

A SURVEY OF DEFENDED ENCLOSURES IN CEREDIGION, 2006



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**A SURVEY OF DEFENDED ENCLOSURES IN
CEREDIGION, 2006**

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SUMMARY

In 2003, Cadw commissioned Gwynedd Archaeological Trust to undertake a scoping study of prehistoric defended enclosures in Wales. Cambria Archaeology built on this initial study by carrying out a desktop assessment of these types of site in southwest Wales, again grant-aided by Cadw. The current Cadw grant-aided survey consists of a field visit to all known non-scheduled sites in Ceredigion and to 1 in 10 of the scheduled sites.

There are 227 defended enclosures and related sites in Ceredigion broken down into the following site types: Hillfort 35, Promontory Fort 30, possible Promontory Fort 1, Defended Enclosure 137, possible Defended Enclosure 20, Enclosure 4. Of these 49 are Scheduled Ancient Monuments. During the course of the survey it was discovered that most of the larger earthwork monuments, such as hillforts and promontory forts are in a good and stable condition. However, some of the smaller earthwork sites have degraded over the past 30 - 40 years. The majority of the smaller defended enclosures are cropmark sites - a project is currently assessing these sites.

INTRODUCTION

In 2003, Gwynedd Archaeological Trust produced for Cadw *Prehistoric Defended Enclosures: Scoping for pan-Wales Assessment* (Smith 2003), which assessed our current knowledge of hillforts and defended enclosures in Wales. It also indicated directions in which future studies might take, suggested recording methodologies and proposed management criteria. On the basis of Smith's report, three of the four Welsh Archaeological Trusts (Gwynedd, Glamorgan-Gwent and Cambria Archaeology) successfully applied to Cadw for grant-aid to further the study of defended enclosures in their areas for 2004-05. The fourth Trust, Clwyd-Powys, were unable run a defended enclosure project owing to competing claims from their other Cadw grant-aided projects. Their defended enclosure project started in 2005-06.

Cambria Archaeology's 2004-05 study was desk-based covering the counties of Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire (Murphy and Manwaring 2004). In 2005-06 Cambria Archaeology's study concentrated on the county of Ceredigion and included site visits as well as more in-depth documentary research than was possible in the desk-based study.

A separate field project examining rectangular crop-marked enclosures in south Ceredigion involving fieldwork has been undertaken and reported on (Murphy *et al*, 2004; Murphy and Mytum 2005; Murphy *et al*, 2006).

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The overall project objectives are:

- The classification, quantification and distribution of defended enclosures in southwest Wales.
- Assessment of the archaeological significance of these sites in both a regional and national perspective.
- Assessment of the vulnerability of this element of the archaeological resource, reviewing of scheduling criteria that might be appropriate regionally, and recommendations for future management strategies.

- Enhancement of the regional Historic Environment Record and END.

The objectives for the 2005-06 Ceredigion survey are essentially the same as those identified by G Smith in his survey of enclosures in northwest Wales in 2004-05:

- To collate existing documentary evidence about defended enclosures.
- To carry out a field assessment of the value of all sites without statutory protection to identify those that may be of national value.
- To assess the condition and threats to all sites.
- To identify and describe new features on visited sites.
- To incorporate all the information into a commonly agreed pan-Wales database and enhance the regional Historic Environment Record.
- To advise Cadw on those sites which are of national value and currently without statutory protection

METHODOLOGY

Cambria Archaeology's 2004-05 study identified 244 probable and possible defended enclosure and related sites in Ceredigion, of which 46 are Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

Initial project tasks consisted of compiling a dossier of each site. This included: a printout of the relevant entry from the Historic Environment Record, a copy of the Ordnance Survey Record Card (if one exists), a copy of first edition Ordnance Survey map (if relevant), a copy of the modern large scale Ordnance Survey map (with plotted cropmark data supplied by RCAHMW superimposed), other easily obtainable documentary material, and one or more aerial photographs. Most of the aerial photographs were supplied in digital form by RCAHMW; a few were from Cambria Archaeology's own collection. The site dossiers were arranged into Ordnance Survey 10km squares.

Following collation of the site dossiers, a site visit was made to all the non-scheduled sites and to about 10% of the scheduled sites in order to assess their current form and condition. In practice, mainly owing to difficulties in tracing landowners, it was not possible to visit every non-scheduled site - approximately 2% of non-scheduled sites remain unvisited. An information sheet explaining the project was given to each landowner (Appendix 2).

Information on site type, the form of the site, their condition and an assessment of their value was recorded on pro-forma recording sheets (these forms are being used by all four Welsh Trusts - see Appendix 1). Where no site visit was made, the recording sheets were completed using readily available information, such as the Cadw field monument warden reports.

All the information recorded during the course of the survey has been incorporated into the Historic Environment Record database, either as part of the core record, or as stand-alone databases. In addition, digital photographs recorded the current condition of the site. These photographs have been incorporated into the Historic Environment Record.

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED IN THE DATABASE

Site Definitions

As there is an absence of agreed site definitions the following was used in this study:

Hillfort: a hilltop enclosure heavily defended by one or more lines of rampart.

Promontory fort: an inland or coastal promontory defended on at least one side by one or more lines of rampart.

Defended Enclosure: an area defended by one or more lines of rampart. The defences are generally smaller and less well-defined than those sites defined as hillforts.

Enclosure: an area surrounded by a bank, ditch, wall or some other form of barrier, but not necessarily a defensive barrier.

Condition of site

The letters A, B, C, D, E, etc used in the gazetteer refer to the following condition descriptions:

- A** - Intact
- B** - Substantially Intact
- C** - Damaged
- D** - Substantial destruction
- E** - Destroyed - when the site has been completely removed for example by quarrying or opencast and excavation would not be able to reveal below ground remains
- M** - Moved
- R** - Restored or Reconstructed
- U** - Unknown
- V** - Various - for complexes and linear features where the condition varies from one part of the feature to another

RESULTS

The main results of the survey are shown in separately bound gazetteers, divided for ease of use into Ordnance Survey 10km grid squares. Only a brief summary of these results is included here.

Following collation of the site dossiers and field visits the total number of defended enclosures and related sites in Ceredigion now stands at 227. Twenty-eight sites included in the original scoping study were rejected, but eleven sites were added to the study dossiers, including nine newly created records. The 227 sites are broken down as follows:

Hillfort	35
Promontory Fort	30
Promontory Fort?	1
Defended Enclosure	137
Defended Enclosure?	20
Enclosure	4
TOTAL	227

Of these sites 121 are earthworks, 101 cropmarks, 1 is known only through geophysical survey and 1 through documentary sources. Three sites are destroyed.

Forty nine of the 227 sites are Scheduled Ancient Monuments. All apart from one, which is a cropmark, are earthworks.

The above totals are simplified versions of the main database (see site gazetteers). Sites recorded as, for instance, Hillfort;Castle (meaning the site is an iron age hillfort later reused as a medieval castle) are included just as hillfort.

Site typology indicates that most of the sites included in this study originated and were used in the Iron Age. This is supported by the (very) limited amount of excavation, such as a Pendinas near Aberystwyth (SN58 3993), Pendinas Lochdin (SN35 1363) and Caer Cadwgan (SN75 2031). Excavation on a small rectangular enclosure during the summer of 2005 (SN24 52064 - Murphy and Mytum, 2005), however, recorded relatively large amounts of Roman pottery. It remains to be seen whether these types of site are wholly Romano-British, or whether they originate in the Iron Age.

It is currently difficult to assess if there is an overall degradation of the defended enclosures in Ceredigion owing to the lack of baseline information. Some general comments can usefully be made. First, the cropmark defended enclosures, particularly those in the south of the county, had been largely reduced to their current form when the landscape of fields, lanes and farms was established at least 160 years ago (and probably a lot earlier). Second, according to historic records and maps the larger monuments with upstanding earthworks do not seem to have degraded greatly over the past 120-130 years. Third, small earthwork enclosures are vulnerable to constant degradation. Several sites recorded by the Ordnance Survey in the 1960s and 70s have been reduced by agriculture - see for instance SN45 1856.

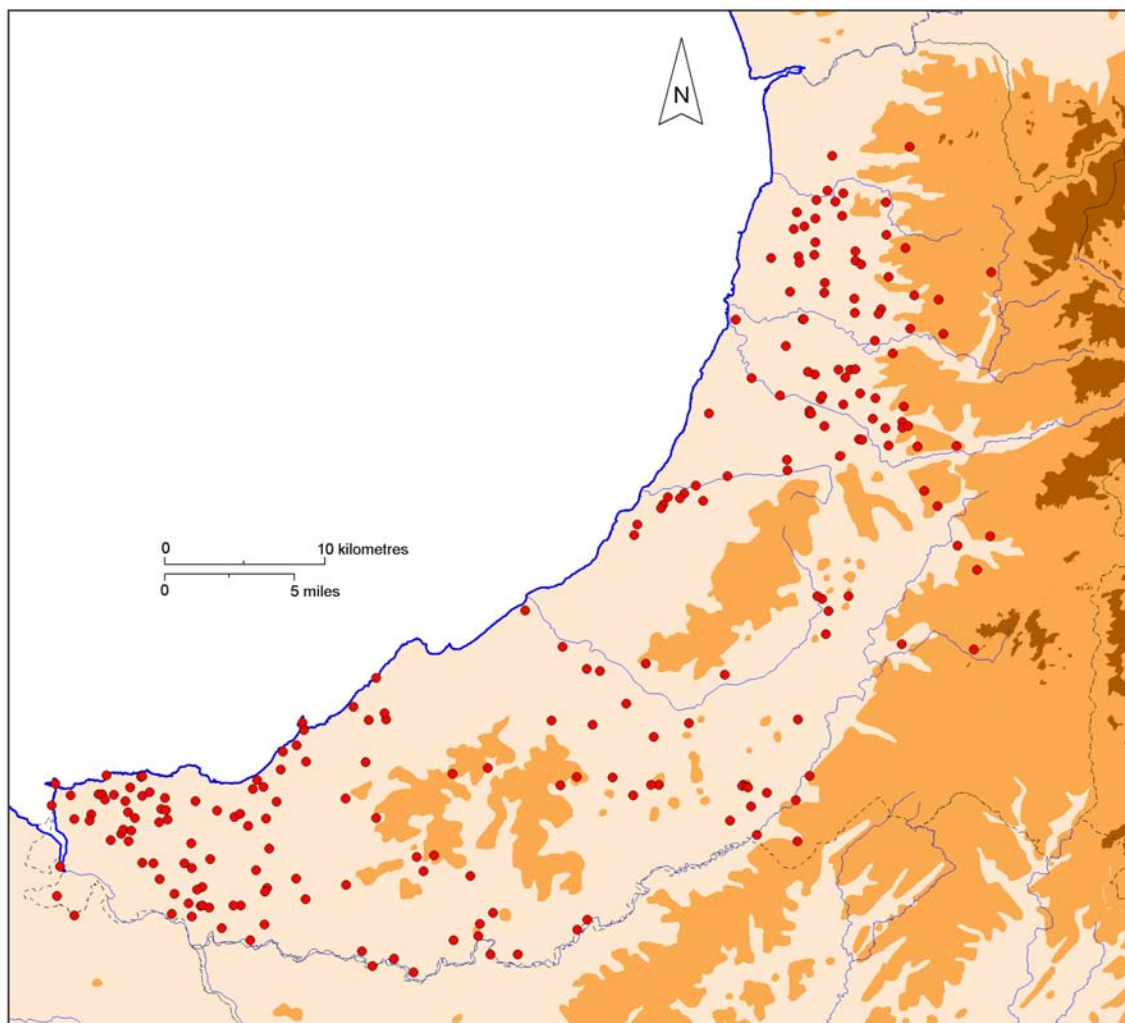


Figure 1. Distribution of defended enclosures and related sites in Ceredigion. Land over 250m and 500m is shown shaded.

SITE ASSESSMENT

The following criteria were used to assess the value of sites. The criteria are weighted in favour of preservation, with good upstanding earthworks and an undisturbed enclosure interior scoring highly.

MONUMENT EVALUATION: DISCRIMINATION CRITERIA

SURVIVAL - DEFENCES

Over 66% of upstanding defences present	Score 6
33 to 66% present	Score 4
Less than 33% present or reduced to cropmark	Score 2
Defences destroyed	Score 0

SURVIVAL - INTERIOR

Over 66% of interior present and largely undisturbed	Score 6
33 to 66% present	Score 4
Less than 33% present and/or evidence of heavy ploughing	Score 2
Interior destroyed or heavily damaged	Score 0

GROUP VALUE

Three or more possibly associated sites/features within 1km (e.g. other fort, enclosures, huts, fields)	Score 3
Two possibly associated sites/features within 1km	Score 2
One possibly associated sites/features within 1km	Score 1
None	Score 0

POTENTIAL

Three or more of: rare type/rare in area/buried features/significant finds/multiple period/annexes or nearby associated enclosures present	Score 3
Two of: ...	Score 2
One of: ...	Score 1
None	Score 0

ARCHAEOLOGICAL DOCUMENTATION

Medium to large scale excavation and report	Score 3
Small scale excavation or survey/description and report	Score 2
Noted only	Score 1
None	Score 0

AMENITY VALUE

Good site visibility with open and public access	Score 3
Medium site visibility with open public access	Score 2
Medium to poor site visibility and restricted public access	Score 1
Poor site visibility and/or no public access	Score 0

EVALUATION SCORES

10 - 18	National Importance
7 - 9	Regional importance
4 - 8	Local Importance
<3	Minor Importance or needs further investigation

SITE GAZETTEERS

For ease of handling the site gazetteers have been arranged into Ordnance Survey 10km grid squares. Each gazetteer consists of one or more 1:50,000 maps showing the overall location of each site followed by the individual entries for each site. Each entry comprises: a printout from the Historic Environment Record, including a site description; a 1:500 map; and where available a ground photograph and an aerial photograph.

Many of the 1:500 maps show details of the site plotted from cropmarks shown on aerial photographs. These plots are supplied by RCAHMW Crown Copyright ©.

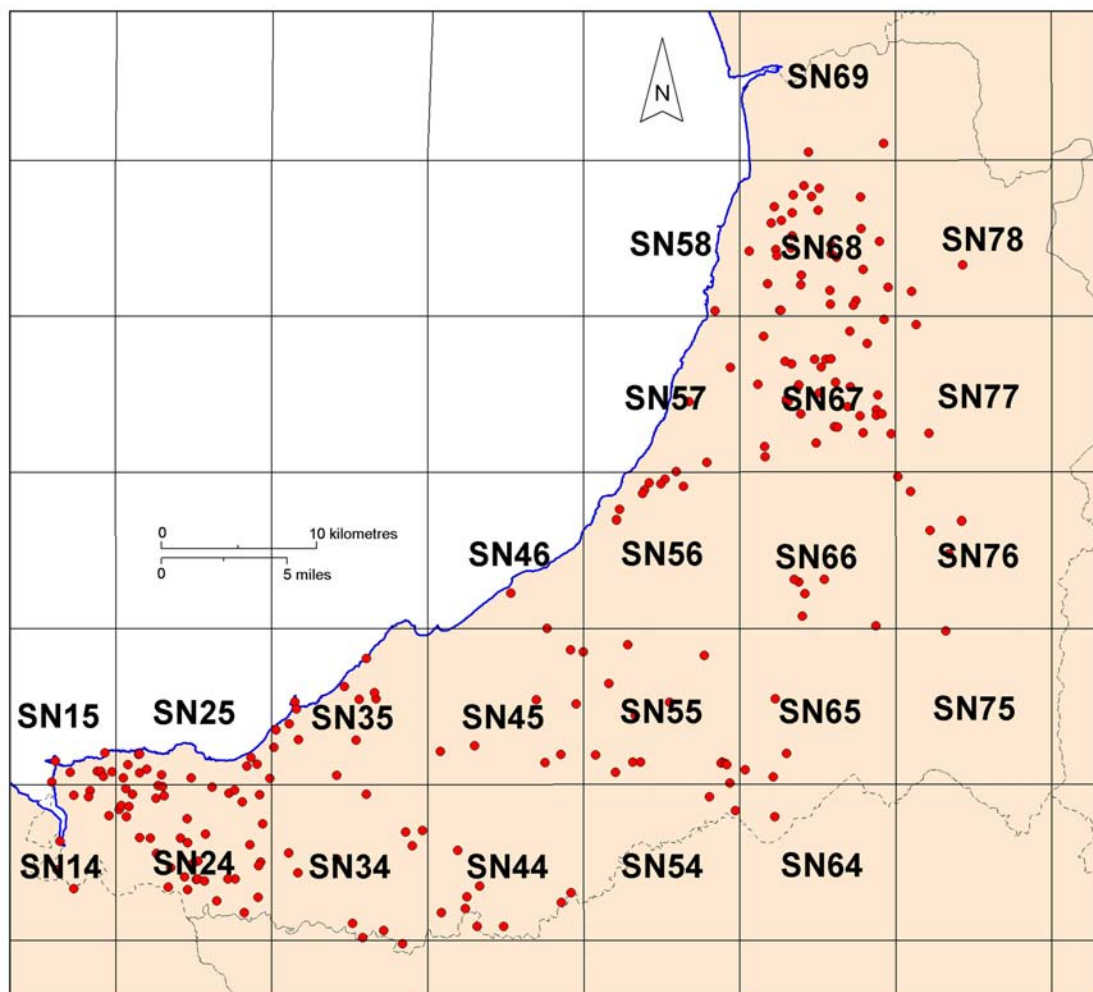


Figure 2. Index to the gazetteers of defended enclosures and related sites. Gazetteers are arranged by 10km grid squares.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many thanks are due to the many landowners who granted us access to view the monuments on their land. We are also very grateful to Toby Driver of the RCAHMW who assisted in gathering the aerial photographs for this survey and who also made a draft of his thesis on the enclosures of north Ceredigion available for this study. Ken Murphy supervised the project, collated the database undertook most of the site visits and wrote this report. Richard Ramsey undertook additional site visits. Marion Manwaring extracted site data from the Historic Environment Record and verified new data gathered during the survey. Thanks are also due to Frances Murphy who entered data gathered during the survey onto the database.

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APPENDIX 1
PREHISTORIC DEFENDED SETTLEMENTS
SITE ASSESSMENT FORM

ORGANISATION
PROJECT No

PRN

SITE NAME

GRID REF

KM MAP SQUARE

SITE TYPE

Hillfort ☐ Defended Enclosure ☐ Promontory Fort ☐

FORM OF SITE

Buried feature (excavation or geophysics) ☐ Earthwork ☐ Cropmark ☐ Documents ☐ Place-name ☐

AREA OF SITE (in hectares)

Internal area of main enclosure

Area to furthest extent of enclosure/annexe ditches

SITE HISTORY

Full excavation ☐ Partial excavation ☐ Topographic survey ☐ Geophysical survey ☐ Other ☐ None ☐

PHASING AND PERIODS OF USE

Unfinished ☐ Single phase ☐ Single phase but possibly long occupation ☐ Two phases (revised defence layout/ rampart design or excavation evidence) ☐ Three of more phases (revised defence layout/ rampart design or excavation evidence) ☐

Main period of occupation (artefactual evidence or scientific dating) – specify

Pre-defensive use of site (eg Bronze Age round barrow, structural or artefactual evidence) ☐

Romano-British reuse ☐ Early Medieval reuse ☐ Medieval reuse ☐ None ☐

GENERAL LOCATION

ALTITUDE (in metres)

TOPOGRAPHY

Coastal cliff ☐ Coastal promontory ☐ Summit ☐ Hilltop ☐ Ridge ☐ Inland Promontory ☐ High plateau ☐

Spur ☐ False crest ☐ Hillslope ☐ Scarp edge ☐ Saddle ☐ Col ☐ Level ☐ Natural terrace ☐ River terrace ☐ Valley base ☐ Valley floor ☐ Flood plain ☐ Other - specify

DEFENSIVE POSITION

Good defensive location (hilltop/cliff-top) ☐ Semi defensive location (inland promontory etc) ☐

Non defensive location (gentle hillslope/valley floor) ☐ Overlooked ☐

LAND USE

Arable ☐ Built over ☐ Derelict ☐ Dune ☐ Forestry ☐ Garden ☐ Heath ☐ Marsh ☐ Mineral Extraction ☐

Moorland ☐ Other ☐ Pasture ☐ Public Open Spaces ☐ Quarry ☐ Rough pasture ☐ Scrub ☐ Urban ☐ Wasteland ☐ Woodland ☐

LAND STATUS

National Park ☐ Common land ☐ Registered Historic Landscape ☐ Tir Gofal ☐ NNR ☐ SSSI ☐

AONB ☐ cSAC ☐ GCR ☐ RAMSAR ☐ RIGS ☐ Other - specify

PALAEOENVIRONMENTAL POTENTIAL

High – peat >0.5m on site or within immediate vicinity ☐

Medium - peat >0.5m within 500m ☐

Low - no obvious peat within 500m ☐

High - on-site calcareous soils ☐

Other possible high scores - on-site wet areas, colluvial deposits, buried soils etc ☐

Description – extent, depth and locations of peat + other deposits

RELATED SITES/FINDS IN VICINITY- PRN NUMBERS AND NAMES

LOCATION DESCRIPTION

INTERNAL AREA**GENERAL SHAPE**

Circular ☐ Sub-circular ☐ Rectangular ☐ Sub-rectangular ☐ Polygonal ☐ Triangular ☐ Irregular ☐
Complex (more than on main enclosure) ☐

PRESENCE OF HOUSES/BUILDING PLATFORMS

Stone circular ☐ Timber circular (excavated) ☐ Platform – circular ☐ Cropmark circular ☐ Stone rectangular ☐

Timber rectangular ☐ Rectangular platform ☐ Other - specify

Number of houses

VEGETATION

Specify -

THREATS

Type of threat

Agriculture – ploughing ☐ Agriculture – stock ☐ Burrowing ☐ Development ☐ Erosion ☐ Extraction ☐
Forestry ☐ Robbing ☐ Vehicle ☐ Visitor ☐ Other ☐ None ☐

Time scale of threat

Active ☐ Extinct (ie old quarry) ☐ None ☐

Extent of threat - specify percentage

Significance of threat

High ☐ Low ☐ Medium ☐

OTHER INTERNAL FEATURES - DESCRIPTION**DEFENCES****TYPE**

Univallate ☐ Bivallate close set ramparts ☐ Bivallate widely spaced ramparts ☐
Multivallate close set ramparts ☐ Multivallate widely spaced ramparts ☐

MATERIALS

Earth ☐ Stone ☐ Earth and Stone ☐ Stone faced earth rampart ☐ Unknown ☐

VEGETATION

Specify -

THREATS

Type of threat

Agriculture – ploughing ☐ Agriculture – stock ☐ Burrowing ☐ Development ☐ Erosion ☐ Extraction ☐
Forestry ☐ Robbing ☐ Vehicle ☐ Visitor ☐ Other ☐ None ☐

Time scale of threat

Active ☐ Extinct (ie old quarry) ☐ None ☐

Extent of threat - specify percentage

Significance of threat

High ☐ Low ☐ Medium ☐

OTHER DEFENSIVE FEATURES - DESCRIPTION

ENTRANCES**NUMBER OF ENTRANCES DIRECTION FACING (N, S, E, W, NE, NW, SE, SW)**1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ Unknown ☐**TYPE**Simple ☐ Entrance passageway ☐ Entrance passageway and guard chambers ☐ Approaching ditched/banked track ☐ Barbican/hornwork ☐ Annex ☐ Bastion ☐ Complex ☐**MATERIALS**Earth ☐ Stone ☐ Earth and Stone ☐ Stone faced earth rampart ☐ Unknown ☐**VEGETATION**

Specify -

THREATS*Type of threat*Agriculture – ploughing ☐ Agriculture – stock ☐ Burrowing ☐ Development ☐ Erosion ☐ Extraction ☐ Forestry ☐ Robbing ☐ Vehicle ☐ Visitor ☐ Other ☐ None ☐*Time scale of threat*Active ☐ Extinct (ie old quarry) ☐ None ☐Extent of threat - *specify percentage**Significance of threat*High ☐ Low ☐ Medium ☐**OTHER ENTRANCE FEATURES - DESCRIPTION****ENCLOSURES/ANNEXES****FORM**Concentric annexe enclosure ☐ Lobate enclosure ☐ Cross ridge earthwork ☐ Outlying ☐**AREA OF ANNEXES (in hectares)****PRESENCE OF HOUSES/BUILDING PLATFORMS**Stone circular ☐ Timber circular (excavated) ☐ Platform – circular ☐ Cropmark circular ☐ Stone rectangular ☐Timber rectangular ☐ Rectangular platform ☐ Other ☐

Number of houses

VEGETATION

Specify -

THREATS*Type of threat*Agriculture – ploughing ☐ Agriculture – stock ☐ Burrowing ☐ Development ☐ Erosion ☐ Extraction ☐ Forestry ☐ Robbing ☐ Vehicle ☐ Visitor ☐ Other ☐*Time scale of threat*Active ☐ Extinct (ie old quarry) ☐ None ☐ None ☐Extent of threat - *specify percentage**Significance of threat*High ☐ Low ☐ Medium ☐**OTHER ENCLOSURE/ANNEXE FEATURES (TRACKWAYS/ROUTES ETC) DESCRIPTION**

EXTERNAL AREAS**PRESENCE OF HOUSES**

Stone circular ☐ Stone rectangular ☐ Platform – circular ☐ Timber circular (excavated) ☐
Timber rectangular (excavated) ☐ Cropmark circular ☐ Other ☐

CONTEMPORARY FIELDS

Stone boundaries ☐ Earth boundaries ☐ Cropmark boundaries ☐

VEGETATION

Specify -

THREATS

Type of threat

Agriculture – ploughing ☐ Agriculture – stock ☐ Burrowing ☐ Development ☐ Erosion ☐ Extraction ☐
Forestry ☐ Robbing ☐ Vehicle ☐ Visitor ☐ Other ☐

Time scale of threat

Active ☐ Extinct (ie old quarry) ☐ None ☐ None ☐

Extent of threat - *specify percentage*

Significance of threat

High ☐ Low ☐ Medium ☐

OTHER EXTERNAL AREAS FEATURES - DESCRIPTION**OWNERSHIP****ACCESS**

Unlimited public access ☐ Access limited: open to public at specific periods/part of site open to public ☐

Access prohibited: access only gained by special permission ☐ Access denied ☐

OWNERSHIP TYPE

Private ☐ MoD ☐ Forestry Commission ☐ Forest Enterprise ☐ National Trust ☐ National Park ☐

Other – specify

OWNERS' NAME AND ADDRESS AND PHONE NO**TENANT'S NAME AND ADDRESS AND PHONE NO****SITE VISIT**

DATE OF VISIT

VISIT BY

COLOUR SLIDE REF
REF

B/W and/or COLOUR NEGATIVE REF

DIGITAL

GENERAL SITE DESCRIPTION

MONUMENT EVALUATION: DISCRIMINATION CRITERIA**SURVIVAL - DEFENCES**

Over 66% of upstanding defences present	Score 6
33 to 66% present	Score 4
Less than 33% present or reduced to cropmark	Score 2
Defences destroyed	Score 0

SURVIVAL - INTERIOR

Over 66% of interior present and largely undisturbed	Score 6
33 to 66% present	Score 4
Less than 33% present and/or evidence of heavy ploughing	Score 2
Interior destroyed or heavily damaged	Score 0

GROUP VALUE

Three or more possibly associated sites/features within 1km (e.g. other fort, enclosures, huts, fields)	Score 3
Two possibly associated sites/features within 1km	Score 2
One possibly associated sites/features within 1km	Score 1
None	Score 0

POTENTIAL

Three or more of: rare type/rare in area/buried features/significant finds/multiple period/annexes or nearby associated enclosures present	Score 3
Two of: ...	Score 2
One of: ...	Score 1
None	Score 0

ARCHAEOLOGICAL DOCUMENTATION

Medium to large scale excavation and report	Score 3
Small scale excavation or survey/description and report	Score 2
Noted only	Score 1
None	Score 0

AMENITY VALUE

Good site visibility with open and public access	Score 3
Medium site visibility with open public access	Score 2
Medium to poor site visibility and restricted public access	Score 1
Poor site visibility and/or no public access	Score 0

EVALUATION SCORES

10 - 18	National Importance
7 - 9	Regional importance
4 - 8	Local Importance
<3	Minor Importance or needs further investigation

APPENDIX 2. INFORMATION LEAFLET

Iron Age hillforts and defended settlements

Monuments in the landscape

The Welsh landscape is rich in the monuments of the past, especially the hillforts and defended settlements of the Iron Age. Many of the larger hillforts are well known and are often visited, and consist of massive earthwork or stone defences. Lesser hillforts and the smaller defended settlements are not so well known. Some of the smallest sites are only visible on aerial photographs taken in dry summers. As part of a Cadw grant-aid project it is hoped to visit every known site over the next few years to make landowners aware of hillforts and defended settlements and so ensure their preservation for future generations.



Carningli, a large hillfort on the Preseli Mountains with stone-built defences

Types of site

The largest hillforts are located on the tops of steep-sided hills and are defended by one or more lines of high ramparts of earth or stone. They would have housed hundreds of people. However, these are quite rare. More common are hillforts of a hectare or less, but still strongly defended by an earth bank and ditch. In southwest Wales there are many small sites of less than 0.3 hectares. Often there is little to be seen of these on the ground, but occasionally low mounds and banks of the defences can be faintly made out.



A typical medium-sized hillfort protected by earthen banks and ditches. Note the outer line of defence close to the forestry.

When were they built?

Hillforts and defended enclosures were built between 800 BC and the coming of the Romans in the 1st century AD. People, however, continued to live in these settlements during the Roman

Period, and some carried on in use into the 5th and 6th centuries AD, and perhaps beyond.



The banks and ditches of these two defended enclosures have been levelled and now show best from the air.

This was a long and dramatic period in human history. New technologies were introduced, such as iron working, and the economy was transformed from one based mainly on subsistence agriculture to a complex system with trade connections over long distances. These developments allowed for a dramatic increase in population levels, and by the end of the Iron Age there was hardly any corner of lowland Wales that was not inhabited. New religious beliefs were adopted and by the end of the Iron Age people spoke the precursor of the Welsh language. The longer inhabited settlements witnessed the coming of the Romans as well as their departure, and the introduction of Christianity.

Why were they built?

Although the need for protection was an important consideration in the decision to build defended settlements, hillforts continued in use for several centuries or more, and their function would have evolved and changed during that time. Recent archaeological work has shown that defences are often far more substantial than is required for practical purposes. Therefore, they may have also served as status symbols. Larger hillforts would have operated like villages or small towns, market places, administrative centres, locations for craft production and storage areas, whilst smaller defended enclosures would have been hamlets or farmsteads.



Reconstructions of timber round-houses at Castell Henllys. It is likely that all hillforts would have houses like these.

What can they tell us about the past?

Hillforts and defended settlements are some of the oldest and the most spectacular monuments in Wales. Each site contains evidence relating to when it was constructed and to the lives of the people who built and lived in it.

Buried artefacts can tell us about when the site was built and about the skills of the people and the type of objects they made and used. To some extent they can tell us about society and religious belief. Analysis of bones, preserved seeds and microscopic pollen informs us about the animals that the people kept, about the crops they grew and about the environment in which they lived.



Artist's reconstruction of what a medium-sized hillfort would have looked like.

Survival and destruction

Many sites still survive as prominent landscape features whilst others are now ploughed flat and are only visible from the air due to different crop growth. Some sites have been damaged or destroyed in the past, often inadvertently, by tree planting, land improvements, ploughing, footpaths, building developments and roads. The main aims of this project are first to record which monuments survive and secondly to try and ensure their preservation for the benefit of future generations.

For more information contact:

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Bryngaerau ac aneddiadau amddiffynedig o'r Oes Haearn

Henebion yn y dirwedd

Mae tirwedd Cymru'n gyforiog o henebion, yn enwedig bryngaerau ac aneddiadau amddiffynedig o'r Oes Haearn. Mae llawer o'r bryngaerau mwyaf yn ddigon hysbys ac ymwelir â hwy'n aml. Mae iddynt wrthgloddiau enfawr neu amddiffynfeydd o gerrig. Nid yw rhai o'r safleoedd a'r aneddiadau amddiffynedig llai eu maint mor hysbys. Nid yw rhai o'r safleoedd lleiaf ond i'w gweld ar awyrluniau a dynnwyd yn ystod hafau sych. Fel rhan o brosiect sy'n cael grant gan Cadw, y gobaith yw ymweld â phob safle hysbys dros yr ychydig flynyddoedd nesaf i roi gwybod i dirfeddianwyr am fryngaerau ac aneddiadau amddiffynedig a thrwy hynny sicrhau eu diogelu i'r oesoedd a ddêl.



Bryngaer fawr Carningli ar Fynyddoedd Preseli, a'i hamddiffynfeydd o gerrig

Mathau o safle

Mae'r bryngaerau mwyaf ar gopaon brynau serth a chânt eu hamddiffyn gan un neu ragor o linellau o ragfuriau uchel o bridd neu gerrig. Byddent wedi bod yn gartref i gannoedd o bobl. Digon prin ydynt, serch hynny. Mwy cyffredin yw bryngaerau o hectar neu lai, ond sydd â chlawdd o bridd, a ffos, i'w hamddiffyn. Yn ne-orllewin Cymru ceir lluo o safleoedd bach o lai na 0.3 hectar. Yn aml, does fawr ddim ohonynt i'w weld yn y fan a'r lle, ond ambell waith gellir gweld mân olion twmpathau isel a chloddiau'r amddiffynfeydd.



Bryngaer nodweddiadol sy'n ganolig ei maint. Fe'i hamddiffynnir gan gloddiau pridd a ffosydd. Sylwch ar y llinell amddiffyn allanol ger y goedwig.

Pryd y cawsant eu codi?

Codwyd bryngaerau a llociau amddiffynnol rhwng 800 CC a dyfodiad y Rhufeiniad yn y ganrif 1af OC. Ond daliodd pobl i fyw yn yr aneddiadau hyn yn ystod cyfnod y Rhufeiniaid, a

daliwyd i ddefnyddio rhai ohonynt yn y 5ed a'r 6ed ganrif OC ac efallai ar ôl hynny.



Mae cloddiau a ffosydd y ddau loc amddiffynnol hyn wedi'u gwastatáu ac i'w gweld orau o'r awyr erbyn hyn.

Dyma gyfnod hir a dramatig yn hanes y ddynoliaeth. Cyflwynwyd technolegau newydd, megis gweithio haearn, a gweddnewidiwyd yr economi o un a oedd wedi'i seilio'n bennaf ar amaethyddiaeth ymgynhaliol i system gymhleth ac iddi gysylltiadau masnachu dros bellteroedd maith. Effaith hynny oedd i'r boblogaeth gynyddu'n sydyn, ac erbyn diwedd yr Oes Haearn go brin bod unrhyw gornel o dir isel Cymru nad oedd rhywun yn byw arno. Mabwysiadwyd credoau crefyddol newydd, ac erbyn diwedd yr Oes Haearn yr oedd y bobl yn siarad mam iaith y Gymraeg. Bu'r aneddiadau y bu pobl yn byw ynddynt am gyfnodau hwy yn dyst i ddyfodiad ac i ymadawiad y Rhufeiniaid, ac i ddyfodiad Cristnogaeth.

Pam y cawsant eu codi?

Er bod yr angen i sicrhau diogelwch yn ystyriaeth bwysig wrth benderfynu codi aneddiadau amddiffynedig, daliwyd i ddefnyddio bryngaerau am rai canrifoedd, a byddai eu swyddogaeth wedi esblygu a newid yn ystod y cyfnod hwnnw. Mae gwaith archaeolegol diweddar wedi dangos bod yr amddiffynfeydd yn aml yn fwy sylweddol o lawer nag yr oedd ei angen at ddibenion ymarferol. Gallant hefyd, felly, fod yn arwyddion o statws. Byddai bryngaerau mwy wedi bod yn bentrefi neu drefi bach, yn lleoedd marchnad, yn ganolfannau gweinyddol, yn lleoliadau i gynnyrch crefftwyr ac yn storfeydd, a byddai'r llociau amddiffynnol llai wedi bod yn bentrefi bach iawn neu'n ffermydd.

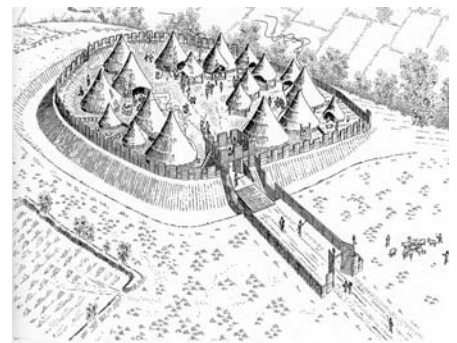


Aiuniadau o'r tai crwn o pren yng Nghastell Henllys. Mae'n debyg y byddai ta fel y rhain ym mhob bryngaer.

Beth y gallant ei ddweud wrthym am y gorffennol?

Bryngaerau ac aneddiadau amddiffynedig yw'r rhai o'r henebion hynaf a mwyaf trawiadol yng Nghymru. Ar bob safle ceir tystiolaeth ynghylch pryd y cafodd ei godi ac am fywydau'r bobl a'i cododd ac a fu'n byw ynddo.

Gall arteffactau sydd wedi'u claddu ddweud wrthym pryd y codwyd y safle, am sgiliau'r bobl ac am y math o wrthrychau y gwnaethant eu cynhyrchu a'u defnyddio. I ryw raddau, gallant ddweud wrthym am y gymdeithas a'u credoau crefyddol. O ddadansoddi'r esgyrn, yr hadau a gadwyd a'r pail microsgopig cawn wybod pa anifeiliaid a gedwid, pa gnydau a dyfid ac am yr amgylchedd yr oedd pobl yn byw ynddo.



Adluniad artist o'r golwg a fyddai wedi bod ar fryngaer o faint canolig.

Goroesi a dinistrio

Mae llawer safle'n dal i fod yn nodwedd amlwg yn y dirwedd, ac eraill wedi'u gwastatáu oherwydd troi'r tir, ac nid oes modd eu gweld ond o'r awyr oherwydd gwahanol gyfraddau twf y cnydau. Yn y gorffennol, ac yn ddamweiniol yn aml, mae rhai safleoedd wedi'u difrodi neu wedi'u dinistrio oherwydd plannu coed, gwella'r tir, troi'r tir, creu llwybrau troed a chodi adeiladau a ffyrdd. Prif amcan cyntaf y prosiect hwn yw cofnodi'r henebion sy'n goroesi, a'r ail yw ceisio sicrhau eu cadw er lles yr oesoedd a ddêl.

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A SURVEY OF DEFENDED ENCLOSURES IN CEREDIGION, 2006

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**Mawrth 2006
March 2006**

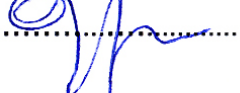
Paratowyd yr adroddiad hwn gan / This report has been prepared by
K Murphy
Swydd / Position: Principal Archaeologist - Field Services

Llofnod / Signature  Dyddiad / Date 16 March 2006

Mae'r adroddiad hwn wedi ei gael yn gywir a derbyn sêl bendith
This report has been checked and approved by E G Hughes

ar ran Archaeoleg Cambria, Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Dyfed Cyf.
on behalf of Cambria Archaeology, Dyfed Archaeological Trust Ltd.

Swydd / Position: Trust Director

Llofnod / Signature  Dyddiad / Date 17 March 2006.

Yn unol â'n nôd i roddi gwasanaeth o ansawdd uchel, croesawn unrhyw sylwadau
sydd gennych ar gynnwys neu strwythur yr adroddiad hwn

As part of our desire to provide a quality service we would welcome any comments
you may have on the content or presentation of this report