

<b>Institution:</b> University of Liverpool		
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> Archaeology (15)		
<b>Title of case study:</b> Castell Henllys: enhancing an Iron Age settlement heritage resource		
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:</b> 2008-2020		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Name(s):</b>	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b>	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b>
Professor Harold Mytum	Professor of Archaeology	2008 to date
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred:</b> 2014-2020		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?</b> No		
<b>1. Summary of the impact</b>		
<p>Pembrokeshire Coast National Park's (PCNP) public presentation of Castell Henllys Iron Age fort and its on-site reconstructed buildings is founded on Mytum's excavations, reconstructions and ongoing post-excavation using the archive and finds. Research since 2008 has contributed to replacement building reconstructions (2017-2018), a new reconstructed gateway (2019-2020), and updating staff on research. This has transformed the visitor experience at this site which uniquely has extensive reconstruction on an Iron Age excavated settlement. Castell Henllys has enhanced on-site schools' provision (280 schools visited during census period, 6,000 children per year) using the newly reconstructed roundhouses and excavated evidence to inform teaching and learning through activities.</p>		
<b>2. Underpinning research</b>		
<p>Mytum has directed all excavations conducted at Castell Henllys – comprising almost complete excavation of the 1ha settlement together with extensive investigation of the surrounding earthworks. He has had direct impact on the designs and construction of all building reconstructions at the site.</p>		
<p>A Mytum's long-term monitoring of the experimental buildings led to their PCNP-funded recording before dismantling, and his subsequent excavation of 2 roundhouse footprints: Cookhouse (2017) and Earthwatch (2018) as experimental archaeology [3.1]. This research specifically informs archaeological understanding of prehistoric building life histories and their physical remains, but also the design and rebuilding of future reconstructed roundhouses. Mytum's analysis of resource use in the reconstructions – to initially erect and then maintain buildings – leads to understanding of the sustainability of the Iron Age settlement [3.3, 3.4, Barcelona 2018 EAA Session 199 (co-organiser with R Paardekooper), What are we learning from experimental archaeology?]. The excavations also recovered substantial amounts of plastic [3.1]; this was an unexpected research finding which has led to further contemporary archaeology research regarding the presence of plastics in recent cultural deposits and is feeding into on-site PCNP explanation about plastics, sustainability and the environment.</p>		
<p>B Mytum's research on Iron Age hillfort gateways [3.3] and ongoing PCNP-funded research into the structural implications of the Castell Henllys gateway and guard-chambers, revealed previously unconsidered questions regarding roofing and rain runoff. This has enabled detailed three-dimensional reconstructions for the gateway which challenge aspects of previous gateway reconstruction drawings. The complexity of the main gateway on a fort as small as Castell Henllys [3.3] indicates that monumental investment was not only chosen for sites with a large area, such as those with similar gate designs in the Welsh Marches.</p>		

## Impact case study (REF3)

C Mytum's ongoing analysis and interpretation of the excavation archive and finds from the settlement (earthworks published [3.3], structures and finds previously unpublished beyond interim summaries) continues since 2008. This work reveals the settlement structures (range of sizes and foundation methods for buildings across the site and their sequence over time). Detailed study of all artefact classes by Mytum and specialists for the first time, places these in a regional context and they can support explanations of cultural change, social structure [3.2], trade, and landscape exploitation [3.3].

D Mytum has also explicitly researched the use of the site for training and education and how it should be presented to the public [3.3, 3.4, 3.5]. This has identified how the public engage positively with the archaeological research and interpretation process, and that the public can appreciate how uncertainty in reconstruction leads to experiment and advancing knowledge. Mytum's research and PCNP presentation practice together create a vibrant environment with iterative reflection and action, and they have led to developing the research agenda alongside shifts in interpretation. This creates a dynamic context for research and dissemination that is in itself innovative [3.2, 3.4].

**Relevant key contextual information:** The last excavation season of ancient remains (2008) was from Liverpool, post-excavation has been in Liverpool from January 2008, and analysis is within this census period using the archive. The reconstruction results derive from Mytum's long-term experiment including throughout the census period and collaborative fieldwork linked to their dismantling, redesign, rebuilding (2017, 2018). The 2017 and 2018 fieldwork was undertaken with Meek, then of Dyfed Archaeological Trust. The gateway reconstruction is ongoing, interrupted by coronavirus measures so still not completed.

### 3. References to the research

3.1 Mytum, H. and J. Meek 2020 Experimental archaeology and roundhouse excavated signatures: the investigation of two reconstructed Iron Age buildings at Castell Henllys, Wales. *Archaeological and Anthropological Sciences* 12:78 <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12520-020-01028-y>

3.2 Mytum, H. 2018. The Iron Age Today. *Internet Archaeology* 48. <https://doi.org/10.11141/ia.48.10> . Open access

3.3 Mytum, H. 2013 *Monumentality in Late Prehistory: Building and Rebuilding Castell Henllys Hillfort*. Book; New York, Springer. ISBN 9781461480273 (electronic bk.) <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-8027-3>

3.4 Mytum, H. 2013 Rebuilding the past: challenges in education and public interpretation at Castell Henllys Iron Age fort. *Arqueo Mediterrània* 13, 73-81. <https://livrepository.liverpool.ac.uk/3106156/>

3.5 Mytum, H. 2012 Field Schools: People, Places and Things in the Present, in H. Mytum (ed.) *Global Perspectives on Archaeological Field Schools: Constructions of Knowledge and Experience*. Springer, New York, 243-249. ISBN 9781461404330 (electronic bk.) <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-0433-0>

All can be supplied by the HEI on request

### 4. Details of the impact

Mytum initiated the first excavations at Castell Henllys and has directed every excavation at the site; he has played a vital role in all the reconstructions. The PCNP Director of Countryside, Community and Visitor Services has highlighted Mytum's research as central in the PCNP investment and range of services provided: "we have invested confidently in Castell Henllys, with the knowledge that the sound archaeological findings over the past decades would give it a firm footing" and "the site continues to evolve with the research carried out by archaeologists" [5.1].

### **A Informing heritage site management at Castell Henllys: renewal and extension of on-site reconstructions – beneficiaries PCNP and all site users**

Mytum has used his research and expertise at Castell Henllys to guide and inform the reconstruction of two roundhouses and a monumental gateway on the sites of the original Iron Age structures.

PCNP has invested in rebuilding 2 roundhouses, with Mytum and Meek's archaeological recording and excavation between dismantling and rebuilding commissioned by PCNP [3.1]. Mytum's understanding of the archaeological evidence from both the original excavation of prehistoric remains [3.3] and from investigations of the dismantled reconstructions was essential for the integrity of the new reconstructions [5.2]: PCNP notes *"his direct contribution towards the design of the roundhouses means that the site continues to be authentic"* [5.1]. PCNP Archaeologist notes Mytum's expertise and supporting research data was essential in ensuring credible new on-site reconstructions, from overall concept to details of materials and techniques: *"his advice regarding the design of the new reconstruction has been indispensable in allowing us to create our new building for interpreting the Iron Age"* [5.2A, 3.1, 3.2].

Mytum provided archaeologically-informed reconstruction plans and elevations for the first Iron Age gateway to be erected on the site of an original gateway in Britain; the PCNP Buildings Projects Manager acknowledges: *"Without his research knowledge the gateway reconstruction could not have been achieved"* [5.5C]. Although delayed by covid, Phase A of the reconstruction (timber superstructure and drystone walling of interior and exterior revetments and guard-chambers) is well advanced [5.5A, 5.5B, 5.5C, 3.3]. This will enhance both schools and visitor experiences and demonstrate the monumentality of Iron Age architecture: *"Gateway construction, overseen by Professor Mytum is the next stage of development"* [5.7B].

### **B Schools provision – beneficiaries PCNP schools interpreters, teachers, school children**

The ongoing staff training based on continued research keeps interpretation fresh. The PCNP Education Officer highlights *"The basis of PCNPA staff training is the reports written and conclusions drawn from the host of excavations held here. This gives our interpretational staff the knowledge they need to educate not only school children but a whole host of visitors"* [5.7B]. Ongoing research on artefact categories have also contributed to the development of PCNP educational materials and the on-site activities: *"conclusions drawn by Professor Mytum are put into practice and the village is brought to life through activities such as cooking and daubing [and] textiles workshops"* [5.1].

Castell Henllys satisfies the requirements of Key Stage (KS) 2 for the Welsh History curriculum on the Celts. Over 6,000 pupils visit the site on school trips every year [5.7B]. Mytum's Castell Henllys research data was used for examination materials to interpret remains and reconstructions in Archaeology AS level assessment (2018/2019) [5.7D, 3.3].

The attraction of Castell Henllys to schools is the authenticity based on Mytum's underlying research and informed reconstruction, and PCNP presentation [5.1, 5.4, 5.7B, 3.2, 3.4]. Over 280 different schools have visited 2014-2018 [5.7A], with a high attendance from SW Wales: Stephen Crabb MP noted: *"Castell Henllys remains a firm favourite among schools across our county"* [5.8A]. 95% of Pembrokeshire, 95% of Ceredigion, 75% of Swansea, and 75% of Carmarthenshire school children visit at least once during their school career, with over 60 schools participating through the medium of Welsh [5.7A]. Cardiff pupils (approximately 20 schools) come over 145km to learn, despite their proximity to Iron Age reconstructions at St Fagan's Museum, and schools from England and other parts of Wales also visit.

Children are highly motivated and engaged by their visits and participation in activities inside and outside the reconstructions. Teachers' feedback includes: *"The re-construction of the*

*Chiefs house along with the informed interpretation inspired the children and helped greatly when back in school" and "The staff were brilliant... All informed and answered a whole manner of questions form [sic] construction techniques, cooking recipes and how they make clothes. The interpretation and construction of the site really did make it a believable and memorable experience," and "Castell Henllys is the only place where you can sit in a meeting house by the fire and let the pupils freely compare what the differences are - you would never get such enthused pupil involvement in the classroom."* [5.7B, School web sites 5.7C].

### **C Engaging the public – beneficiaries PCNP staff and visitors, community volunteer excavators**

Mytum has provided training materials for Castell Henllys PCNP staff, and informal advice and collaboration with them during fieldwork [5.2A, 5.7B, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5], which results in well-informed, up-to-date, motivated staff. This has led to very high visitor satisfaction with on-site staff knowledge.

The PCNP Director of Countryside, Community and Visitor Services notes: *"Castell Henllys is a hub for tourism in the north of the county"; with "on average 20,000 visitors a year" and "5,519 people attended 21 events" in 2018/2019* [5.1, Director of Countryside, Community and Visitor Services]. One tourist stated *"I also visited on an archaeology day, so there were talks about the archaeological history of the site"* [5.10].

PCNP has developed a site guidebook for the first time during 2020, with the Interpretation Officer stating: *"I drew heavily on the extensive research, themes and arguments set out in your book ...as well as more recent publications and as yet unpublished research findings"* and *"The level of detail in your research has been vital in constructing a narrative of the Iron Age that is both specific to Castell Henllys and sheds light on Iron Age culture in west Wales."* [5.3, 3.3].

On-site interpretation emphasises authenticity, reconstruction based on the archaeology, and with the staff regularly updated in their training [5.7B, 3.1, 3.2], which is much appreciated by the public. Tripadvisor lists the site as No.1 activity in the region with 236 out of 271 entries rating it as Excellent or Very Good [5.10,1]: *"An outstanding recreation, based on the actual footprints of roundhouses and built under close academic supervision"* [5.10,5]; *"our Iron-age host, someone quite familiar with the archeology of this site .... Castell Henllys makes is [sic] all come alive."* [5.10,5]; *"The buildings give a wonderful insight into the technology we never imagined existed in the past"* [5.10,6]; *"friendly, patient and helpful guide ... answered all our questions and gave us much insight not only to the period and how our Iron Age relatives lived, but also into the work that has been done and continues to make and maintain this fabulous attraction"* [5.10,7].

The 2017 and 2018 excavations included community volunteers, who experienced a unique learning opportunity because of the excavation's integration with reconstruction and experimental archaeology. These insights were also communicated to the visitors [5.2A, 5.10,6, 3.2]. Dyfed Archaeological Trust Chief Executive notes: *"volunteering at Castell Henllys increased their understanding of the formation process involved in creating an archaeological record."* [5.9A, 3.1]. The archaeological remains can be directly related to known human activities and practices, and visible standing structures, so volunteers can now see this in ancient remains: volunteers noted that: *"The idea behind the project was really interesting: using contemporary evidence to help interpret the past. It was quite unlike any other dig we have done and brought home the notion that even the most mundane of evidence can have significance beyond the immediately obvious"; "it was a positive experience that extended our archaeological understanding"* [5.9B, email dated 21 October 2020]. High plastic finds density also reminded everyone of our contemporary footprint and the PCNP Archaeologist notes that this evidence has *"helped the park bring home the message regarding the impact of plastic on the landscape"* [5.2A, 3.1].

*Particular contribution of the submitted unit's research and acknowledgement of other key research contributions:*

Mytum and Meek (Dyfed Archaeological Trust) collaborated equally on the 2017, 2018 fieldwork and community excavation. Its post-excavation, publication preparation, and reconstruction input were led by or were solely by Mytum, publications approved by Meek.

## **5. Sources to corroborate the impact**

### 5.1 Mytum CH Castell Henllys site.pdf

- email from PCNP Director of Countryside Community & Visitor Services about Mytum's role in developing the site

### 5.2 Mytum CH Roundhouse Reconstructions.pdf

- emails from PCNP staff regarding Mytum's role in the design and construction of the roundhouses at Castell Henllys, including the following:
  - 5.2A Statement from PCNP Archaeologist regarding roundhouses
  - 5.2B Emails from PCNP Building Projects Officer regarding roundhouses

### 5.3 Mytum CH Castell Henllys guidebook.pdf

- email statement from PCNP Interpretation officer regarding the central role of Mytum's research results, both published and unpublished

### 5.4 Mytum CH Community Archaeologist.pdf

- email statement from PCNP Community Archaeologist regarding the effects of research on management at the Castell henllys but also across the National Park

### 5.5 Mytum CH Gateway Reconstruction.pdf

- 5.5A PCNP Buildings Manager - Gateway & Ramparts
- 5.5B PCNP Visitor Services Manager North – Gateway
- 5.5C PCNP Buildings Manager – statement of Mytum's role in reconstructions

### 5.6 Mytum CH Press coverage roundhouses.pdf

- press coverage on-line of new excavations and reconstructions at Castell Henllys

### 5.7 Mytum CH Schools at Castell Henllys.pdf

- supporting evidence regarding school visits to Castell Henllys, including:
  - 5.7A List of schools that have visited Castell Henllys during the census period provided by PCNP and numbers of schools in each educational authority
  - 5.7B PCNP Education Officer
  - 5.7C Schools web pages re: visits
  - 5.7D AQA AS level examination source book 2019 and AQA emails

### 5.8 Mytum CH Visit of MP.pdf

- press coverage of MP visit to Castell Henllys

### 5.9 Mytum CH Community volunteer excavators.pdf

- emails from volunteers and the DAT Director responsible for them
  - 5.9A DAT Director
  - 5.9B Excavation community volunteer experiences

### 5.10 Mytum CH Tripadvisor comments.pdf

- screen shots of some feedback from visiting public noting authenticity, use of archaeology, knowledge of staff