

New computer dating technology changing the history of Britain

June 7 2011, by Deborah Braconnier



(PhysOrg.com) -- In a new study called *Gathering Time* published this month, archaeologists from English Heritage and [Cardiff University](#) have been able to create an accurate timeline of the first 700 years of settlement in Britain. Using a newly refined computer and dating system, the researchers have been able to accurately date battle, migrations and construction. This new dating system has changed what was originally believed to have taken place over a time span of 700 years and narrowed it down to less than 100 years.

An example of the new dating technique can be seen with Windmill Hill. Originally it was believed to have been built between 3,700BC and 3,100BC. The new dating technique has narrowed down that time frame to between 3,700BC and 3,640BC.

The [Neolithic period](#) occurred in Britain between 4000BC and 2000BC when residents began to settle into an agricultural way of life instead of nomadic hunters and gatherers. According to the lead archaeologist Dr. Alex Bayliss, farming began in the south-east region of England a few decades before 4,000BC. It progressed to western parts of England over a period of about two centuries before there was a sudden increase in development.

The building of causewayed enclosures throughout Britain were originally believed to have spread over the course of five centuries, but this new dating technique shows that it was much more rapid and spanned only about 75 years. Evidence also shows that the construction of these enclosures created a hierarchy of some sort that led to violence and challenges, with many of the enclosures showing evidence of attacks with large numbers of arrows.

It is the hope of researchers that this new dating technology which looks at the [radiocarbon](#) date of organic materials within a [statistical model](#) may be used to better date other events around the world such as the collapse of the [Mayans](#) and the development of farming in China.

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Citation: New computer dating technology changing the history of Britain (2011, June 7)
retrieved 8 April 2024 from
<https://phys.org/news/2011-06-dating-technology-history-britain.html>

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