

## An Introduction to British Prehistory

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**Start date** 8<sup>th</sup> April 2016 **End date** 10<sup>th</sup> April 2016

**Venue** Madingley Hall  
Madingley  
Cambridge

**Tutor** Prof Stephen Upex **Course code** 1516NRX062

**Director of Programmes** Emma Jennings

**For further information on this course, please contact** Public Programme Co-ordinator, Clare Kerr  
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**To book** See: [www.ice.cam.ac.uk](http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk) or telephone 01223 746262

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### Tutor biography

Stephen Upex has written on a wide variety of topics related to British landscape history and archaeology, and his interests range from prehistoric settlement, Roman and Saxon farming to medieval open fields systems – a topic which formed the subject of his PhD dissertation. He taught at the University of Brunei from 1996- 2008 and has also published extensively on aspects of South East Asian archaeology and culture. He has excavated widely within the East of England on Prehistoric, Roman and Saxon sites and is currently researching the landscape area around the Roman town of *Durobrivae* in northern Cambridgeshire. He has contributed to several Time Team programmes and his book on the *Romans in the East of England* was published in 2008. He is a member of the Chartered Institute of Archaeologists and a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London.

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## Course programme

Please plan to arrive between 16:30 and 18:30. You can meet other course members in the bar which opens at 18:15. Tea and coffee making facilities are available in the study bedrooms.

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### Friday

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| 19.00       | Dinner  |
| 20.30-22.00 | Introduction: the evidence - Palaeolithic and Mesolithic societies, hunter-gatherers and Ice Age art. |
| 22.00       | Terrace bar open for informal discussion  |

### Saturday

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| 07.30         | Breakfast  |
| 9.00 - 10.30  | The earliest monuments in Britain: the cursus, causewayed enclosures, henges and early farming |
| 10.30         | Coffee   |
| 11.00 – 12.30 | Late Neolithic communities, burial and tombs, and ceremonial landscapes                        |
| 13.00         | Lunch  |
| 14.00-16.00   | Free   |
| 16.00         | Tea  |
| 16.30-18.00   | Bronze Age farming, fields, settlements, and monuments for the dead                            |
| 18.30         | Dinner   |
| 20.00-21.30   | A practical session handling original prehistoric objects                                      |
| 21.30         | Terrace bar open for informal discussion   |

### Sunday

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| 7.30         | Breakfast   |
| 9.00 – 10.30 | Iron Age Britain: settlement patterns – from huts to hill forts |
| 10.30        | Coffee  |

11.00 – 12.30            Pre-Roman Iron Age Britain: the rise of organised society

12.45                      Lunch

The course will disperse after lunch

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## **Course syllabus**

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### **Aims:**

This course aims to enable students to:

1. Have an overview of the way in which archaeologists identify, record and interpret archaeological evidence from a variety of sources.
2. Have a general overview of the main periods of prehistory and the significant monuments which were constructed within each of these periods.
3. Have a basic understanding of the way in which prehistoric society developed through time, from nomadic hunter-gather communities into an organised, hierarchical, tribal based and sedentary society.
4. Gain an overview of the types of objects and artefacts which are associated with prehistoric communities and how to recognise such material culture.

### **Content:**

This course comprises an introductory session to the course, which considers how archaeologists work; the evidence at their disposal and how it survives; and a discussion of aerial photography and geophysical survey. This will be followed by details of Palaeolithic and Mesolithic populations of Britain, followed by Neolithic cultural remains, settlements and ritual and burial monuments.

The patterns and changes of Bronze Age society will be discussed, along with fields, farms, burials and some of the biggest monuments ever built in Europe including Stonehenge and Avebury.

The later parts of the course will deal with aspects of Iron Age society including the vast range of settlement patterns – from huts to hill forts. Finally there will be an insight into late Iron Age society on the eve of the Roman invasion.

The use of flint and the tools produced throughout the prehistoric period will be linked to a practical session where flint, bronze, pottery and other objects will be passed around and discussed.

### **Presentation of the course:**

The course will be presented through lectures, discussion and practical object handling sessions.

**As a result of the course, within the constraints of the time available, students should be able to:**

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the broad range of prehistoric monuments which survive in the archaeological record and how and why they were built.
2. Have an understanding of the way in which society developed throughout the prehistoric period.
3. Have a basic understanding of the range of artefacts which survive from the prehistoric past and be able to recognise those artefacts and understand some of the processes of their manufacture.

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### **Reading and resources list**

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Listed below are a number of texts that might be of interest for future reference, but do not need to be bought (or consulted) for the course.

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| Pollard, J.<br>(ed.)                 | <i>Prehistoric Britain</i>                   | Blackwells (2008)          |
| Darvill, T                           | <i>Prehistoric Britain</i>                   | Routledge (2003)           |
| Bradley, R.                          | <i>The Prehistory of Britain And Ireland</i> | Cambridge (2007)           |
| Megaw, J.V.S. and<br>Simpson, D.D.A. | <i>Introduction to British Prehistory</i>    | Leicester University Press |

**Note** Students of the Institute of Continuing Education are entitled to 20% discount on books published by Cambridge University Press (CUP) which are purchased at the Press bookshop, 1 Trinity Street, Cambridge (Mon-Sat 9am – 5:30pm, Sun 11am – 5pm). A letter or email confirming acceptance on to a current Institute course should be taken as evidence of enrolment.

*Information correct as of:* 23 February 2016