we saw their flare go off. The moon was amazing too as it was so very big and pink! There were lots of other people who just came along to watch. It was great, we all slept well after it too!"



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Press interest

There was a phenomenal amount of press interest for the Hillfort Glow both before the evening and even more so following the event.

Some local papers covered the press release issued, such as the North Wales Daily Post. An article was also written alongside the press release issued for Halkyn Mountain News, a local newsletter in Flintshire.

The BBC north east Wales webteam prepared a webpage for the story including a map showing the hillfort locations.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-north-east-wales-11832323>

On morning of the event Helen Mrowiec was interviewed by BBC Radio Cymru and Erin Robinson interviewed for BBC Radio Wales about the upcoming event.

The morning after the event, the BBC telephoned for the results and published a story and a link to which was published on the front page of the BBC national website and featured in their 'weird and wonderful' section.

Other websites covering the story include:

www.ukhillwalking.com/news/item.php?id=61117 (UK)

www.presstv.ir/detail/171075.html (Iran)

www.dailyindia.com/show/430849.php (India)

The story was featured in the Northwich Guardian (print) after they attended the event on Beeston Castle and also online:

http://www.northwichguardian.co.uk/news/8924977.Hillforts_glow_in_journey_back_in_time/

A wonderful blog was written by a participant on Penycloddiau following the event and can be enjoyed at this link:

<http://wildplacesandeverythinginthem.blogspot.com/2011/03/hillfort-glow.html>

Journals and magazine coverage includes:

- Country & Border Life
- Science
- Current Archaeology

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www.ygrugarcaerau.co.uk

www.heatherandhillforts.co.uk

- Halkyn Mountain News Summer Edition
http://www.halkyn.org/en/news/halkyn_mountain_news_articles/

Radio coverage worldwide:

- On 23rd March an interview with Erin Robinson was broadcast on **Canada and North America's CBC Radio** programme 'As it Happens'
<http://www.cbc.ca/asithappens/episode/2011/03/23/wednesday-march-23-2011/>
- **ABC Radio Perth, Australia** interviewed Erin Robinson live for their breakfast show on 23rd March
- The experiment was discussed as part of the **BBC Radio Four** programme 'Making History' with Professor Emeritus John Collis and Erin Robinson on 29th March
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00zsdss>
- Erin was also interviewed by **Radio New Zealand** on 13th May
<http://www.radionz.co.nz/national/programmes/nights/audio/2489152/hullo-hillfort>

A selection of press cuttings can be seen in Appendix M

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Future

In all the event proved a huge success and met objects originally set by both projects.

In order to ensure the event is not lost the web pages created for the event will be updated with this report and feedback from the public and will also reiterate more feedback is always welcome.

This will also feature links to press, articles, interesting relevant other, mp3s of radio interviews, video links

An email will be sent to all participants with a link to this webpage to view the report.

Do we hold another event in the future? This is to be discussed by both projects, and a number of points discussed, i.e. the event was an experiment, do we therefore need another event? If we were to hold another event, what would we do differently, and what would be taken into account for example taking on board the feedback comments.

Watch this space....!

Our thanks go out to:

All project supporters, including staff members, fellow staff members and especially Ann from the Heather and Hillforts Team who coordinated all the bookings.

Denbighshire legal team and Cheshire Health and Safety advisors

Cheshire event team

DCC Tourism and Marketing Team and Corporate Communications Team

Torch providers (NEW Wildlife, North Wales Wildlife Trust, Denbighshire Biodiversity Officers, Flintshire biodiversity Officer, CCW, Colin Hayes)

North East Wales Search and Rescue and Cheshire Search and Rescue

Private landowners

Denbigh Explorer scouts and all participants

RSPB

Hadrian's Wall marketing team who advised us in the beginning

Iestyn & Ann Jones Evans

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www.heatherandhillforts.co.uk

Appendix A and Ai- Marketing Plan and Initial Press release:

Hillfort Glow- Marketing and Promotion

Pre-event promotion for volunteers to communities

- EMAIL to:
 - Community councils
 - Each organisation (Habitats, Heather and RSPB) to send an email to their local hillfort's community council (details of community councillors can be found on your local government's website)
 - County councillors
 - ER to send out to DCC
 - GS/RW to send out to Flintshire
 - ES to Cheshire
 - RSPB to Wirral
 - Community groups
 - ER to ask ModAp to research local community newsletters in north east Wales, Cheshire and Wirral and email/letter to each with press release about event offering it as an article in their publication
 - RSPB to send out email/letter to volunteers group
 - ER to send out email/letter to DCC volunteers groups and e-mailing list
 - ES to send out email/letter to Habitats and Hillforts volunteers group
 - Schools
 - Each organisation (Habitats, Heather and RSPB) to send an email to their local hillfort's school to make them aware of the event
- FLYER AND POSTERS to:
 - Attach to email to above
 - These to be concentrated in areas where booking were low for December date.
Numbers needed most for
 1. Maiden Castle- Bickerton- ES
 2. Burton- Neston/Little Sutton- RSPB
 3. Moel Arthur and Penycloddiau- Llandyrnog, Denbigh, Nannerch- ER
 4. Caer Drewyn – Corwen - ER
 - Hard copy to (concentrated in above areas):
 - Village halls
 - Community councillors for notice boards
 - Libraries
 - Church
 - Shops
 - Pubs
 - Post offices
 - Tourist Information Centres?
 - Schools
- WEBPAGE:
 - Tab from Heather site home page- ER
 - Tab from Habitats site home page- ES ✓
 - Web page with Event text including –ER to update with new date:
 - Thumbs (click to enlarge) of each hillfort with name and location

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www.heatherandhillforts.co.uk

- “To register as a Hillfort Glow volunteer, contact <Ann’s email and number> stating your name, location, email, telephone number and preferred hillfort. Please note that numbers are strictly limited so please book early to avoid disappointment. Preference will be given to local residents.”

Information to press

- Press release to local papers and community newsletters describing experiment asking for local residents to help end of Jan
- Press release week before event, 14th March, to tell people to look to the hills, explain experiment
- Press release following event, end of March explaining how the event went and results of experiment.
- Article in Community Newsletters as follow up article to explain how it went and results

****STOP PRESS** Hillfort Glow - Your Hillfort needs you, March 19th!**

An appeal for volunteers from local communities is being made to take part in a very special historical experiment on Saturday 19th March when communication is attempted between ten ancient hillforts.

At dusk, on the evening of the full moon this March, north east Wales’ Heather and Hillforts Project and Cheshire West and Chester’s Habitats and Hillforts Project will be heading for the hills. The experiment will involve local people close to ten hillforts on the Sandstone Ridge, the Clwydian Range, Mynydd-y-Gaer Corwen, Halkyn Mountain and the Wirral, trying to communicate between the hillforts using torch light.

Flares will be launched from the hillforts followed by torch light at Maiden Castle, Beeston Castle, Kelsborrow, Helsby, Burton Point, Moel y Gaer Rhosesmor, Penycloddiau, Moel Arthur, Moel Fenlli and Caer Drewyn.

Iron Age settlements can be found on many of the summits of the Sandstone Ridge, Clwydian Range and surrounding hills, dating back around 2,500 years. Most of the hillforts across the surrounding landscape can be seen from each other. The experiment, originally scheduled for December 2010 but postponed due to heavy snow, aims to see if the glowing fires could have been seen across the hills and acted as a communication or warning system.

Flares will be fired from the hillforts, and volunteers will be invited to help with this mass experiment by manning each of the ten hilltops by signaling with torches in an attempt to make contact across the landscape. Places are strictly limited, so to register to help as a volunteer for your local hillfort, visit www.heatherandhillforts.co.uk/

Erin Robinson, Community Participation Officer for the Heather and Hillforts Project, said “We have chosen the evening in March because of the full moon. Not only will this hopefully provide us with extra light in the evening, but also because it will create even more ambiance for the experiment, where we are trying to recreate something that may not have been done for around 2,500 years, since the Iron Age.

“Circles, such as the full moon, are very important features of Celtic Art; fluid and concentric images being favoured by our prehistoric ancestors, perhaps seen as a symbol of continuity of birth, life and death or the seasons. The moon would have helped to define seasons and to mark festivals, both

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very important as the Iron Age people would have been farmers, growing grain such as Spelt and Emmer.

The experiment takes part on the day before the March equinox, marking the beginning of Spring in the northern hemisphere.

Once registered, volunteers will be sent information packs with exact timings and locations to meet and what to bring.

Further details about the Hillfort Glow can also be found at the newly launched Habitats and Hillforts website - www.habitatsandhillforts.co.uk

Heather & Hillforts and Habitats and Hillforts are Landscape Partnership Schemes funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

-Ends-

Notes to editors:

For further details contact Erin Robinson, Heather and Hillforts Interpretation Officer, Denbighshire Countryside Service, Loggerheads Country Park, 01352 811013,

The three year Heather and Hillforts Project is developing a £2.3 million initiative for upland conservation work and has received a grant of £1.5 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund. For more information please visit heatherandhillforts.co.uk. You can now follow us on twitter! Visit www.twitter.com/HeatherHillfort or join our Facebook Fan page for more updates from the project.

The Habitats and Hillforts scheme is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and Cheshire West and Chester and is supported by dedicated partners including Cheshire Community Action, English Heritage, Forestry Commission, National Trust, Woodland Trust, Cheshire Landscape Trust and private landowners as well as the Mersey Forest who are all dedicated to the overall success of the three year project.

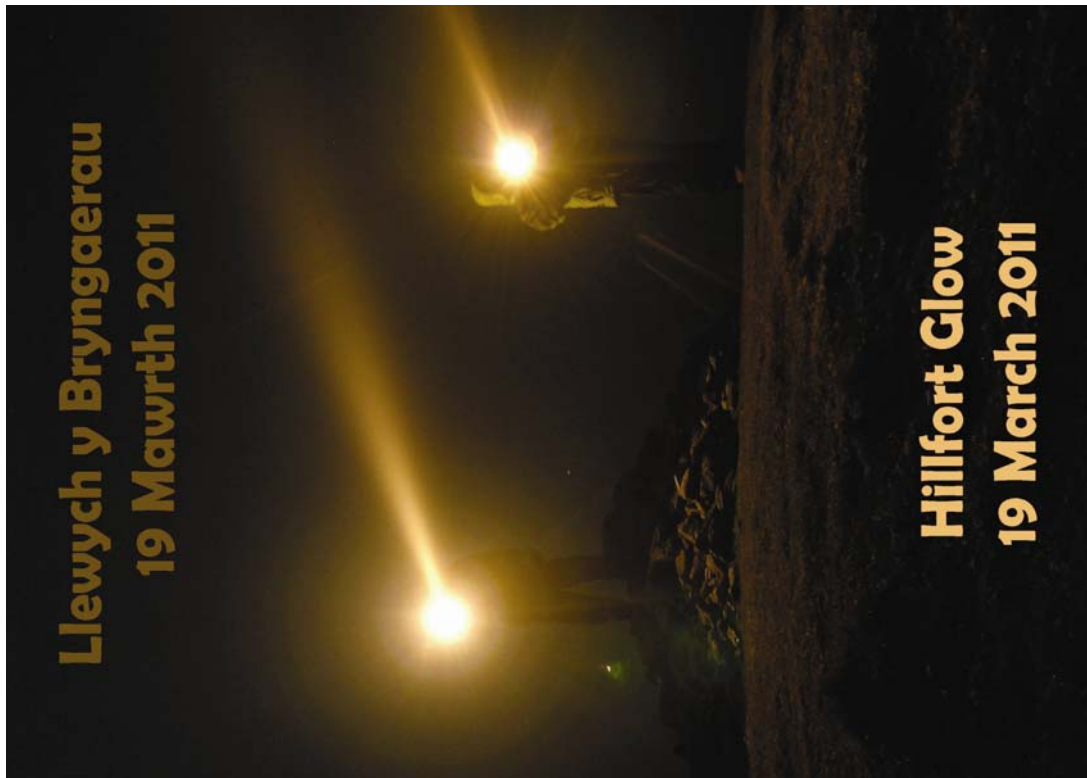
Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) sustains and transforms a wide range of heritage for present and future generations to take part in, learn from and enjoy. From museums, parks and historic places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage. HLF has supported more than 28,800 projects allocating over £4.3 billion across the UK, including more than 1,800 projects totalling over £200 million in Wales. To find out more, please visit www.hlf.org.uk

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Appendix B- Promotional Poster/Flyer (front and back)



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Hillfort Glow

Your hillfort needs you!

Did you know that one of your local hills has the remains of an Iron Age settlement on its summit, dating back around 2,500 years?

Did you know that from the top of the hill you can see many more hillforts, dating back to the same time?

On March 19, we will be heading for the hills, involving local people within the vicinity of ten hillforts on the Sandstone Ridge, the Clwydian Range, Hallkyn Mountain and the Wirral, in an experiment to try and communicate between the hillforts using light and we need your help!

Places are strictly limited, so to register to help as a volunteer for your local hillfort, visit www.ygrugarcerau.co.uk or www.habitatsandhillforts.co.uk

'Glow' hillforts include: Maiden Castle, Beeston Castle, Kelsborrow, Helsby, Burton Point, Moel y Caer Rhosmor, Penycoddiâu, Moel Arthur, Moel Fenlli and Caer Drewyn.



calogydd gan
y loteri genedlaethol
Prif gwmni genedlaethol y loteri



Llewych y Bryngaerau

Mae eich bryngaer eich angen chi!

Wydddech chi fod un o'r bryniau sy'n agos at eich pentref chi â gweddillion amheddiad o'r Oes Haearn ar ei gopa, yn dyddio'n ôl oddeutu 2,500 o flynyddoedd?

Oeddech chi'n gwybod y gallwch weld llawer mwy o fryngaerau eraill o ben y bryn a'r rheiny'n dyddio'n ôl i'r un cyfnod?

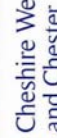
Ar Mawrth 19, fe fyddwn yn anelu am y bryniau, yn cynnwys pobl leol yng nghyffiniau'r deg bryngaer ar y Sandstone Ridge, Mynydd Helygain a'r Wirral, mewn arbrwf torfol i geisio cyfathrebu rhwng y caerau gan ddefnyddio golau ac mae arnon ni angen eich help chi!

Mae lleoedd yn gyfyngedig iawn, felly i gofrestru i helpu fel gwirfoddolwr ar gyfer eich bryngaer leol, euch i www.ygrugarcerau.co.uk neu www.habitatsandhillforts.co.uk

Mae'r bryngaerau 'Llewych' yn cynnwys: Castell Maiden, Castell Beeston, Kelsborrow, Helsby, Burton Point, Moel y Caer Rhosmor, Penycoddiâu, Moel Arthur, Moel Fenlli a Caer Drewyn.



Supported by
The National Lottery
through the Heritage Lottery Fund



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Appendix C- Awareness press release

Stop Press! Dusk Hillfort Experiment during a Super Moon!

As we encounter the rare celestial event of a 'Super Extreme Moon' on 19 March, volunteers will be heading to ten hillforts across Cheshire and north Wales for a communication experiment at dusk, using light. Local residents are encouraged to keep their eyes on the hills as well as the sky!

This weekend, the moon's distance will be in its nearest position to earth, the phenomenon only happening once every 18 years. At the same time, volunteers will be participating in the Hillfort Glow event, when communication is attempted between ten ancient hillforts.

At dusk, north east Wales' Heather and Hillforts Project and Cheshire West and Chester's Habitats and Hillforts Project will involve local volunteers on ten hillforts on the Sandstone Ridge, the Clwydian Range, Mynydd-y-Gaer Corwen, Halkyn Mountain and the Wirral, trying to communicate between the hillforts using torch light.

Flares will be launched from the hillforts followed by torch light at Maiden Castle, Beeston Castle, Kelsborrow, Helsby, Burton Point, Moel y Gaer Rhosesmor, Penycloddiau, Moel Arthur, Moel Fenlli and Caer Drewyn.

Late Prehistoric settlements can be found on many of the summits of the Sandstone Ridge, Clwydian Range and surrounding hills, dating back around 2,500 years. Most of the hillforts across the surrounding landscape can be seen from each other. The experiment, originally scheduled for December 2010 but postponed due to heavy snow, aims to see if the glowing fires could have been seen across the hills, making the many hillforts in the area part of a larger community.

Erin Robinson, Community Participation Officer for the Heather and Hillforts Project, said "We have chosen the evening in March because of the full moon and this rare celestial event. Not only will the moon hopefully provide us with extra light in the evening, but also because it will create even more ambiance for the experiment, where we are trying to recreate something that may not have been done for around 2,500 years, since the Iron Age.

"Circles, such as the full moon, are very important features of Celtic Art; fluid and concentric images being favoured by our prehistoric ancestors, perhaps seen as a symbol of continuity of birth, life and death or the seasons. The moon would have helped to define seasons and to mark festivals, both very important as the Iron Age people would have been farmers, growing grain such as Spelt and Emmer.

As well as occurring during the Super Moon, the experiment takes part on the day before the March equinox, marking the beginning of Spring in the northern hemisphere.

Further details about the Hillfort Glow can be found at the Heather and Hillforts Project website www.heatherandhillforts.co.uk and also at the newly launched Habitats and Hillforts Project website - www.habitatsandhillforts.co.uk

www.habitatsandhillforts.co.uk

www.ygrugarcaerau.co.uk

www.heatherandhillforts.co.uk

Heather & Hillforts and Habitats and Hillforts are Landscape Partnership Schemes funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

-Ends-

Notes to editors:

For further details contact Erin Robinson, Heather and Hillforts Interpretation Officer, Denbighshire Countryside Service, Loggerheads Country Park, 01352 811013,

The three year Heather and Hillforts Project is developing a £2.3 million initiative for upland conservation work and has received a grant of £1.5 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund. For more information please visit heatherandhillforts.co.uk. You can now follow us on twitter! Visit www.twitter.com/HeatherHillfort or join our Facebook Fan page for more updates from the project.

The Habitats and Hillforts scheme is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and Cheshire West and Chester and is supported by dedicated partners including Cheshire Community Action, English Heritage, Forestry Commission, National Trust, Woodland Trust, Cheshire Landscape Trust and private landowners as well as the Mersey Forest who are all dedicated to the overall success of the three year project.

Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) sustains and transforms a wide range of heritage for present and future generations to take part in, learn from and enjoy. From museums, parks and historic places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage. HLF has supported more than 28,800 projects allocating over £4.3 billion across the UK, including more than 1,800 projects totalling over £200 million in Wales. To find out more, please visit www.hlf.org.uk

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Appendix D- Example Participant Information Pack

THANK YOU FOR REGISTERING FOR THE HILLFORT GLOW EXPERIMENT ON SATURDAY 19 MARCH AT PENYCLODDIAU

Event Information

Many of the hillforts across the landscapes of Cheshire and North Wales can be seen from each other. The Hillfort Glow experiment will aim to communicate between 5 Cheshire hillforts and 5 North Wales hillforts hoping to prove whether they are intervisible or not. The question being, could Iron Age people have seen the glowing fires across the hills?



The Hillforts themselves are Scheduled Ancient Monuments, so we cannot light our own fires, therefore torch light is the next best thing! People will be on each of the hillforts signalling their torches, starting at Caer Drewyn by Corwen, northwards along the Clwydian Range, to Burton Point on the Wirral and then all the way down Cheshire's Sandstone Ridge, with the experiment culminating on Maiden Castle, Bickerton Hill.

Meet at: 5.00pm prompt

Where: Coed Llangwyfan car park. Grid Reference SJ139669. *(For a map of this grid reference online, visit ordnancesurvey.co.uk/getamap)*

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www.heatherandhillforts.co.uk

When you arrive at the car park, please make yourself known to the co-ordinator to sign in.

Event timings: Communication between hillforts will start at 6.30pm from the hilltops. The walk to the hilltop is steep and uneven so we need enough time to get in position prior to the start of the event. Signalling should come to an end at approximately 7.30.

Coed Llangwyfan Car Park:



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© Hawlfraint y Goron. Cedwir pob hawl. Cyngor Sir Ddinbych. 100023408. 2010.

Warnings: The event will take up to 1 hour, it can be very cold on the hilltops as well as dark. Leaving the event early would be at your own risk. There will also be flashing lights which could cause photosensitive epilepsy.

Disclaimer

You will be asked to sign in upon arrival, and sign out at the end of the event. Whilst walking within these areas and on these footpaths is not regarded as a dangerous pastime, it is necessary that we bring to your attention the following:

- The specific walk to the hilltop for this event has been prepared and is led by staff members or fully briefed volunteers, but they are not qualified professional leaders.
- Whilst site coordinators will endeavour to highlight any risks before starting, neither they nor the organisers accept any responsibility for the loss or injury resulting during this event.

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- Staff will lead you to and from the hillfort but if you decide to leave the event before the end, you do so at your own risk. Walking without supervision may expose you to the risk of personal injury. You are asked to stay with the group at all times during the walk.
- The walk will proceed at the pace of the slowest walker(s)

What to bring:

- Warm Clothes – lots of layers and your winter woollies (don't forget a hat!)
- Stout footwear – terrain under foot is steep and uneven
- Gloves – your hands will get very cold when signalling with torches if you don't have gloves.
- A torch – if you have a high powered torch, bring this with you. Normal torches will also be useful for signalling and finding your way back to your car.
- A flask of hot drink – it will be cold!
- Binoculars
- A change of clothes may be advisable if the weather is bad as well as extra layers

Contact Information/Site Co-ordinator: Helen Mrowiec

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www.ygrugarcaerau.co.uk

www.heatherandhillforts.co.uk

Appendix E- Postponement Message

Mae'n wir ddrwg gennym fod wedi gorfod gwneud y penderfyniad synhwyrol i ohirio digwyddiad Llewych y Bryngaerau'r dydd Sul yma.

Mae'r cyfuniad o dymheredd dan sero, gorchudd o eira a rhew yn barod a mwy o eira a thymheredd rhewllyd wedi eu darogan yn y dyddiau nesaf yn golygu fod yr oblygiadau iechyd a diogelwch yn rhy ddifrifol.

Mae rhai o'r llwybrau mynediad i nifer o'r Bryngaerau yng Ngogledd Cymru'n beryglus iawn ar hyn o bryd oherwydd y rhew a'r eira.

Rydyn ni'n siomedig iawn wrth reswm, ond 'dydi'r cwbl ddim ar ben – fe gynhelir y digwyddiad eto, yng Ngwanwyn 2011 mae'n debyg, cyn newid yr awr.

Diolch i chi am gofrestru ar gyfer y digwyddiad. Fe gedwir eich manylion ar ffeil ac fe gysylltw'n â chi'r flwyddyn nesaf efo gwybodaeth bellach, yn cynnwys yr union ddyddiad ar gyfer y digwyddiad.

Cadwch lygad ar y wefan i gael y wybodaeth ddiweddaraf:

www.heatherandhillforts.co.uk

www.ygrugarcaerau.co.uk

www.habitatsandhillforts.co.uk

Bydd Llewych y Bryngaerau'n awr yn digwydd yn ystod gwanwyn 2011 – rydyn ni'n gobeithio y byddwch chi'n dal yn awyddus i gyfranogi – mae eich bryngaerau eich angen o hyd!!

It is with great regret that we have had to take the sensible decision to postpone this Sunday's Hillfort Glow event.

The combination of below zero temperatures, existing ground cover of snow and ice and more snow and freezing temperatures forecast over the next few days means the health and safety implications are just too high.

Some of the access routes to several of the Hillforts in North Wales are currently very dangerous due to ice and snow.

We are obviously really disappointed, but all is not lost – the event will still go ahead, probably in the Spring of 2011, before the clocks go forward.

Thank you for registering for the event, we will keep your details on file and contact you next year with further information, including the exact date the event will be rescheduled to.

Keep your eye on the website for updated information:

www.heatherandhillforts.co.uk

www.ygrugarcaerau.co.uk

www.habitatsandhillforts.co.uk

Hillfort Glow will now take place during the spring of 2011 – we hope you will still want to be involved – your hillforts will still need you!!

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Appendix F- Example Staff Info Pack-

Moel Fenlli crib sheet for Hillfort Glow.

- **Site coordinator** : David Shiel, Senior Warden for Clwydian Range AONB, (will bring the torches)
- Nick Critchley (FIRST AIDER) Moorland Field Officer, Denbighshire Countryside Service,
- Sarah Pevely, Archaeologist,
- Will Evers-Swindell

Please **meet** your volunteers at **Bwlch Pen Barras car park at 17:15pm** on 19th March. We need everyone to be in position on site for 18:15pm.

- Welcome your volunteers to the Hillfort Glow!
- Please brief your volunteers with your health and safety talk.
 - Checking they have adequate footwear and clothing.
 - If you are not satisfied they are adequately dressed please make them aware.
 - Check they have torches, if not for glowing for the walk back from the hillfort.
- On your registration list please ask your volunteers to sign in, primarily to agree they have been fully briefed.
- Ensure volunteers stay together on your walk. Give **other site staff members/official volunteers Hi-Vis jackets**
- Emphasise this is an **experiment!** Information about intervisibility and your hillfort will be emailed over so you can give background to the site and also on why we are doing this.

Please synchronise your watches with Big Ben/ Radio2 beeps etc so we are all looking in the right direction at the right time!

- On site – make sure all volunteers are well away from steep edges or drops.
- When it is your turn to set the flare off, ensure that there is a buffer zone of at least 20m, from the volunteers. Check **wind direction** as once released the flares also release smoke.
- Don't forget to give out Welsh cakes and home made Cheshire 'Honesty Cake'!!

When it is your turn, signal your torches on and off so other hillforts that can see you will signal back at you. And vice versa, keep a look out for those hillforts at correct time, then signal back at them

- On the walk back – make sure you have counted all volunteers back safely to their cars.
- Thank everyone for their time – let them know that we will be in touch for feedback

Order of Proceedings:

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- 17:15 Arrive on site at Bwlch Pen Barras. Sign in participants, welcome, introduction, H&S, and walk to site by 18:15
- 18:15- Familiarise yourselves with the hills before it becomes too dull as dusk falls. From Moel Fenlli you should be able to see all nine other hillforts. Try and familiarise yourselves with these points whilst it is still light.
- 18:30- Caer Drewyn, 204 °, will send its flare off and begin signalling towards you. Signal back to make the link. All other hillforts that can see Caer Drewyn will signal at the hillfort.
- 18:35- **Moel Fenlli's turn- Send off flare to signal you are turning on your torches. Switch torches on in general direction of the hillforts you know can see you. Begin to look for flashing lights coming from the hillforts to make the links.**
- 18:40- Moel Arthur's turn- 344 ° from you. They will send up a flare and then turn on their torches on and off to signal, you must then signal back at them to make the link.
- 18:45- Penycloddiau's turn- 338 ° from you. They will send up a flare and then turn on their torches on and off to signal, you must then signal back at them to make the link.
- 18:50- Moel y Gaer Rhosesmor 28 °. They will send up a flare and then turn on their torches on and off to signal.
- 18:55- Burton Point. 48 ° As above
- 19:00- Helsby. 63 ° They will send up a flare and then turn on their torches on and off to signal, you must then signal back at them to make the link.
- 19:05- Kelsborrow. 80 ° As above
- 19:10- Beeston. 92 ° As above
- 19:15- Maiden Castle. 100 ° As above

*Reverse chain reaction of flares will then start: starting with Maiden Castle. Flares will be released **one after the other as soon as one flare is seen, the next will follow.***

19:20: Maiden Castle, Bickerton Hill (Grid ref: SJ4980 5286)

19:21: Beeston Castle (Grid ref: SJ5380 5920)

19:22: Kelsborrow (Nr Kelsall) (Grid ref: SJ5317 6752)

19:23: Helsby Hill (Grid ref: SJ4927 7539)

19:24: Burton Point (SJ3050 7420)

19:25: Moel y Gaer Rhosesmor (SJ211691)

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19:26: Penycloddiau (SJ128678)

19:27: Moel Arthur (SJ145660)

19:28: Moel Fenlli (SJ163601)

19:29: Caer Drewyn (SJ087444)

19:30 CLOSE/FINISH EVENT

Main contact details:

Cheshire:

Ellie Soper - Project Manager, Habitats and Hillforts Landscape Partnership Scheme
(Cheshire West and Chester Borough Council)

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Wales:

Erin Robinson –Community Participation Officer, Heather & Hillforts Landscape Partnership
Scheme (Denbighshire County Council)

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Hillfort Glow Risk Assessment

<i>AREA</i>	<i>HAZARD</i>	<i>DEGREE OF RISK</i>	SAFETY PRECAUTIONS
CAR PARKS/MEETING PLACES	Queues of cars forming near entrance park which may interfere with access to site. Traffic management on site	Minimum risk	Staff members controlling car parks at each relevant sites. Experienced staff will be used to ensure the cars enter the car parks safely and public are safe in the car parks.
	Slips and trips	Medium Risk	Information sent to volunteers will highlight need to bring own torches. Members of staff will be on hand to assist where necessary. People will advised to wear appropriate footwear to minimise slips etc
	Other members of the public not involved in the event	Medium Risk	There is a strong possibility that members of public will turn up to walk to the sites who are not involved in the event. Members of staff are advised to be aware of these people.
HAZARDS IDENTIFIED ON DAY	Cars not parked in car parks - designated spaces or on the road.	Medium Risk	Numbers of cars in car parks will be monitored carefully. Staff parking to be at alternative locations if parking is limited.

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WALK TO HILLTOPS	Slips, trips and falls	Medium Risk	Site coordinators to advise participants of ground and underfoot conditions prior to setting off to hilltop.
	Public Welfare and safety	Low Risk	Staff will be clearly marked in High Vis clothing for volunteer's information if they have any problems during the walk.
	Inappropriate clothing / footwear		Staff will monitor volunteers clothing and footwear and advise public if they think there clothing footwear is not appropriate as the temperature looks like it will get below freezing after sunset
AT THE SUMMIT	Disorientation	Medium Risk Medium	Staff will advise volunteers of steep drops or edges and keep everyone together whilst on hilltops and signalling with torches. If it becomes clear

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	Lost people		people have become separated during ascent or descent, volunteers will be advised. Members of staff will agree a meeting place, such as the car park. Search and Rescue teams have been made aware of the event.
	Flares	Medium / High	Volunteers will be kept well away from the release site of the flares. Staff will provide a buffer zone of at least 10m. Members of staff will be fully briefed prior to release of flare and written instructions will be sent out to users. Test will have been carried out.
	Clearing Public from the summit	Medium	Following the final flare/signalling, the public will start leaving the summit -Staff will walk down and some will remain at the summit to ensure the summit is clear
FLARE RELEASE	On the summit	Medium	Flares will be released by fully briefed members of staff. Flares will be released away from the volunteers, at least 10m.
THE DESCENT	Leaving the summit	Medium	As above, staff will coordinate the descent and try and keep people together by leading the

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	Slips and trips	Medium / High	walk down Due to the time of the event - i.e. being dark and the uneven surface, the public will be advised to take their time. Staff will all have torches to assist people back down - The forecast will be monitored prior to the event.
	Disorientation	Low	Staff will lead and follow the public down guiding them back to the car parks. Directions will be marked on the ground in line paint to help orientation if visibility is bad.
DURING & AFTER	Cold Weather	Medium	The current forecast is for cold weather so public will be encouraged to make their way straight home after the descent or given directions to a local pub.
Car Parks with visitors leaving	Slips and Trips	Medium	Staff with torches will also be on hand to assist.
	Car Congestion	Medium	Staff will be used to control the flow of traffic
Hazards Identified on			

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the day			
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Heather and Hillforts and Habitats and Hillforts will advise the relevant Police and Fire authorities of the events in a briefing note.

The CAA will also receive a briefing note as well the coast guard at Holyhead and Liverpool Docks.

Weather	Weather forecast will be carefully monitored before the event. If it's for rain and wind, the site will be monitored at all times to ensure bad areas are clearly marked, including areas that might be slippery etc. If its forecast to be dry but cold, staff to monitor visitors' well-being etc.
First Aid	First Aid officers will be on site throughout the event and identified at the beginning of the event
Event Management:	Ellie Soper/Erin Robinson
Parking:	Experienced officers in charge.

Insurance

Risk assessment read, and agreed:

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Llewych y Caerau – Dydd Sadwrn Mawrth 19^{eg} 2011

Hillfort Glow – Saturday 19th March 2011

Cydlynnydd y Safle / Site Coordinator		Safle Site	
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Er nad ystyrir cerdded o fewn yr ardaloedd hyn ac ar y llwybrau hyn yn ddifyrwch peryglus, mae angen i ni ddwyn y canlynol i'ch sylw:

- Mae'r daith gerdded benodedig i ben y bryn ar gyfer y digwyddiad yma wedi ei pharatoi gan aelodau'r staff a nhw, neu wirfoddolwyr sydd wedi cael briff llawn fydd yn arwain, ond nid ydyn [nhw'n](#) arweinwyr proffesiynol cymwys.
- Er y gwnaiff cydlynwyr y safle ymdrechu i amlygu unrhyw risgiau cyn dechrau, nid ydyn nhw na'r trefnwyr yn derbyn unrhyw gyfrifoldeb am golled neu anaf yn ystod neu o ganlyniad i'r digwyddiad hwn.
- Fe wnaiff staff eich arwain i'r fryngaer ac oddi yno ond os penderfynwch chi adael y digwyddiad cyn y diwedd, byddwch yn gwneud hynny ar eich cyfrifoldeb eich hun. [Gall cerdded heb oruchwyliaeth eich amlygu i berygl o anaf personol. Gofynnir i chi aros efo'r grŵp bob amser yn ystod y daith.](#)
- [Fe aiff y daith yn ei blaen yn ôl cyflymder y cerddwr/cerddwyr arafaf](#)

Bydd arwyddo'r ffurflen hon yn golygu eich bod wedi deall a derbyn yr amodau uchod ac mae hynny'n amod i'ch cyfranogiad yn y digwyddiad hwn.

Whilst walking within these areas and on these footpaths is not regarded as a dangerous pastime, it is necessary that we bring to your attention the following:

- The specific walk to the hilltop for this event has been prepared and is led by staff members or fully briefed volunteers, but they are not qualified professional leaders.
- Whilst site coordinators will endeavour to highlight any risks before starting, neither they nor the organisers accept any responsibility for the loss or injury resulting during this event.
- Staff will lead you to and from the hillfort but if you decide to leave the event before the end, you do so at your own risk. Walking without supervision may expose you to the risk of personal injury. You are asked to stay with the group at all times during the walk.
- The walk will proceed at the pace of the slowest walker(s)

Signing this form means you have read and accepted the above conditions and it is a condition of your participation in this event.

	Enw Name	Llofnod Signature	Rhif ffôn / cyswllt mewn argyfwng Telephone no/emergency contact
1			
2			
3			

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Appendix G- Information Sheet for Emergency Services

Hillfort Glow Briefing Note:

The Hillfort Glow is an exciting event bringing Landscape Partnership Schemes together from Cheshire and North Wales to raise the awareness of Iron Age Hillforts and to involve local communities in a 'mass experiment' where we will be testing the intervisibility of 10 hillforts

When will the event happen? : Saturday 19th March 2011

What is involved?

Flares will be sent up from the top of 10 iron age hillforts along the Clwydian Range in North East Wales, Burton Point and the Sandstone Ridge in Cheshire. These will be followed by using torch light to communicate between the hillforts.

The public will be invited onto each hillfort – there will be a booking system in place with a maximum of 30 people of each site. Health and Safety procedures will be followed.

How long will the event last? 1 hour

What sort of flares will be used:

Ikaros White Parachute Rocket Flare

- Light Intensity: 30,000 cd
- Burn Time: 30 seconds
- Flare Ejection Height: 350m
- Size: 277mm Long x 47mm Dia
- Weight: 350g

Sites and times where the flares will be sent from:

18:30: Caer Drewyn (SJ087444)

18:35: Moel Fenlli (SJ163601)

18:40: Moel Arthur (SJ145660)

18:45: Penycloddiau (SJ128678)

18:50: Moel y Gaer Rhosesmor (SJ211691)

18:55: Burton Point (SJ3050 7420)

19:00: Helsby Hill (Grid ref: SJ4927 7539)

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19:05: Kelsborrow (Nr Kelsall) (Grid ref: SJ5317 6752)

19:10: Beeston Castle (Grid ref: SJ5380 5920)

19:15: Maiden Castle, Bickerton Hill (Grid ref: SJ4980 5286)

Reverse chain reaction of flares will then start : starting with Maiden Castle. Flares will be released one after the other as soon as one flare is seen, the next will follow

19:20: Maiden Castle, Bickerton Hill (Grid ref: SJ4980 5286)

19:21: Beeston Castle (Grid ref: SJ5380 5920)

19:22: Kelsborrow (Nr Kelsall) (Grid ref: SJ5317 6752)

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19:25: Moel y Gaer Rhosesmor (SJ211691)

19:26: Penycloddiau (SJ128678)

19:27: Moel Arthur (SJ145660)

19:28: Moel Fenlli (SJ163601)

19:29: Caer Drewyn (SJ087444)

19:30 CLOSE/FINISH EVENT

Main contact details:

Cheshire:

Ellie Soper - Project Manager, Habitats and Hillforts Landscape Partnership Scheme (Cheshire West and Chester Borough Council)

Wales:

Erin Robinson – Interpretation Officer, Heather & Hillforts Landscape Partnership Scheme (Denbighshire County Council)

Burton:

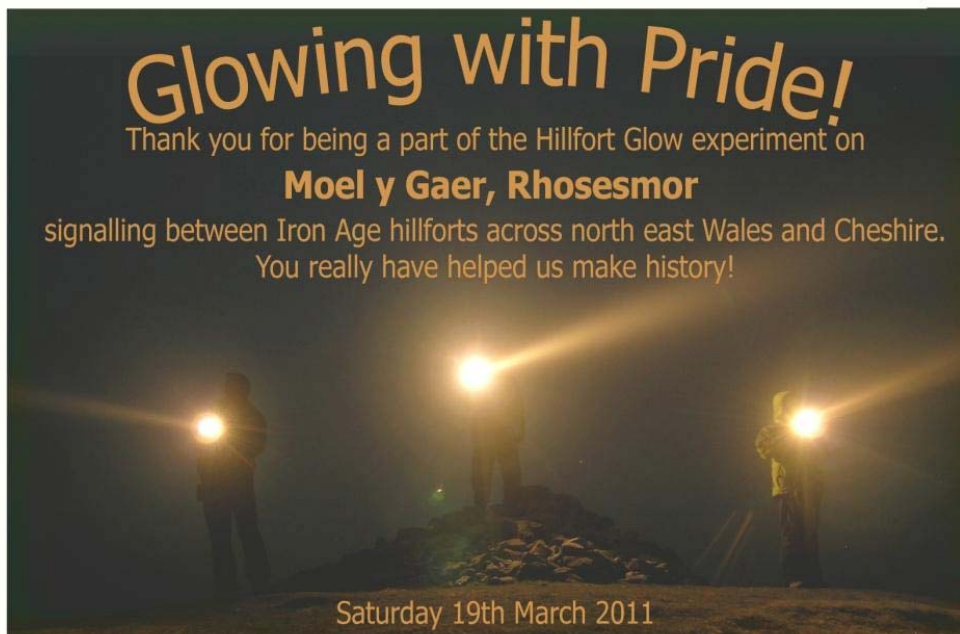
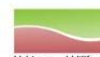
Colin Wells – Manager, RSPB

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Appendix H- Certificates of Participation



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Appendix I- Initial Results emailed

Thank you for being part of the Hillfort Glow 2011

Feedback from Caer Drewyn



We went up Caer Drewyn with 13 adults and 5 children, (plus the 4 of us from Denbighshire Countryside Service and Becky and Jess from Chester University). We spent a little time at the top examining the Clwydian Range and the maps provided, then kicked the event off with a flare at 6.30pm. We easily saw lights from Moel Fenlli, Moel Arthur and Penycloddiau (even though you can barely make out

the top of that hill through a thin gap in a hedgeline). We saw those 3 hillforts let their flares off and waited a while to see if we could spot Moel y Gaer on Halkyn Mountain, but couldn't.

At about this time we saw what looked like a flare coming from the Llangollen direction! Does anyone know who that was? Maybe a fellow hillfort enthusiast on Castell Dinas Bran which also used to be a hillfort... We then had a break for hot chocolates and to eat our extensive cake collection before letting off the final flare when Moel Fenlli's went up - we could see all 3 on the Range at one time.

Feedback from Moel Fenlli

Around 25 people gathered on Moel Fenlli to take part in this glowing experiment. Connections were made with all hillforts in the chain - Burton point the most difficult but nonetheless a positive connection made. Everyone had a great experience and flashed most enthusiastically at the thought that someone might



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flash back !

Feedback from Moel Arthur

Moel Arthur saw more than 25 people attend the hillfort glow event. Connections were made with the following hillforts, Moel Fenlli, Penycloddiau, Moel Y Gaer Rhosesmor, Helsby Hill, Kelsborrow, Beeston and Maiden Castle. We can also confirm that we saw all 10 flares at the end of the event.

Feedback from Penycloddiau

Well, exciting news as we were able to see both Caer Drewyn's flare and their torches- a link made that we didn't think was possible! We were able to spot everyone's flare and torches apart from the torches at Maiden Castle as there is a hill in the way but their flare was visible in the sky. At Burton Point saw were able to see their flare but couldn't make out the torches because of light pollution which is such a shame. Some people thought they were able to make out flashing lights but we can't be certain. Helsby was really clear considering the light pollution from Stanlow and we had an amazing view of moon as it rose over Beeston Castle; an amazing backdrop to our event. A big thank you goes out to Denbigh Explorer Scouts who joined us for the experiment and were in charge of the signalling- a great job done everyone, thank you!

Feedback from Moel y Gaer Rhosesmor



What a fantastic evening! The registered Glowers met in the village and walked up to the hillfort from the school. At the top we were shortly joined by the Hillfort Glow 'witnesses', who had come to watch the event through a guided walk organised by the local Blue Bell Inn in Halkyn. We think there were around 100 of us on the hill at one time! We were unable to see Caer Drewyn's flare, but the excitement began when we spotted Moel Fenlli's flare and then a distinctive glow coming from the hilltop. As the moon rose over the Sandstone Ridge it was the biggest and pinkest

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we had ever seen and added to the magic of the event. We saw all of the other hillforts' lights and flares. At the end of the event we waited to see if we could see the flare that the Friends of Old Oswestry hillfort were letting off at 7.30pm but we were unable to. We enjoyed Welsh Cakes and homemade fruit cake from Cheshire and warm drinks on top of the reservoir as we watched the line of torches descend Moel Arthur and Penycloddiau hillforts- a lovely way to end.

For those who attended Moel y Gaer and did not receive a certificate, please contact Fiona Gale and one will be sent to you.

Feedback from Burton Point

There was real excitement waiting for the first flare, everyone was debating which ones we could see. We were made up and cheered with every visual. Almost a bit of a competition with the furthest ones; "I can see a light!", "Where? I can't see anything!", "Oh no, wait, there it is!!"

Burton Point were not able to see anything from Caer Drewyn, Moel Fenlli was really clear, but only the flares were spotted at Moel Arthur, Penycloddiau and Helsby but the flares and the Glow were visible at Moel y Gaer, Kelsborrow, Beeston and Maiden Castle.

Feedback from Helsby



Helsby Hill saw more than 25 people attend the hillfort glow event. Connections were made with the following hillforts, Moel Fenlli, Moel Arthur, Penycloddiau, Moel Y Gaer Rhosesmor, Kelsborrow, Beeston and Maiden Castle. We can also confirm the flare from Burton Point was seen from here.

For those who attended Helsby Hill and did not receive a certificate, please contact the site coordinator directly – Ellie

Soper and one will be sent to you.

Thank you to all those volunteers who attended, the event wouldn't have been such a success without you.

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Feedback from Kelsborrow

Kelsborrow had circa 30 people attend the Hillfort Glow Event. Connections were made to Moel Fenlli, Moel Arthur, Penycloddiau, Moel y Gaer – Rhosesmor, Helsby, Beeston and Maiden Castle. Only the flare could be seen from Burton, but suspect that the signalling between these two sites is hindered by trees. Everyone enjoyed themselves and a good night was had by all.

For those who attended Kelsborrow and did not receive a certificate, please contact Ellie Soper and one will be sent to you.

Feedback from Beeston

An excellent evening – with no problems or incidents to report.

Beeston was attended by approximately 30 volunteers plus Gina Bebbington and Nick Jones from the Northwich Guardian. The timing allowed for an orderly ascent to the top of Beeston crag with plenty of time to orientate everyone and go through the details of what-to-do-when, along with the various bits of housekeeping and the handing out of cake – to which there was much rejoicing!

There was a moment when the rising ‘Super Moon’ threatened to upstage the whole event but once this was overcome the serious business of ‘Glowing’ could begin.

The results from Beeston were as follows. All flares were seen with the exception of Caer Drewyn. We could see good clear torch signals with the naked eye from Moel Fenlli, Moel Arthur, Penycloddiau, Moel Y Gaer (Rhos.), Helsby and Kelsborrow and a torch signal from Burton Point was observed by one or two participants using binoculars.

At the end of the experiment it was noteworthy to see the chain of torch wielding volunteers wending their way down the hill like a giant glowing wyrm. Once we got back to the car park everyone was keen to get their hands on one of the much coveted ‘Glow certificates’ – collector’s item of the future I’m sure!

Feedback from Maiden Castle

Final attendance at Maiden Castle was approx 30 people. Connections were made with the following hillforts: Moel Fenlli, Moel Arthur, Penycloddiau, Moel Y Gaer Rhosesmor, Helsby, Kelsborrow. We can also confirm the flare from Beeston was seen from here. A flare sent from Old Oswestry was also clearly visible.

Thank you to the National Trust for their help and support during and prior to the evening.

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Feedback from Old Oswestry

Saturday was a bit chilly but we were intrepid and the moon was beautiful rising over Shropshire.

Long wait during which we think we saw the flare from Moel Fenli but then we definitely saw all the flares from Burton Point on -ie Helsby, Kelsborrow Beeston and Maiden Castle and then back again. We did not see Moel Fenli on the reverse run but that could have been due to the extra street lights etc which had come on in the middle distance. When we set off our flare we saw the torches on what we think was Maiden Castle and Beeston.

We were very impressed - we felt our flare was especially spectacular - so hope others really did see us!



Thank you to all for being involved – we would love to hear your feedback.....and if you have any photos please send them to us!

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Appendix J- Comments from Feedback Forms:

Caer Drewyn:

- Well organised. Marshals/supervisors helpful and informative. Could have been better advertised
- A great evening on Caer Drewyn hillfort. We were told about the event by a speaker at a walk-leading course organised by Conwy council then googled it to find out more. We knew there were hillforts on the Clwydian Range but had not visited any. We did not even know about our one and it did add to our knowledge of the forts. The event was very well organised and successful and we enjoyed it very much.
- we all enjoyed it, was a great family outing, educational as well as fun!

Moel Fenlli

- It was well organised and the staff on the night were well-prepared and friendly
- This was a very interesting evening and with the super moon it was enjoyable in its own way. The area was well covered and I believe 'we' saw everyone else. An interesting concept- how much further would it reach into Wales or Cheshire/Wirral?
- Really good fun. Could it be an annual event? Perhaps on guy fawkes night, or st david's day, or even possibly new years eve? Or mid-summer night at midnight!
- This was really interesting and also tremendous fun! It was very well organised: not just coordinating the flares etc but also getting that number of people up and down Foel Fenli safely. It was a lovely touch that they'd brought cake and hot chocolate, please pass on my thanks and apprec

Moel Arthur

- Thank you for including me in the group on Moel Arthur this weekend. It was not only a wonderful project to be part of, but an amazing experience. The flares, lights and the super moon and the lovely people. It was an experience not to be missed. Thank you
- Maybe too much walking time- it was somewhat chilly up there!
- This was a thoroughly enjoyable experience in every way- well organised by friendly yet efficient folk!

Penycloddiau

- Thoroughly enjoyed this event but wished we'd taken your advice and had a hot drink with us! The event was well organised and well coordinated with a good mix of ages taking part and it was great to see the Scouts involved!
- It was great fun and a special experience when the flares went up from the hillforts on the Wirral and in Cheshire. The bara brith was a welcome extra. I would love to take part in any future events

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- Just to say how much I enjoyed the hillfort evening. It was great fun and very interesting. We were lucky that the large full moon was on the same night or was that great planning? The bara brith was also much appreciated. Many thanks to Helen for giving us such a fun time. Anything else I would love to be involved.
- Great evening, very informative. An interesting and enjoyable project.
- I would like to express our thanks to the organised of the hillfort glow event, especially to Helen and Rachel on the Penycloddiau site. We had a really interesting evening- if a little cold! We learnt lots about the hillforts in general, and penycloddiau in particular and it was great to join in with the signalling to the other forts. Thanks very much for allowing Denbigh scouts to be part of this experience.
- <wild places blog>

Moel y Gaer

- I very much enjoyed the event and learning more about our local hillforts.
- We really enjoyed the event- we've been up this (and several other) hillforts many times but this felt very special and unique. It was amazing seeing the flares go up and the signals from the other hills- especially at the end when the whole set went up together. I feel very lucky to have been part of such an experiment- right on our doorstep! Part of my family has lived on the mountain for many generations and I couldn't help wondering if my ancestors had seen similar lights! Thanks for a well organised and interesting event.
- A great pity bonfires not allowed. Rhosesmor has a tradition of bonfires eg coronation, royal wedding, end of war. Great procession led by men on horseback carrying lighted flames. Set off from the cross keys. Mrs Unwin in Rhosesmor may have pictures of her father, a great character on his horse. My father lit the last one on the bump before you got the the reservoir in 1960? Princess margaret5 and A Armstrong Jones.
- I really enjoyed the event. It's good to see people getting together in the countryside, it fosters community awareness. I thought the tea and cakes were a nice touch.

Burton Point

- I thought the event was excellent due to the knowledge of the archaeologist and the RSPB warden. It was wonderful to imagine back in time people with their fires able to signal each other. We would both love to volunteer for anything else.
- Thank you for letting my husband and I join the burton point glowers!! It was a fantastic experience and i just couldn't believe we would see so many hillforts as we did. As we all said if all the lights were off so no light pollution and each hillfort had a huge fire then we would have seen them so clearly but the torches were exceptional. Ps the RSPB warden was great too
- Thank you for a wonderful experience and a very enchanting evening! I was delighted the experiment was a success.

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- We would like to thank you for the opportunity to take part in the event, we thoroughly enjoyed the evening and learnt a lot about the hillforts in our region. The communication between the sites worked brilliantly. Well done to all involved.

Helsby

- It was an excellent evening, extremely well organised and very good fun
- The evening event was a great success and I enjoyed it. I am very interested in history and the past. Thank you for letting me take part.
- I knew very little about hillforts before this event which obviously was a great success. Had the weather been rainy or overcast the outcome would have been very different!!
- Very enjoyable and well organised. Helped along by the weather. The Welsh cakes were wonderful thanks to Ellie
- A well organised and interesting event. I was assisting Ellie by monitoring timing. The fine weather and the rising of the large moon added to the enjoyment and interest.
- I really enjoyed this very well organised event. Thanks for organising it. It was good to feel part of something historic.
- I would like to thank you so much for letting me be a part of the event. It was a really enjoyable experience as well as being informative.
- We all thoroughly enjoyed it, especially being part of a larger group of like-minded people scattered across Wales and Cheshire.

Beeston

- Very well organised and enjoyable event. Good information supplied. Staff for the event were very knowledgeable. Good crowd of people, would like to be involved as a volunteer in any future projects.
- Loved the event
- It was a really good night, enjoyed being part of it
- We had a fantastic time, we'd love to take part in anything to do with the hillforts again, thanks so much for organising it!
- Thank you for arranging the experiment. You couldn't have organised any better night, the weather was great and the excitement of seeing all the other sites winking their torches at each other was magical
- I thoroughly enjoyed the evening and was much more interesting than I expected. We were lucky to have such a spectacular view of the moon. A great sense of history!
- I was fortunate enough to take part in the hillfort glow at Beeston Castle last night- and what a wonderful and memorable event it was! It felt thrilling to communicate successfully by light with seven of the other nine hillforts, just as our ancient ancestors might have done, and an experience that will stay with me for a long time. My sincere thanks for making this such a memorable occasion. Wishing I could do it all again!

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Kelsborrow

- There had clearly been a lot of preparation work for the event and we were impressed at how smoothly it went. The gentleman who coordinated our event was excellent and very informative. Many thanks for an enjoyable evening!
- Thanks for organising the hillfort glow event, which was brilliant to be a part of. David Matthews who coordinated our site at Kelsborrow proved to be a wealth of information and really put the various sites and the experiment in general into context for us. Thanks again to you and to all those who helped make the evening possible. It was really something to remember.

Maiden

- This for me was fantastic, literally a week or so before finding out about this event a group of us were doing some work around the hillforts in north Wales and had come to a pretty definite conclusion that there was a communication link between them all using fires/lights as signals, linking through Gop Hill at Trelawnydd and possibly further through to the copper mines at Llandudno and maybe further on to Anglesey. We didn't get as far as linking in through to Cheshire and the Wirral so this was an amazing chance for me to consolidate the work that we had already suspected and have it scientifically proved that it was at least possible.
- A big thank you to Colin Slater and Dave Morris for their help in escorting me and hubby down to our car after the hillfort glow at Maiden Castle. We really enjoyed it.

Old Oswestry

- It was a most interesting and worthwhile evening

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Appendix K- Additional Facebook feedback from the Heather and Hillforts Fan Page

[Colin Wrench](#) i was at helsby and it was awesome

[Blue Bell Inn Halkyn](#) Fantastic turnout on Moel-y-Gaer, we reckoned on over 100 people! 20 March at 12:53 ·

[Wendy Hughes](#) Great event, amazing to see all the flares go up at the end! Thanks Erin and the team! 20 March at 15:52 ·

[Ben Lovegrove](#) Was reading about this in the BBC news today, fascinating 21 March at 21:53 ·

[David Field](#) Just a quick note to thank you for organising an unforgettable evening. And a very successful one at that! We were at Moel y Gaer, and had a fantastic time. Still can't believe that lights were seen from all bar one of the sites. Thanks again. [21 March at 20:35](#) ·

[Paul Beer](#) I really enjoyed this at maiden castle [21 March at 02:41](#) ·

[Jennifer Liston-Smith](#) It was a real thrill when the other, distant hill fort dwellers signalled back to acknowledge our signs, and the excitement was shared by a big age range of people we represented on Moel-y-Gaer: great to be part of it.

[Blue Bell Inn Halkyn](#) Fantastic job Erin, a really wonderful event and tremendous positive feedback from our walkers. I hope you will consider doing it again as so much fun was had! [20 March at 14:23](#) ·

[Louise Sherratt](#) I was at Beeston Castle - great experience! [20 March at 12:01](#) ·

[Y Grug a'r Caerau - Heather and Hillforts](#) Brilliant! We saw you so clearly from Wales! Please add any pictures if you took any. Wasn't the moon spectacular!

[Louise Sherratt](#) The moon was amazing - don't think any photos will do it justice

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[Derry Hunter](#) Can you just turn up at Burton Point? Is it too late to book? [18 March at 22:17](#) ·

[Y Grug a'r Caerau - Heather and Hillforts](#) Hi Derry, I'm afraid the event was by booking only and we are now fully booked, but you can join in if you head just over the Dee to Halkyn Mountain- the Blue Bell Inn in Halkyn are leading a free guided walk to watch the event from Moel y Gaer hillfort Rhosesmor. Search for 'Hillfort Glow Witness Walk' on Facebook! 19 March at 12:45

[Y Grug a'r Caerau - Heather and Hillforts](#) Did you come to Moel y Gaer in the end Derry? 20 March at 01:47 ·

[Derry Hunter](#) We did! Fantastic evening and well looked after by the Blue Bell posse. Thanks for organising this. It was magical and kept thinking of "And did those feet in ancient times"

20 March at 11:36 ·

[Janine Pinion](#) Ditto - it was fantastic!

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Appendix L- Press Cuttings

Halkyn Mountain News. Issue 144. Spring 2011. Halkyn

Hillfort Glow- historical experiment across Cheshire, Wirral & Wales!

A very special historical experiment will be taking place on Halkyn Mountain on the evening of the full moon this March. The prehistoric hillfort of Moel y Gaer will be part of a community experiment when communication is attempted between ten ancient hillforts across north east Wales, the Wirral and Cheshire at dusk.

The Iron Age hillfort on Halkyn Mountain was subject to excavations in the 1970's in preparation for the building of the reservoir which now sits on its summit. The findings from these excavations have made Moel y Gaer Internationally known in hillfort studies, regularly cited in academic texts.



The hillfort had at least three phases of use, the first enclosure surrounded by a wooden fence, with wooden roundhouses. The second phase included the building of the 'ramparts'- the large banks and ditches which surround the hillfort. Archaeologists found evidence of 'street planning' within the fort, where areas had been designated for specific buildings, such as roundhouses and 'four-posters', commonly thought to be grain stores. The post holes from the third phase showed evidence that their posts were removed shortly after they had been placed, presumably for use at a different site, suggesting that this phase of the hillfort was short lived, perhaps used as a temporary refuge in a time of unrest; a temporary stronghold for residents of the neighbouring lands, needing a place of safety from raids and skirmishes.

However, almost all the evidence we have for the use of this hillfort and many more in Wales and beyond, is the archaeology that remains under the ground, as we have no written record from natives from the Iron Age. The large banks and ditches and the impressive gateway feature of Moel y Gaer suggest a defensive purpose, but they could easily have been elaborate for reasons of ostentation. Could this have been a place where the local chieftain lived, where people came to pay homage

and taxes of stock and grain? Could this be what the 'four-posters' within the fort were used to house?

Or perhaps it was a place that the people gathered, for market and for special occasions. There is no denying that Moel y Gaer is a prominent feature in the landscape and not only is it easily seen, but from it the views are spectacular, as I am sure you are aware from enjoying the views today, around 2,500 years after it was built.

From the hillfort you are able to see a number of other hillforts across Wales, Cheshire and the Wirral and when you take a seat on the summit, perhaps pausing for a hot drink on the reservoir as you enjoy a walk around the Common, your mind starts to wonder how many people have sat here before you, looking over to neighbouring hillforts, perhaps all of the same tribe- the Deceangli, with a feeling of community as you imagine the rising smoke from the fires within their roundhouses.

On March 15th, north east Wales' Heather and Hillforts Project and Cheshire West and Chester's Habitats and Hillforts Project will be testing this theory. The experiment will involve local people close to ten hillforts on Cheshire's Sandstone Ridge, the Clwydian Range, Mynydd y Gaer Conwen, Halkyn Mountain and the Wirral, trying to communicate between the hillforts using torch light. The experiment, originally scheduled for December 2010 but postponed due to heavy snow, aims to see if the glowing fires could have been seen across the hills and acted as a communication or warning system. For more details of the experiment please visit www.heatherandhillforts.co.uk.



Volunteer places for Moel y Gaer were filled incredibly quickly and are now fully booked, but The Blue Bell Inn will be organising a guided 'witness walk' to see the experiment in action on the evening. Please visit <http://www.bluebell.uk.eu.org/> for more details and for your chance to witness this event, recreating something that may not have been done for over two thousand years...

Erin Robinson

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Iron age hillforts glow with journey back in time

11:30am Wednesday 23rd March 2011

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By [Gina Bebbington](#) »

AS a blood-red moon rose large and low over Beeston Castle, the 30-strong group waited for the first flare from the Welsh hills before they began to signal.

Their torch-light shone bright across the darkening Cheshire plain as they made contact with their distant counterparts on the night of the full moon.

This auspicious evening just before the spring equinox, when the moon was also at its closest for 19 years, was chosen by organisers as the perfect night to bring iron age history to life across Cheshire and north east Wales.

The Hillfort Glow experiment took place at 10 ancient sites at dusk on Saturday, including Beeston Castle, Maiden Castle, Kelsborrow, Helsby, Burton Point, Moel Y Gaer Rhosesmor, Pen Y Cloddiau, Moel Arthur, Moel Fenlli and Caer Drewyn.

Each hillfort in turn set off a flare, which was the signal for volunteers at all other hillforts to shine torches at that site, where volunteers there flashed their torches back.

The aim of this was to show the visibility between the hillforts and illustrate the relationship that may have existed between them in the iron age.

Dan Garner, from Cheshire West and Chester Council's (CWAC) Habitats and Hillforts project, co-ordinated Hillfort Glow at Beeston Castle.

He said: "At certain times of the year these hillforts may have been used for gatherings of people, perhaps to celebrate equinoxes or other important times of the year.

"We're coming up to the spring equinox so it's a fitting time of the year to do this experiment - we've just substituted torches for their large bonfires.

"We want to prove the intervisibility between the hillforts - hillforts with strong connections with one another may have been part of a larger tribal identity."

The experiment was a resounding success, with flares and torchlight visible between Beeston Castle and the hillforts at Foel Fenlli, Moel Arthur, Pen Y Cloddiau, Moel Y Gaer, Burton Point, Helsby and Kelsborrow.

Dan said: "It was a clear night and worked really well - the results were better than we expected."



Dan Garner, from Habitats and Hillforts, at Beeston Castle



Volunteers at Beeston Castle during the Hillfort Glow experiment



Kerry Fletcher and six-year-old Max Savage were two of the volunteers at Hillfort Glow



Volunteers signal to the Welsh hills

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EDITORS CHOICE

UPDATE: Blaze destroys building at Winnington Rec
A MAN has been arrested on suspicion of arson after a blaze ripped through a pavillion at Winnington Rec today, Friday.



TOURING CARS: Neal tips champion to shine
THE Dunlop MSA British Touring Car Championship makes its annual visit to Oulton Park this weekend.



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NEWS

Random Sample

Friendly Fires

Just after sunset on Saturday, 19 March, archaeologist Erin Robinson waited with a small crowd of volunteers at Moel y Gaer, an Iron Age hill fort in Wales not far from the English border. They were watching another hill fort, Moel Fenli, about 10 km to the southwest, waiting for a flare to shoot up. "There was just a huge bolt of excitement when it went off," Robinson says. "We had a huge cheer."

The volunteers were part of an experiment to see whether the people who occupied hill forts along the Welsh-English border some 2500 years ago could have seen each other and maybe even sent signals with fire. After the flare's signal, the group on Moel y Gaer shone their flashlights at the people at Moel Fenli, who flashed theirs back, simulating light from a fire. Over the next hour, the greeting was repeated among a total of 10 hill forts.

Robinson's doctoral research at Bangor University in Wales is on the connections between the different hill forts, such as shared architectural styles. If these sites were occupied at the same time, they would have been aware of each other, the experiment shows. "The thing that I found more than anything was the emotional attachment," Robinson says. "By seeing people with a signaling light on a fellow hill fort, maybe up to 40 kilometers away, you felt the sense that you were part of one large community."



A view from a Welsh hill fort.

FINDINGS | would require 50% of the animal's entire

Current Archaeology Magazine. July 2011.

Current Publishing : London

NEWS IN BRIEF

Hillfort beacons

Scores of volunteers took part in an experiment in March 2011 to prove that Iron Age communities could interact and communicate. The volunteers used flashlights to signal to each other from the summits of ten hillforts running across the landscape of North Wales, the Wirral, and Cheshire. Archaeologist Erin Robinson, from Denbighshire's Heather and Hillforts Project, said that 'the experiment proved that fires could have been seen across the hills and could have acted as a communication or warning system'.

www.habitatsandhillforts.co.uk

www.ygrugarcaerau.co.uk

Country and Border Life Magazine. May 2011. Border Publishing: Oswestry

Tel: 01691 718076. www.glynceiriog.org.uk

Shine a light

The hills were alight with torches recently as 10 Iron Age hillforts across North-East Wales and Cheshire communicated with each other using just light as part of an experiment named Hillfort Glow. Flares were set off into the night sky at allotted times and some of the more than 350 volunteers shone high-powered torches at each other to see if it was possible that people from different forts ever communicated with each other.

"We were able to make more connections than we imagined – some that we were unsure were even possible in the daylight," enthuses Erin Robinson, archaeologist and co-organiser.

Torches were used to signal rather than fire beacons (which have been used in the past for special events), due to the internationally rare habitat that the hillforts sit within. Around one-third of the world's population of heather moorland is located in the United Kingdom.

To learn more about the project, visit www.heatherandhillforts.co.uk



www.heatherandhillforts.co.uk

Graziers News

Glastir

Our application for Glastir has been confirmed as received by WAG and we have been issued with our CR number (customer reference number).

The next stage as we see it is to arrange a meeting between the active graziers and our Commons Development Officer Mr Gwyn Rowland's. Mr Rowland's is a grazier on the Clwyddian hills and is our link with Glastir. We hope to arrange this meeting within the next couple of months.

Management Agreement

No further action on this for two reasons

1 We cannot negotiate an agreement with CCW and Grosvenor Estates until we know the outcome of the Glastir agreement.

2 Welsh Assembly Government are rearranging their departments and CCW is to be amalgamated with Forestry and Environment. What this will mean for the future we do not know?

Flintshire Local Access Forum

At a meeting of the above forum a presentation was given by the head of the Environmental Department of Flintshire County Council.

From a survey that was done throughout Flintshire they found that by far the most complained about problem was dog mess. As a result they have raised a dog order and are using PCSOs to patrol problem areas. Seven fixed penalties had been issued up to the date of the meeting (11th April).

If you have this problem in your area you can ring the Environmental Department on 01352 703360.

Halkyn Graziers and Commoners Association

Hillfort Glow Project

In the last edition of the Halkyn Mountain News I wrote about the upcoming Hillfort Glow experiment that your local hillfort of Moel y Gaer would be taking part in, along with many of yourselves!

The experiment was an intervisibility study between ten hillforts across north east Wales and Cheshire, signalling between them to make connections.

Connections were made reaching to hillforts sitting over 40km away from each other and this was all thanks to all of the local residents giving up their time to help shine their lights on the hilltops! Moel y Gaer hillfort was able to spot all hillforts taking part in the experiment apart from Caer Drewyn, Corwen. The farthest link from Halkyn Mountain was to Beeston Castle hillfort, over 20 miles away.



The children were especially interested in what was to happen as we were all shown where to look

The feedback gained from the event was that people really connected with the ancient enclosures. Just by seeing a light on a fellow hilltop, people felt a sense of community and connection with the other hillforts and people who were signalling back to them; it certainly felt as if these hillforts belonged together.



No torch, no problem, try the glowsticks

The ambience of the event was added to by the 'Super Moon' which rose over the hillforts during the experiment. This meant that the moon's distance was in its nearest position to earth, the phenomenon only happening once every 18 years.



The weekend was also the date of the Spring Equinox which would have been an important date in the Iron Age calendar. From where we were standing on Moel y Gaer hillfort, the large pink full moon rose over Beeston Castle and everyone turned to gaze, (it almost outshone the experiment- it was stunningly beautiful!)

Although we are unsure if these hillforts all date to the same time (even if they all date to the Iron Age, that is still a period of 800 years so they may not all have been built or used at the same time), the experiment highlighted the area for its wealth of hillforts and their proximity.

We can't prove that they sent signals to each other, we don't even know if they were friend or foe, but we can certainly conclude that these places still have a special meaning to us 2,500 years after they were built and to think that it could have been our own ancestors looking out to other hillforts all of those years ago certainly makes the hills and hillforts glow in our imaginations.

The experiment took place at dusk using ten hillforts on the Sandstone Ridge, the Wirral, Halkyn Mountain, the Clwydian Range and Mynydd-y-Gaer Corwen at the hillforts of Maiden Castle (Bickerton Hill), Beeston Castle, Kelsborrow, Helsby Hill, Burton Point, Moel y Gaer Rhosesmor, Penycloddiau, Moel Arthur, Moel Fenlli and Caer Drewyn.

Thank you all for helping us make history during the experiment and I am sure you are all 'glowing' with pride to have one of these magnificent enclosures on your doorstep on Halkyn Mountain.

Erin Robinson, Community Participation Officer
Heather and Hillforts Project, Denbighshire
Countryside Service



Open Farm Sunday at Midlist Farm Sunday June 12th 10am – 3pm

This is the fifth year for us to take part in the Leaf Open Farm Sunday. We along with hundreds of other farms across the UK open our farm to visitors one day a year. The aim of the event is to allow people to come along and see what farming is all about. Adults and children can see at first hand some of the tasks undertaken on a farm. You will see a range of animals - buffaloes, pigs, sheep and chickens some of which you can touch. There will be shearing demonstrations, and some activities you can join in - try your hand at sausage making, take a walk down the field to see the bee hives. You can enjoy something from our tasty BBQ as drinks teas and cakes. We shall have a few competitions and some stalls selling rural crafts. It is free to come in though you are welcome to make donations for a charity. We have raised over a thousand pounds for various charities in the past four years. So get your wellies out! come along and have some fun, learn about farming and the countryside

John & Wendy Sigsworth

Feedback from Moel-y-Gaer Rhosesmor

What a fantastic evening! The registered Glowlers met in the village and walked up to the hillfort from the school.



At the top we were shortly joined by the Hillfort Glow 'witnesses', who had come to watch the event through a guided walk organised by the local Blue Bell Inn in Halkyn. We think there were around 100 of us on the hill at one time!



We were unable to see Caer Drewyn's flare, but the excitement began when we spotted Moel Fenlli's flare and then a distinctive glow coming from the hilltop. As the moon rose over the Sandstone Ridge it was the biggest and pinkest we had ever seen and added to the magic of the event. We saw all of the other hillforts' lights and flares. At the end of the event we waited to see if we could see the flare that the Friends of Old Oswestry hillfort were letting off at 7.30pm but we were unable to. We enjoyed Welsh Cakes and homemade fruit cake from Cheshire and warm drinks on top of the reservoir as we watched the line of torches descend Moel Arthur and Penycloddiau hillforts- a lovely way to end.

For those who attended Moel y Gaer and did not receive a certificate, please contact Fiona Gale fiona.gale@denbighshire.gov.uk and one will be sent to you.