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## What lies beneath? Ancient history to be unearthed from under golf course and nature reserve

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In May 2024 a team of archaeologists from Guernsey, Alderney and the UK will be returning to the island to carry out further excavations on the Iron Age and Roman settlement concealed beneath the sands of Longis Common, at the heart of the Northern Isle's largest Nature Reserve. This year the work will focus on two areas: on the edge of the golf course across the road from the Nunnery, and a little way up the hill next to the Alderney Society's site of 'Les Huguettes', known as the Iron Age Pottery workshop.

The area opposite the Nunnery was partly investigated in 2018-19, when a series of Roman structures were revealed. Among the finds were very rare pieces of Merovingian glass and pottery, dating to the 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> centuries AD. These exceptional discoveries indicate previously unknown settlement in the Longis area after the end of the Roman Empire. This year's excavation should shed more light on this post-Roman activity.

The site at Les Huguettes was discovered during construction of the golf-course in the late 1960s, and partly excavated between 1968-70. That excavation revealed a huge amount of early Iron Age pottery, now on display in the Alderney Museum. A radiocarbon date of c. 490 BC from the site ties in very well with the burials excavated in the last few years in the Paddock and Coastguards Fields, and it is very likely that the people buried there were living up around the Huguettes site. This year two trenches will be dug adjacent to the earlier excavation in an attempt to discover more about the lives of these Iron Age people.

DigAlderney is dependent on the support of dedicated volunteers from both Guernsey and Alderney, and are very grateful to the Alderney Golf Club and the States of Alderney for their support. Given the dig's location adjacent to the Longis Nature Reserve, the Alderney Wildlife Trust (AWT) is very interested in the insights the excavation might provide into the rich biodiversity and social history of the Nature Reserve. AWT staff commenced this year's work by carrying out the clearance of dense scrub and rank grass at the beginning of February. This was done to increase the amount of time available for archaeology and to help reduce disturbance for nesting birds in May. Once the excavations are finished the trenches will be carefully backfilled and the vegetation on both sites will be allowed to regenerate.

Visitors to the digs will be welcome throughout the work, from 1 – 25 May. For those interested in receiving updates about the dig they can follow DigAlderney's [Facebook](#) page. We look forward to revealing another chapter of Alderney's incredibly rich past.

## Background

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### About DigAlderney

Dig Alderney is a registered charity dedicated to promoting and supporting research into the unique archaeology of the island of Alderney.

[Facebook](#)

[digalderney.gg/](http://digalderney.gg/)

### About the Alderney Wildlife Trust

The Alderney Wildlife Trust is one of the 46 Wildlife Trusts working across the British Isles. We are the youngest of the Wildlife Trusts, forming 20 years ago and since then the AWT has received incredible support from a dedicated team of wildlife enthusiasts, what we like to think of as the 'TeamWilder'. This team isn't just limited to residents and AWT members, it includes people from all walks of life who have an interest in our island's wildlife, as well as supporters and organizations from around the world. We work with the local community to engage them with their natural environment in order to protect Alderney's wildlife for the future.

[Our mission is to study, protect and champion Alderney's wildlife. We wish to see a thriving natural island where wildlife and natural habitats play a valued role in addressing our island's future and the climate and ecological emergencies that face us.](#)

***Alderney is a very special place and by helping the work of the Alderney Wildlife Trust you can make a difference. After all, if you love where you live, you'll want to look after it - Dr. George McGavin, Patron AWT***

[alderneywildlife.org](http://alderneywildlife.org)

## Notes to Media

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