



Museum in the Park

Stroud District (Cowle) Museum Service

Stone Age Britain

Study artefacts from the Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic period (and the Bronze and Iron Age) in the Museum's Archaeology gallery, 'And Then Came People'. The Museum offers a guided tour in the gallery, or teachers may opt for a self-led experience. Artefacts on display have been found locally; see the handaxes, flint tools and blades, and the bones of animals once hunted in our area, by Stone Age Man.

In addition, students can handle, under supervision, a box of artefacts from the Museum collection, to get a real glimpse into how people lived in Britain between 2,000 and 300,000 years ago. The box works like an archaeological dig, with each era assigned a layer – as you remove each layer, so you go back through time. The layers cover the Iron Age, Bronze Age, Neolithic, Mesolithic and Palaeolithic eras and each holds hand axes, scraper tools and arrowheads. The box enables students to discover each era through handling the tools actually used by our ancestor, for example, an axe made over 300,000 years ago – the axe is so old that in fact it was likely to have been made by Homo Heidelbergensis, pre-dating Homo Sapiens.

The Handling box allows students to observe the technological advancements made by our ancestors from the very roughly shaped flints of the Palaeolithic to the exquisitely worked arrowheads from the Bronze Age. See also the film clip with Phil Harding, of Channel 4's 'Time Team', working a flint arrowhead, which is displayed in the gallery.

The visit might include a study of the Mammoth tusks found at Cainscross and on display in the Geology Room; so, chronologically, beginning with Ice Age and evidence of animals hunted by the first humans. Tom Marshall's painting, 'Fantasy of Mammoths at Cainscross Roundabout' will inspire follow up artwork, discussion and writing. (An 'Art Pack' is available to guide this activity)

Teachers and students may follow up their Museum visit with a trip to the Neolithic longbarrow at Nymphsfield, or the Randwick longbarrow.

For more information, please contact the Learning Programmes Officer on 01453 763394.