

## Press Release

Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2013

### Jersey's Ice Age past set to 'pop-up' throughout July

**Ice Age Island**, a project which plans to uncover the archaeological significance of Jersey's Ice Age past will launch this Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> June, with a team of Ice Age experts and archaeology students commencing research at a series of important archaeological sites on the Island. Visitors will be able to visit the team in action, handle real Ice Age objects, witness any discoveries and learn more about the Island's Ice Age past as a dedicated pop-up museum follows the team to four locations throughout July.

Jersey Heritage, working in partnership with La Société Jersiaise and the National Trust for Jersey, is co-ordinating the research, which forms part of a three-year archaeological project. Funded by the Tourism Development Fund (TDF), the project will further explore Jersey's unique heritage stretching back over a quarter of a million years.

Initial project fieldwork and research has already uncovered hunting sites and submerged Ice Age landscapes, ranging from the earliest occupation by Neanderthals over 250,000 years ago to the arrival of the first modern humans. To date, there have already been significant finds which have received extensive national television and media coverage, including 'Digging for Britain' and 'Ice Age Giants'. It is anticipated, however, that there are more artefacts and evidence of ancient human occupation still waiting to be discovered across Jersey. The team undertaking the study is led by Dr Matt Pope, Senior Research Fellow of the Institute of Archaeology at University College London, and colleagues from a number of UK institutions including the British Museum.

The Ice Age Island pop-up museum which will follow the team to each location is being brought to life with the artwork of Year 10 Hautlieu art students. The pop-up museum will also feature Living History demonstrations designed to illustrate what life was like in prehistoric times, the

skills needed to survive and the significance of the archaeological finds being discovered across the Island.

**ICE AGE ISLAND DISCOVERIES | Pop Up Museum | 30 June to 26 July**

**WEEK 1:** 30 JUNE - 5 JULY: Petit Portelet, St Martin - (Castle Green)

**WEEK 2:** 7 - 12 JULY: Les Varines, St Saviour

**WEEK 3:** 14 - 19 JULY: La Cotte Point / Portelet Common (headland), St Brelade

**WEEK 4:** 21 - 26 JULY: Col de la Rocque, St Mary

Map references to each location and a park-and-ride bus service will be available from La Hougue Bie Museum, where visitors will also find the Treasures of the Island Exhibition which looks into the recent Ice Age findings at La Cotte de St Brelade.

Dr Matt Pope, commented: *“We have only begun to scratch the surface of Jersey’s rich record of Ice Age hunters, climate change and extinct mammals such as the mammoth. The Ice Age Island project is expected not only to uncover insight into the Island’s colourful Ice Age past, but into human evolution, with significant findings relevant across Europe and the wider world. It is thanks to the kind support of the TDF and our partners Jersey Heritage, the National Trust for Jersey and the Société Jersiaise, that this ground-breaking knowledge can be discovered.”*

Jersey Heritage will be facilitating the exploration and interpretation of this project, the results of which will have global resonance. They are working with Jersey Tourism to transform the archaeological discoveries into a tourism and educational resource, including dedicated Ice Age Walking Trails around the Island, an Ice Age Walking Guide, virtual tours and an Ice Age Island website which are all set to launch next month.

For more information visit [www.jerseyheritage.org/IceAgeIsland](http://www.jerseyheritage.org/IceAgeIsland) .-ENDS-

**MEDIA CALL:**

Matt Pope and Olga Finch will be available for interview from Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> June. For more information, or to arrange an interview, please contact Rachel at ORCHID on 888997 or email [Rachel@orchid.je](mailto:Rachel@orchid.je)

### **Notes to editors:**

The Ice Age Island project is of notable importance in putting Jersey firmly on the historical map globally and it has the potential for the Island to become one of the most significant cultural heritage destinations in Europe.

Research into Ice Age Island has been given new impetus during the past four years due to the work of a collaborative team drawn from UK institutions including:

- Dr Matt Pope, Institute of Archaeology, University College London
- 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

Building a team comprising UK undergraduate and postgraduate students they have 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 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 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. They have also undertaken reorganisation and analysis of 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.

### **Further Information on the TDF**

- The Tourism Development Fund Panel, which consists of members from the private sector, oversees the TDF. Further information can be found at [www.jersey.com/TDF](http://www.jersey.com/TDF)
- The Minister of Economic Development is required to approve any grant over £100,000. The Ministerial Decision is available at [www.gov.je](http://www.gov.je) alongside further information about the project.
- In the Autumn 2012 round, in total eight applications were awarded grants amounting to £243,566, including the grant to Jersey Heritage.