

# Archaeology

## on Wittenham Clumps



Excavated ramparts on Castle Hill

### Archaeology on Castle Hill

Flint artefacts show that hunter-gatherers and early farmers visited Castle Hill during the Mesolithic (Middle Stone Age) and Neolithic (Late Stone Age). People were visiting the reserve before the 'invention' of farming.

The Iron Age ramparts and ditch you can see today are more recent. They were dug around 600 BC- that's some 2,600 years ago! Within this an earlier Bronze Age Hill Fort has been found. Originally the ditch would have been much deeper, but over time it has partially filled in with silt and vegetation.

You will cross the ramparts as you follow the path up to Castle Hill from the Clumps Car Park. Today, Castle Hill is a 'Scheduled Ancient Monument' (SAM). This means the site has been recognised for its important historical significance and is protected for the future.



Neolithic flint arrow head

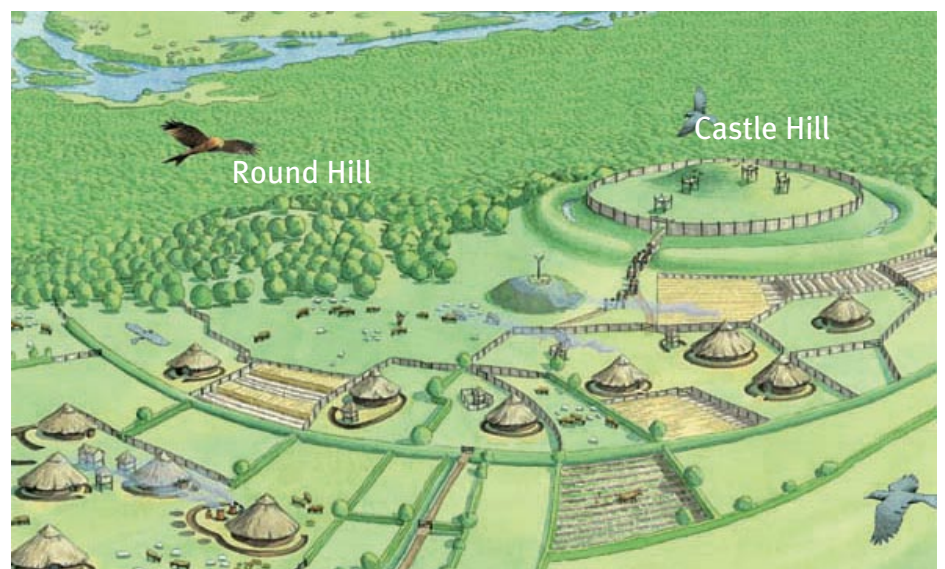
The Wittenham Clumps contain important archaeology, from the Bronze Age to the Roman period, with a magnificent Iron Age Hill Fort on Castle Hill.



Remains of Iron Age skeletons, pots and animal bones have all been discovered on the Clumps and can be seen on display at Project Timescape.

Wittenham Clumps lie across two small hills – Castle Hill and Round Hill. Back in the Iron Age the Clumps provided a perfect location for an Iron Age Hill Fort.

Artist's impression of Round Hill and Castle Hill in the Iron Age



## Archaeology on Round Hill

On Round Hill, a large Iron Age settlement has been discovered. Evidence of earlier Bronze Age activity has also been found along with later Roman trackways and buildings.

## Time Team on The Clumps



During 2003 and 2004, Oxford Archaeology and Channel 4's Time Team spent three days excavating trenches across the Clumps.



Roman pot

Thousands of important Iron Age finds including pottery, animal bones, wool spinning weights and several amazingly well preserved human skeletons of an adult and baby were found at the bottom of the Hill Fort ditch.



Uncovering skeletons of an adult and baby



Bone needle

Like us today, the Iron Age people also had a problem with unwanted rubbish and waste. Some of the most interesting finds discovered by the Time Team were in enormous 2,500 year old Iron Age rubbish pits called 'middens'.



Bone gouge



Iron Age pot

Originally, the pits would have been dug into the chalk ground and used to store grain – the cool chalk acted just like a big fridge! But, hundreds of years later, the abandoned pits would have been used by settlers to bury rubbish and the Time Team revealed abundant animal bones, ironwork, coins and large pieces of broken Roman pottery.



Spindle whorl used for hand spinning



Visit Project Timescape to find out more about local wildlife and landscapes.

[www.projecttimescape.co.uk](http://www.projecttimescape.co.uk)

To find out more about archaeology on the Clumps visit the Northmoor Trust website at [www.northmoortrust.co.uk](http://www.northmoortrust.co.uk).

