Jersey: Ice Age Island

Media Information

Ice Age Island research team

Jersey Heritage, working in partnership with La Société Jersiaise and the National Trust for Jersey, is co-coordinating the Ice Age Island research, which launched in 2013 and forms part of a three-year archaeological project. Sponsored by Capco Trust and supported by the Tourism Development Fund (TDF), the project explores Jersey’s unique heritage stretching back over a quarter of a million years. The team is made up of U.K. academics and students from British Museum, University College London, University of Manchester, Trinity St. Davids and St. Andrews.

The research team undertaking is led by Dr Matt Pope, Senior Research Fellow of the Institute of Archaeology at University College London. Other members of the team include:

- Dr Beccy Scott, The British Museum
- Dr Andy Shaw, Centre for the Archaeology of Human Origins, University of Southampton
- Dr Martin Bates, University of Wales Trinity St David; and
- Dr Chantal Conneller, University of Manchester

The team has investigated a number of locations across the Island and brought new understanding to its rich Ice Age past. This has included the discovery of a large hunter gatherer camp dating from the end of the last ice age at Les Varines. The team has received media coverage in the popular press and well as having been filmed on the island for BBC documentaries (for example BBC2’s Digging for Britain) and radio coverage. The results of their first stages of investigation are being published in the academic press.

From 2011, supported by funding from the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) they have also undertaken reinvestigation at the Neanderthal site of La Cotte de St Brelade, investigating new parts of the ravine system with modern scientific dating and analytical techniques; and reorganisation and analysis of the collection held by Jersey Heritage with support from the trust. Jersey’s unique archaeological record provides a perfect location for their research allowing the past half million years of human evolution and climate change to be studied within a relatively small landmass which punches well above its weight in terms of scientific importance.