

Archaeology uncovers amazing finds in West Sussex

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Bronze Age settlements and Neolithic pottery are some of the finds made by UCL archaeologists during the construction of major new sea defences inland at Medmerry between Selsey and Bracklesham in West Sussex.

Once the fieldwork is complete, the archive of artefacts will be submitted to Chichester Museum.

Sussex has some of the earliest British Neolithic monuments, but recent discoveries have now doubled the number of known features of this date from non-monumental sites on the Sussex coast, heralding an important development in understanding the nature of the Sussex in the Neolithic era.

Other finds include three large and two small circular Bronze-age houses, water management features, and a cremation cemetery. It would appear that a large area of Bronze Age landscape has been preserved at Medmerry under sediments and other deposits and the site has the potential to preserve [wooden structures](#), such as a section of wattle work recorded at the base of a Bronze Age well, which has been carbon dated to c. 1,100 BC. Other features were dated by finds of Bronze Age pottery.

Interestingly, the Iron Age and early Roman remains uncovered to date are notable for their presence in low numbers, with only one ditch containing any Iron Age pottery. This may suggest that the lower lying areas of the site were regularly flooded during this period making them unsuitable for settlement and other uses which would leave an archaeological signature.

The scheme itself will greatly improve the standard of [flood protection](#) for over 300 homes, the water treatment works and the main road into Selsey. It will also create important new wildlife habitat and open up new footpaths, cycleways and bridleways. Work started in September 2011, and is expected to finish in autumn 2013.

Provided by University College London

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