Dig into Ancient Ireland

Archeological sites



Neolithic Settlement sites in Northern Ireland

Ballygalley

Type House complex

County Antrim

A number of Neolithic houses were recovered from Ballygalley, in a field 500 metres from the coast. House 1 was a subrectangular house defined by wall trenches, with a rounded southern end. Six internal postholes indicated provided support for the roof. An annexe at the northern end of the building was probably not roofed, as there were no internal post-holes. This may have formed a sheltered outdoor activity area, or perhaps an animal pen. A second house had a more rectangular plan, with large posts providing support in the corners. However, the house was only partially excavated and little more could be said.

Key artefacts

 Lithics: flint cores and flakes.
Fragments of pitchstone were also recovered, believed to have come from the Isle of Arran in the Firth of Clyde, indicating long-distance contacts.

Ballygalley Hill

Type Flint mining site and occupation

County Antrim

A series of cuttings had been made into a chalk cliff, creating a 'staircase'. These cuttings had been made to access large nodules of flint, which appeared in bands in the chalk. In this area were a series of basalt boulders, and around these was a concentration of flint knapping waste. These boulders seem to have been used as seats or anvils for the flint knapping activities. A small patch of charcoal-blackened soil provides evidence for a hearth, which contained fragments of Neolithic pottery.

An area of Neolithic occupation was also uncovered on Ballygalley Hill, with large amounts of Neolithic flint and pottery being found in the soil. A small hearth was also found in this area, but no structures were uncovered. It is likely that the flint-mining site and occupation area were in use at the same time.

- Pottery: Ten fragments of undecorated Neolithic pottery.
- Flint: a large quantity of freshly-mined flint, including waste material (e.g. cores and flakes) and worked material (e.g. axes, scrapers, leaf-shaped arrowheads).
- Porcellanite: fragments of polished porcellanite axes were recovered.



No

Q Ballyharry

Type House complex

County Antrim

Two Neolithic houses were uncovered in the peninsula of Islandmagee. The earliest phase of activity at the House 1 site comprised a subrectangular structure constructed from posts, with three internal chambers. The posts were removed when use of this structure ended, and may have been reused in the next phase. This next phase involved the construction of a rectangular structure on the site of the previous building. The structure involved post and plank construction, with these elements being set into wall trenches. These posts and planks remain in some positions, as they were charred, aiding their preservation. Two internal posts were used to support the roof. A second structure was built against the northern end of the building, and appears to have been built from wattle and daub fencing. This may have been an animal pen adjoining the house. Part of the structure was burnt, and then re-built. The burning may have been from an attack, as a number of arrowheads with burnt tips were found, suggesting that they had been used to set the

building alight. When the building was re-built an axe and arrowhead were deposited in the post-holes, possibly as an offering to bring better luck to this phase of occupation or to renew a connection to the site.

A second house was also uncovered, but only partially excavated. It appeared to be constructed with posts which were set into a wall trench.

Key artefacts

- Pottery: Almost 2500 fragments of pottery were recovered, representing undecorated Neolithic bowls.
- Lithics: A large quantity of stone material was recovered, including manufacturing waste, which indicates that lithics were being produced at the site. Worked flint included scrapers, knives and arrowheads. Porcellanite axes and flakes were also recovered. An ard point indicates agriculture at the site, and quern stones and rubbers indicate the processing of grain. Flakes of material from Great Langdale, Cumbria, were found, indicating long-distance contacts.

Langford Lodge

Type Occupation site

County Antrim

Excavation showed that this site was first occupied in the Neolithic, with a series of pits, stake-holes and stone settings enclosed by a ditch. Finds were recovered from pits, but had also been trodden into the surface of the site. These included Neolithic pottery, porcellanite axe fragments, struck flint and quartz.

- Pottery: undecorated Neolithic bowls, with rolled and thickened rims.
- Lithics: large amounts of flint waste and finished tools. The waste included flakes and cores, some from beach/river cobbles, and also some freshly-quarried flint. The finished tools included scrapers, a knife, a broken arrowhead, a butttrimmed flake, and a flake with delicate trimming along one edge. Quartz was also recovered, with one being trimmed along one side. Fragments of polished porcellanite axes were also found.

Neolithic Settlement sites in Northern Ireland

Campsie

Type House complex

County Londonderry

Two large Neolithic houses were recovered, close to the shore of Lough Foyle. The first house was rectangular, measured ~15 metres in length and 6 metres in width. It was defined by foundation trenches, wherein large oak posts were set. There were further posts outside the walls, which provided extra support. This suggests that there may have been a loft within the roofing of the structure, requiring extra support. The interior was divided into at least four separate chambers, with a central aisle. Evidence form soil analysis suggest that one end of the house was used as a barn, with animals living within the home.

The second house was similarly sized, measuring ~14 metres in length and 6.5 metres in width. Despite the similar dimensions, this house was not as substantial as House 1. Its foundations were not as deep and it did not have evidence for such a heavy roof construction. However, the style of construction was similar, with wall trenches containing posts and planks. The interior of the house was divided into two chambers.

A wealth of artefacts were recovered, with some coming from conspicuous contexts. For example, an entire bowl was recovered from a post-hole, where it was probably deliberately deposited. Similarly, a porcellanite axe and a flint blade were found in a small niche cut into a post-hole. These deliberate deposits may have been significant to the group who lived at the site, and may have represented the 'death' of the house after its abandonment.

- Pottery: a very large amount of pottery was recovered, representing at least 52 differeent vessels.
- Lithics: over 400 lithics were recovered during the excavations, including cores, flakes, blades, scrapers, knives, rubbing stones/polishers, quartz pieces, a porcellanite axe, a porcellanite scraper, and knapping waste.

Neolithic Settlement sites in Northern Ireland

Q Windy Ridge

Type Hearth site

County Antrim

A site on the Garron Plateau, consisting of a scatter of lithics and pottery around a small hearth. A number of tool making activities seem to have taken place at the site, including the knapping of flint, and production of arrow shafts and axes. It seems as though this site was used for seasonal upland grazing of cattle or sheep, during which time maintenance activities took place. The main settlement would have been down at the valley floor.

Key artefacts

 Porcellanite: Unpolished flakes of porcellanite, the material often used for polished axes. Any finished axes would have been brought away from the site.

- Flint: Various flint tools were recovered, including scrapers (end and hollow types), a lead arrowhead, flakes and cores. Nodules were also recovered, from which flint flakes were removed and knapped into tools.
- Pottery: the pottery was mostly from undecorated bowls, probably used for cooking. The few pieces of decorated pottery have horizontal corded decoration, some vertical cord impressions and occasionally incised lines. The decorated pieces tend to be from the rim, suggesting that only this part of the pot was decorated

Enagh

Type House	
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County Londonderry

The site was located on the west-facing slope of a ridge, 200 metres from the River Foyle. A rectangular Neolithic house was discovered at the site, with an apsidal end. The house measured 6 metres by 4 metres and was orientated north-west to southeast. The remains of the building consisted of wall slots, which were stone-packed, and would have originally contained upright planks. Post-holes were present in some of the corners, as well as in the centre of the building. These would have supported the walls and the roof. Apart from this post-hole, no other features were found in the interior. On the west side of the house there was a gap in the construction features, which may be the position of the entrance.

Key artefacts

- Pottery: pottery fragments were recovered, representing three vessels. These appear to be part of the Early Neolithic carinated bowl tradition.
- Lithics: a single flint blade was recovered.
- A number of hazelnut shell fragments were recovered.

Material in collection Yes

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Neolithic Settlement sites in Northern Ireland

• Thornhill

Type House complex

County Londonderry

On a terrace near the mouth of the River Foyle a Neolithic settlement was uncovered, surrounded by at least seven separate lines of concentric palisades. The palisades were constructed from posts, planks and boards, and were held in place by packing stones and clay soil. At least five Neolithic structures were found within the palisaded enclosure. Of these buildings, at least three are rectangular houses, defined by wall trenches and post-holes. Two of these buildings had internal post-holes, indicating roof supports. Two of the buildings also appeared to have been internally divided into at least two rooms. There was also a circular structure at the site, although it is unclear how it related to the rest of the site. Similarly, a fifth structure was subrectangular in shape, with its outline defined by wall trenches, however

it appeared to be slighter than the three houses, and was possibly unroofed. A large amount of Neolithic material was recovered from the site, suggesting that the site was occupied for a long period of time.

Key artefacts

- Pottery: fragments from numerous undecorated Carinated bowls.
- Lithics: fragments of stone and flint axes, quartz, saddle querns, various flint tools including arrowheads, javelin heads and scrapers. Porcellanite axes were recovered, indicating exchange across the north of Ireland. A greenstone axe possibly from Great Langdale, Cumbria, was recovered, suggesting broader connections.
- Beads: perforated stone beads were found, probably from items of jewellery.

Ballynagilly

Туре	House
I y p C	110430

County Tyrone

This occupation site was excavated in the 1960s and revealed a Neolithic settlement. This settlement was represented by a rectangular, timber house, 6.5 metres long by 6 metres wide. The walls of this house were made of timber planks, found in a burnt condition, which had been set in trenches. Stones along the outside of these walls provided support to the planks. A number of post-holes indicate the use of large, upright posts to provide additional support. There were two hearths within the house, which would have been used for cooking, as well as providing heat and light.

Later settlement by the Bronze Age Beaker group was found further down the slope. There were no distinct houses here, but various stake-holes, pits and hearths are probably the remains of a temporary structure. These traces of settlement were associated with scrapers, a barbed-andtanged arrowhead, reworked fragments of polished stone axes and a large quantity of early Bronze Age Beaker pottery.

- Pottery: Undecorated. Neolithic pottery.
- Lithics: Leaf-shaped arrowheads, scrapers (end scrapers, convex scrapers, hollow scrapers), knives, broken polished stone axes.
- Food waste: animal bone and burnt hazelnut shells were recovered.

Neolithic monuments and tombs

Dooey's Cairn/Ballymacaldrack

Туре	Court	tomb
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County Antrim

Excavated in 1935 and 1975. A single ended court tomb with a deep U-shaped forecourt, composed of upright basalt slabs. Remains of pottery bowls were recovered from the court, suggesting that rites were carried out in this area before the cremation/burial in the tomb. An opening in the court facade, marked by two portal stones, leads to a stone chamber containing many artefacts (lithics, pottery, beads). Beyond this chamber was a long, stone-paved passage containing three circular pits. This passage would have had a timber roof, supported by upright posts held in the three pits. The third pit (closest to the end of the passage) contained the cremated remains of 5-6 individuals, both male and female. The stones of this passage were fire-reddened, and large quantities of charcoal were present, suggesting that cremation of bodies was taking place within this passage. The even deposit of charcoal above the paving slabs in this passage may also suggest that the structure was destroyed by a fire, burning the timber roof and posts. Stone revetment edges the tomb, supporting a stone cairn which would have covered the entire structure at one point.

Key artefacts

- Pottery: Round based pots of various types. Multiple types of decoration, e.g. impressions of cords and grassstalks; sharp scorings, perhaps made by a fingernail or stone/wood tool; and perforated holes.
- Stone axes: polished stone axes, with finely ground, sharp edges.
- Unpolished axe: a rough, shaped axe which might have been used as a hoe or a pick for farming activities.
- Arrowheads: Leaf-shaped, and lozengeshaped arrowheads. Very delicately worked flint.
- Other lithics: flint blades, knives, scrapers and flakes.
- Beads: Perforated bone bead, and darkgreen stone (serpentine) bead. Great skill was required to shape these, especially the serpentine bead. Probably used for decoration, perhaps as part of a necklace or bracelet.

Access: No car park, but there is space for a car to park on a footpath across the road. Well signposted path to access site.

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Neolithic monuments and tombs

Annaghmare/ the Black Castle

Type Court tomb

County Armagh

A well-preserved court tomb excavated in 1963 and 1964. The enclosing cairn is trapezoidal in shape, and is 20m long, 11.75m wide at south, narrowing to 6.5m across north. The sides of the cairn are defined by a revetment of orthostats with drystone walling in between. The horse-shoe court is defined by a facade of orthostats, with the drystone walling between these as well. A small standing stone was identified in the middle of the court. Two portal stones mark the entrance to the gallery 7m long and divided into 3 chambers by pairs of jamb stones, with a stone sill between the middle and inner chambers. The burial gallery originally had a corbelled roof (a type of roof where overlapping stone slabs create a vault, which can be covered with a single slab). The first chamber had been robbed,

but the other two contained the burials of two adult females and two children, as well as artefacts. The tomb had been extended by two more chambers. These chambers were also entered through portal stones. Revetment stones were not placed at the back of these extensions, perhaps suggesting that the builders planned to extend the tomb further.

Key artefacts

- Pottery pots and bowls
- Flint tools scrapers, javelin head.
- Quartz a broken fragment of a quartz prism. Possibly a votive deposit.
- Animal bones bear tooth (possible worn as a pendant), as well as pig and ox bones.

Access: Car park, and a 300m walk along a forest path to the site.

Ballintaggart

Type Court tomb

County Armagh

This megalithic monument was excavated in 1966 as it was under threat from a guarry extension. It was re-erected in Botanic Gardens, although is now in museum storage. The tomb has a very shallow forecourt compared to other court tombs, but the four upright stones that make up the façade are well matched in size and shape. The entrance in the façade leads to a gallery of four chambers, which are divided by jamb stones with sill stones. The tomb had been disturbed and much of the original artefacts had been robbed. However, in the third chamber a cache of flint was discovered. On one side of the gallery a line of stones acted as a kerb to the stone cairn covering the monument. This

was probably present on the other side, but the stones had been removed at some point. Evidence was also found to indicate that entrance to the gallery had been blocked by packing stone in the forecourt. In this area was a large amount of Neolithic pottery.

Key artefacts

- Flint: a cache of about 100 flint flakes was discovered, along with a scraper and a flint core.
- Pottery: a large amount of fragments of Neolithic pottery, mainly round-bottomed Carinated bowls. One of these bowls had decorative slashes around the rim.

Access: Site no longer exists – in museum storage.

Neolithic monuments and tombs

Ballymacdermot

Type Court cairn

County Armagh

This megalithic monument is located on the south-eastern slopes of Ballymacdermott Mountain, giving it views over the Ring of Gullion and Plain of Meigh. The forecourt of this tomb is almost circular, with a narrow opening in the façade for access. The façade is made up of upright stones, and in some places there is drystone-walling between them. A granite rock outcrop to the left side might have influenced the design of the circular court. Two low portal stones flank the entrance to the three-chambered gallery, with each chamber separated by pairs of jamb stones. Although these don't survive today, the tomb was roofed by overlapping stones (corbelled roof). Surrounding the tomb was a kerb of boulders, which held the stone cairn covering the site. The entrance to the tomb was filled with blocking stones,

which prevented entry into the tomb after the deceased was buried.

The site was excavated in 1962, recovering evidence for human cremation burials within the chambers. Pottery was recovered from the forecourt and the chambers.

Key artefacts

- Pottery: fragments of three pots were recovered. These were all relatively simple bowls, which were well made, but undecorated.
- Flint: worked flint was found within the tomb, but they were from numerous sources. This suggests that the group using the tomb moved around the landscape, or that they had connections with other Neolithic people across Northern Ireland.

Ballykeel

Type Portal tomb

County Armagh

A tripod portal tomb at the end of a long cairn. The cairn contained four parallel lines of stones, covered with small stones and earth. The remains of a stone-lined cist was found at the north end of the cairn. The cist contained a few sherds of Neolithic pottery, a javelin head & a flint flake. Any burials in the cist were probably destroyed by the acidity of the soil. The portal tomb is composed of a massive capstone supported by a rear supporting stone and two portal stones, which formed the entrance to the tomb. A closing stone was present between the portals, closing access to the chamber. The stones forming this tomb had collapsed but were put back into position using a crane - the original builders would not have been able to use a crane! The chamber contained

3 finely worked & highly decorated pottery bowls, and some flint artefacts. Similar to the cist, the soil acidity has destroyed any evidence for burials.

Key artefacts

- Pottery: Multiple styles of pottery, including highly-decorated vessels.
- Flints: Probably made from quarried flint which was imported from the Co. Antrim or Co. Londonderry coast (very fresh outer 'cortex' of stone, which is usually battered if flint cobbles from rivers are used). Scrapers, flakes and a well-made javelin head.

Access: Parking on rough ground just past the site on the Ballykeel Road. Access to the site through a gate.

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Clonlum South

Type Round cairn with portal tomb

County Armagh

An unusual megalithic monument to the east of Slieve Gullion. The monument is difficult to classify, although appears to consist of a collapsed portal tomb surrounded by a round cairn. In the centre of the cairn is a rectangular chamber, constructed of four slabs (two large side walls and two smaller end stones – these stones all lean inwards). Originally, this chamber had been roofed by a large slab, but it has since split in two, with these segments slipping off the monument. There is also a large upright stone to the north-west, just outside the chamber - a matching stone on the south side has collapsed. These upright stones are reminiscent of portal stones. The surrounding cairn is set back from the chamber, creating a court around it. However, the circular cairn has no opening, cutting off the chamber entirely.

Key artefacts

- Pottery: just two fragments were recovered, both from within the chamber. One of these has been decorated with 'punch-marks'.
- Bead: a polished pebble was recovered, which has had a hole bored through it. The faces of the pebble have also been slightly hollowed, to shape it. The pebble was probably used as a decorative bead.

Access: Signposted access through field with small car park.

Slieve Gullion South Cairn

Type Passage tomb

County Armagh

The highest surviving passage tomb in Ireland, this monument is located at the southern end of the Slieve Gullion summit ridge. A large circular cairn of loose stones is piled up to a height of 5 metres, measuring 30 metres in diameter. This cairn was contained by a kerb of large, undecorated stones. Within the cairn was an octagonal chamber, with an approach passage and an end-chamber. The walls of the chamber and passage were constructed from massive stone slabs, laid out end-to-end. Between these slabs were smaller stones, filling the gaps. The chamber and passage were roofed with lintels and corbelled stones. Within the chamber were three large stones with basin depressions - these basins are thought to have been natural, but had been enhanced by stone hammers. There were few archaeological finds within the chamber, with some fragments of cremated human bone and worked flint and chert. The entrance to the chamber is aligned with the setting sun on the winter solstice. A description of the monument from 1739 describes a funnelshaped porch, which was present between the passage and the edge of the cairn. This no longer remains, although a large stone in this position may be a fallen sill stone. A secondary cairn had been built on to the north side of the main cairn, although there was no trace of a burial within this.

Key artefacts

- Lithics: seven pieces of worked flint and one of worked chert. The flint included a barbed-and-tanged arrowheads and a circular scraper.
- Human bone: fragments of cremated human bone belonging to one adult.

Access: Car park at Slieve Gullion Forest Park. Long uphill walk to site.

Neolithic monuments and tombs

Clontygora

Type Court tomb

County Armagh

This court tomb is set on a gently sloping slope overlooking a shallow valley. The tomb has a very deep forecourt, in a U-shape. This is defined by a façade of tall upright stones, some of which are nearly three metres in height. The central part of the forecourt was paved, with a shallow pit underneath this paving. The tomb's gallery is entered via an opening in the façade, marked by two large, well matched portal stones. The gallery has suffered stone robbing, and so is not intact. However, it appears that it was split into at least two, and possibly three, chambers, divided by jamb stones. The first chamber is still intact, with massive stone slabs forming the sides, and roofed by a capstone. Only a single stone remains of the second chamber, which is divided from the first by jamb stones and a sill stone. However, a further jamb stone and sill stone were found at the back of the second chamber, suggesting that there was another chamber. Very little of the cairn remains, but the trace of a revetment kerb

was found, suggesting that the cairn was quite narrow. A number of artefacts were recovered from the excavation, including pottery, lithics and the remains of a cremated individual.

Key artefacts

- Pottery: undecorated Carinated Ware was discovered in the forecourt and first chamber. Several fragments of decorated pottery, a broad-rimmed vessel, a bowl and the remnants of a pygmy cup (a very small ceramic vessel) were recovered from the second and third chambers.
- Lithics: Flint flakes, hollow scapers, circular scrapers, leaf-shaped arrowheads and a polished stone axe.
- Bone: a large quantity of cremated human bone, probably from a single individual.
- Animal bone

Access: No parking, but access path from track off Ferryhill Road.

Annadorn

Type Passage tomb

County Down

A rectangular chamber of three side stones, with a slightly displaced capstone. Although this is all that remains of the tomb, an account from 1802 describes a stone cairn of 18 metres diameter which overlay the chamber. A lintelled passage led from the edge of the cairn to the chamber. Within the chamber a number of human bones and ashes were recovered.

Key artefacts

 Human bone, alongside ashes, probably the remnants of a cremation burial.

No parking, so visitors may have to park on grassy roadside. Steps to site.

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Neolithic monuments and tombs

Q Audleystown

Type Court tomb

County Down

Located 200 metres from the shore of Strangford Lough is this dual court tomb, with a forecourt and gallery at either end of a long cairn. The cairn of loose stone is revetted by a kerb of neat drystone walling (unlike the large boulders usually used for court tomb kerbs), which survives to a height of about 1 metre. The façade at either end is guite flat, with openings between portal stones allowing entrance to the galleries. They are each separated into four chambers by jamb stones and sill stones. A large number of burnt bones were recovered, indicating communal burial within the chambers. Numerous artefacts were found with the remains, including pottery and worked lithic tools. Both of the forecourts contained rubble, blocking entry to the galleries after internment of the human remains.

Key artefacts

- Pottery: fragments from 15 separate vessels were recovered, including decorated and undecorated Carinated bowls.
- Flint: 29 pieces of worked flint were recovered, including flakes, cores, round scrapers, end scrapers, hollow scrapers, knives, javelin heads and arrowheads. These very well worked lithics were almost certainly deliberately buried with the dead.
- Quartz: two worked pieces of quartz.
- Human bones: the remains of 34 individuals were recovered. These represented both male and female, and all age groups. Some of the bones were burnt, indicating that they had been cremated. A number were buried in the tomb in an unburnt condition. These bones were buried in groups, sometimes neatly arranged, but not as entire skeletons. This indicates that they were disarticulated when buried, and had been defleshed before being added to the court tomb.

Access: Yes, access road off Audleystown Road which leads to a small car park.

Giant's Ring

Type Funerary and ceremonial landscape, henge, passage tomb

County Down

The Giant's Ring is an impressive circular enclosure (a henge), which measures 200 metres in diameter, with a 4 metre high bank. The enclosure dates to either the Late Neolithic, or Early Bronze Age, and would have taken an estimated 70.000 hours of labour to construct. The earth used to construct the bank was removed from the interior of the ring, creating a broad trough and making the bank even more impressive from the inside of the henge. A wall of stones on the inside of the bank helped to keep it from collapsing, and may have formed a visible façade in the past. In the centre of this enclosure is an earlier monument; a Neolithic passage tomb, with most of the original megaliths still in position. In the past the monument would have been covered in an earthen mound, however. It is unclear what activities would have taken place inside the enclosure, but it seems likely that it would have focussed on the passage tomb. No domestic evidence (houses, hearths etc) were recovered from the inside of the henge, suggesting that it was a ceremonial structure. The top of the henge may even have been used as a viewing platform.

The enclosure and passage tomb are part of a ritual and funerary landscape, with multiple sites including burial mounds, cist burials, flat cemeteries and various isolated burials. One site, excavated in 1855, was a circular stone chamber containing pottery, burnt and unburnt human remains (including skulls), and animal bones (possibly as food offerings). Some of the pottery was Neolithic, but it appears that the tomb was used over a long period of time. Unfortunately, most of these sites were destroyed by the clearance of land for agriculture. However, one site, located just to the north of the henge enclosure, was excavated in the 1990s. This site, Ballynahatty 5/6, involves a complex series of ritual circular enclosures, passages and palisades constructed from upright timber posts. Some of these pits were laid out in squares, and they have been interpreted as platforms upon which the dead would be excarnated (the natural removal of flesh from the body). This feature, like the passage tomb and surrounding sites, was associated with death and community ceremonies. The remains of feasts were evidenced by the presence of burnt animal bones and charcoal in pits.

Key artefacts

- Animal bone: many burnt animal bones, especially pig bones, were recovered from the wooden complex of enclosures, evidencing feasting.
- Lithics: Flint tools associated with food processing (e.g. knives and scrapers) were recovered from the wooden complex of enclosures.
- Pottery: Neolithic Grooved Ware pottery was recovered from the wooden complex of enclosures.
- Human bone: human bone was recovered from some of the burial cairns in the area, including two skulls.

Access: Car park and easy access

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Neolithic monuments and tombs

Ballynoe

Type Stone circle with outlying stones

County Down

The site includes a circular setting of closelyspaced standing stones with a number of outlying stones surrounding it. An opening in the west side of this circle may have been an entrance. Within the stone circle is a short arc of standing stones, and an oval mound which is located off-centre. This mound is a low cairn of stones, revetted by a kerb of upright stones. The cairn was partially excavated in 1937, revealing two cists with large, flat capstones. One of the cists contained cremated bones. Few finds were recovered, although some pottery and lithics were noted.

Key artefacts

- Pottery: a few sherds of Neolithic pottery with decorated using a small mammal or bird bone.
- Lithics: a flint nodule, scrapers, and flakes were recovered.
- Human bones: the cremated remains of seven individuals were recovered. Six were probably adults, but one may be from a very young child.

Access: Small space for parking at entrance to site. Beautiful 320m walk along tree-tunnel path to the site.

Legananny

Type Portal tomb

County Down

A tall tripod portal tomb, situated on the south of the Slieve Croob range, with extensive views to the south. The two portal stones are around six feet in height, with a single support stone at the opposite end (four foot). These three stones support a long capstone. Within the structure is a further stone slab, which might have acted as a closing stone. The site has not been excavated.

Key artefacts

— N/A

Access: Yes, car park on Dolmen Road. Short walk up track to the site.

Neolithic monuments and tombs

Goward

Type Court tomb

County Down

The site survives as a well-preserved façade of 11 uprights forming a forecourt, with 3 aligned chambers, separated by jambs and sills within the cairn. The cairn was edged by a revetment kerb of stones, although the cairn is largely destroyed. No human bones were recovered from the tomb, although ox bones were. Finely polished Neolithic pottery was found in the chambers. Excavations in 1932 revealed that the grave had been used as a habitation during the Iron Age.

Key artefacts

- Pottery finely polished examples of Neolithic pottery.
- Animal bone ox bones, probably the result of sacrifice or feasting.

Access: No access, site in farmland.

Goward

Type Portal tomb

County Down

This portal tomb, built of granite, consists of an enormous capstone, 5ft thick, roofing a long rectangular chamber. The higher end of the capstone was originally supported by an end-stone, but has slipped and is now supported on two taller stones. These stones appear to have originally formed a crescent façade of uprights with other stones. This is a good example of how monuments can change over time, and it is important to interpret them as they originally stood. Another thin slab, now lying over the western end of the chamber, was probably the western end-stone, which has since collapsed inwards. There are traces of the cairn around the dolmen. A cremation urn and flint arrowhead were found within the chamber.

Key artefacts

- Pottery: cremation urn.
- Lithics: flint arrowhead.
- Excavations in early 19th century did not record the artefacts in sufficient detail.

Access: Car park beside site.

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Millin Bay

Type Long cairn

County Down

The site was backfilled after excavation, and relatively little is visible now. The low cairn is surrounded by an oval of large standing stones. In the centre of the cairn was a long stone cist, with its walls, floor and roof constructed from flagstones. Within this cist were the bones of at least 15 individuals, and the cremated bones of one other, although no grave goods were recovered. The bones were disarticulated and grouped, i.e. the skulls were organised together, and the long bones were grouped together. Around this cist was an oval setting of upright flagstones, which was roughly concentric with the standing stones. The whole internal oval had been filled with shingle and flat stones laid horizontally, with the outer flagstone oval being buttressed externally against a raised bank of shingle and stones. There were a further eight cists at the site; four of these

contained cremation deposits. The entire area was then covered in a cairn of sand.

Neolithic monuments and tombs

Many of the stones making up this monument had been decorated with circles, arcs, zip-zaps, triangles, lozenges and cupmarks. These patterns were made by pecking small depressions into the rock.

Key artefacts

- Pottery: numerous pieces from a single round-bottomed bowl. Elaborately decorated with vertical lines produced with a stick or bone.
- Polished stone axe: the blade end of a polished flint axe.
- Lithics: a few flakes of flint, some burnt and found with the cremations.

Access: No parking, but car can stop at grass verge. Signposted path to site from road.

Orumskinny

Type Stone circle

County Fermanagh

On the crest of a south facing hillslope, this stone circle consists of 31 standing stones, and one which has collapsed. Stone holes indicated the former presence of another seven. The stone circle measures approximately 13m in diameter. A circular cairn just north-west of the circle is surrounded by a kerb of stones. The cairn is constructed carefully from boulders and stone slabs. No evidence for burials, or any deposits, was found in the cairn.

Aligned to the cairn centre and extending 15m south is a row of small, upright stones. Neolithic pottery & flint scrapers were found.

Key artefacts

- Pottery: a single fragment of pottery.
- Lithics: a few flint flakes and scrapers. It was noted that the flint was not from a beach or river, and must have been guarried at a source.

Access: Car park and signposted path to site.

Neolithic monuments and tombs

Ballybriest/Carnanbane

Type Court tomb

County Londonderry

On a knoll with extensive views to the south-west, west and north-west. This is a dual court tomb, with a court at either end, leading to burial chambers which are placed back-to-back. The tomb was set within an oval cairn, which has since been stripped. Many of the orthostats which make up the 'horns' of the monument are gone, although the internal chambers are still relatively intact. The tomb was excavated in 1937, yielding several flint scrapers and knives, as well as sherds of Neolithic pottery. The tomb was found to have been built on a Neolithic occupation site, with hearths, pot sherds and hazel nuts.

Key artefacts

- Pottery: Fragments of pottery from multiple vessels.
- Lithics: leaf-shaped arrowhead, straight knives, scrapers.

Access: Lay-by at roadside, and signposted access to site.

V Knockoneil

Type Court tomb

County Londonderry

On high ground with excellent views all round. The eastern 'horn' of this court tomb has been damaged, although the western horn is intact. Two chambers run off the forecourt, with a pair of portal stones marking the entrance. A second set of paired stones, entry jambs, creates a small 'porch', before entering the chambers. Each chamber is entered through a pair of portal stones with lintels. Later, subsidiary chambers are at the rear, approached by a passage running along the eastern edge of the tomb. The tomb was re-used in the Bronze Age, when a round cairn was superimposed on to the tomb, with a ring of kerb stones surrounding it.

Key artefacts

- Pottery: a complete bowl, as well as other fragments
- Lithics: a polished porcellanite axe, as assorted flint artefacts
- A perforated stone bead

Access: No parking and signposted access across a field with grazing sheep.

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Neolithic monuments and tombs

♀ Tamnyrankin

Type Court tomb

County Londonderry

This impressive court tomb is well-preserved, with much of the covering cairn being intact. The cairn is bounded by kerb stones. An opening in the curved forecourt façade leads into a gallery of two chambers. At the rear of the monument is a later gallery, constructed across the court tomb. It consisted of an antechamber and two antechambers, with sides composed of upright stones. This was originally roofed with capstones, but these are now missing. The cremation of an adult was discovered in this gallery, accompanied by late Neolithic decorated bowls and flint tools. The OS memoirs record "3 urns of bones" found a few yards from the tomb.

Key artefacts

- Pottery: decorated bowls and pots
- Lithics: knives, scrapers, leaf-shaped arrowhead

Access: Access road from Tamnyrankin Road, with parking beside the site.

Tirnony

Type Portal tomb

County Londonderry

This tomb consists of a single chamber formed by two well-matched portal stones and five other stones forming back and side walls. The interior of the tomb has a floor of flattish stones. The chamber is covered with a capstone, which slopes inwards. A second capstone was probably originally present, but has since been robbed. A single stone at the west of the tomb may be part of a façade from a forecourt, as seen with court tombs. This may have had a number of further stones originally. The cairn material does not survive, but the monument was probably covered in a long cairn of stones. This cairn material was probably used in the building of a nearby road.

Key artefacts

- Pottery: 70 fragments from several different Neolithic pottery vessels were recovered, mostly Carninated Ware.
- Lithics: three flint knives were recovered.
- Quartz: One fragment of struck quartz and one quartzite pebble were found between the portal tombs. Quartz is a common deposit at Neolithic burial sites.

Access: Yes, car park beside site.

Neolithic monuments and tombs

Ballyrenan/Cloghogle

Type **Portal tomb**

County Tyrone

The site consists of two portal tombs, four metres apart. The west tomb has two chambers divided by a sill stone, with two portal stones at the entrance and three capstones (now displaced). The east tomb also has a single chamber. Both tombs were probably covered by a stone cairn, which was bounded by low kerbstones. An excavation in 1907 uncovered a flint arrowhead and stone beads, and further excavation in 1936 recovered Neolithic pottery, worked flints and more beads.

Key artefacts

- Pottery: framgents of at least seven Neolithic pots, some with decoration.
- Lithics: three worked flints were recovered, including a hollow scraper, a leaf-shaped arrowhead and a knife.
- Beads: eight stone beads, which have been shaped, perforated and polished.
 Probably worn as ornamentation, e.g. necklace or bracelet.

Access: No car park, but can park at roadside. Entrance to site from roadside, but not managed by HED.

Ballywholan/Carnagat

Type **Dual court tomb**

County Tyrone

A good example of a dual court tomb. The site is composed of a long cairn of stone, with a semi-circular forecourt at either end, composed of a façade of upright stones. At both ends of the tomb, an opening between two portal stones leads to a two-chambered gallery. These chambers are separated with jamb stones and are lined with small flat stones. The galleries were originally roofed with flat slabs, which have slipped to the outside edge of the galleries. The site was excavated in the late 1980s, which uncovered cremated human bones, flint chips, a leafshaped arrowhead and a stone wrist bracer were found.

Key artefacts

- Lithics: a flint leaf-shaped arrowhead was recovered, along with some flint chips.
- Stone bracer: a Bronze-Age wrist bracer, to protect from bow-string impact, was found, indicating that the monument continued to be used beyond its initial use.

Access: No car park, but can park on grass roadside. Clear access path to site.

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Beaghmore

Type Stone circles, stone rows and cairns

County Tyrone

This is a large, impressive series of Bronze Age ceremonial stone monuments excavated from the surrounding bog. The main features are six stone circles occurring in pairs, with twelve small cairns which held cremation burials and eight stone alignments running in. A further single stone circle, the 'Dragon's Teeth', is filled with closely-set stones. Running under these features are low banks of small stones, probably derived from clearing fields for arable farming in Neolithic times. The stone structures continue to the north, under the bog, and there are many other Neolithic and Bronze Age monuments in this area. Some evidence for burial was found in the cairns, where stone-lined cists contained burnt bone, but this was limited. Finds were sparse from the excavations

but two flint hoards were found, one dated by radiocarbon to the late Neolithic and the other to the early Bronze Age. Study of pollen from a nearby former lake suggests Neolithic activity from 3500 BC, with the main period of the stone monuments in the Bronze Age, 1500 to 800 BC.

Key artefacts

- Lithics: a porcellanite axe was recovered from one of the cairns. A worked stone was also recovered, which was probably used as a sharpening stone. Other assorted flints were also recovered, including cores, scrapers, blades and flakes.
- Pottery: some pottery fragments were recovered, but they were badly decayed.

Access: Large car park with signposted path to site.

Clogherny

Type Wedge tomb

County Tyrone

A wedge tomb which is surrounded by a small circular cairn. This is surrounded by a ring of relatively tall upright stones. The tomb consists of a gallery partially covered by a single large capstone; it is likely that the rest of the gallery was also roofed, but these stones have since disappeared. The gallery is divided into two chambers by a set of jamb stones. Large amounts of cremated bone were recovered from the gallery. Few artefacts were recovered, but a flint chip and a barbed-and-tanged arrowhead were found in the gallery.

Key artefacts

 Lithics: a barbed-and-tanged arrowhead, and a flint chip.

Access: No parking, signposted access from road with walk across rough ground to the site.

Neolithic monuments and tombs

Oreggandevesky

Type Court tomb

County Tyrone

This tomb consists of a trapezoidal cairn of loose stones, with an open, semicircular forecourt at the south-east end. The cairn is revetted by a kerb of drystone walling, which survives up to 1.75 metres, but may have originally stood up to 3 metres. The façade of the court is built with large upright stones, with panels of drystone walling in between. An opening in the centre of the façade, which is marked by two portal stones with a very large lintel stone, leads into a burial gallery. The gallery is divided into three chambers by pairs of jamb stones, with walls of large stones, with smaller stones plugging any gaps. The gallery was originally roofed with corbelled slabs of stone, with sandstone slabs being used to bridge the gaps between these. The cremated remains of 21 individuals were recovered from Chambers 1 and 3. Although no remains were found from Chamber 2, the presence of grave goods suggests an inhumation burial once was present here, but has since disintegrated.

Key artefacts

- Pottery: fragments of seven roundbottomed, Carinated Neolithic bowls.
- Lithics: flint arrowheads, a chert leafshaped arrowhead, javelin-heads, scrapers, a flint awl and flint knives.
- Quartz: lumps of quartz, and flaked quartz.
- Beads: over 100 stone beads were found in chamber 1, and seem to have formed a necklace. Most beads are in disc shape, and all have central perforations.
- Human bone: the cremated remains of 21 individuals were found in the burial chambers – five males, seven females, one adolescent, and eight others.

Access: Yes, no parking but signposted access from Loughmallon Road. No parking, but some space on grass roadside. Access to site via a walk across numerous fields.

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Neolithic monuments and tombs

Knockmany

Type Passage tomb

County Tyrone

A passage tomb sited on the summit of Knockmany hill, with superb views over the Clogher Valley. The covering cairn of this passage tomb is modern, added in 1959 to prevent the stones from weathering and vandalism. The tomb is now enclosed in a concrete and glass structure – the Historic Environment Division should be contacted to open the gate into the chamber.

Excavation revealed a stone cairn capped with earth which originally covered the burial chamber. The classic 'passage' is absent, but the sandstone slabs forming the chamber itself are present. These are placed in sockets which were carved into the bedrock. These are decorated with characteristic passage grave art, including circles, zigzags and spirals, some of the best examples of this art in Northern Ireland. The chamber was probably originally roofed, but may have been corbelled, as at other passage tombs. As there is no passage into the chamber, which would have allowed successive burials, it is possible that the chamber was blocked up after its first use. Excavations in 1951 uncovered fragments of burnt human bone within the chamber. A number of flints were also found at the site, along with a fragment of Neolithic pottery.

Key artefacts

- Pottery: a plain fragment of Neolithic pottery.
- Lithics: a leaf-shaped arrowhead, a knife, and two leaf-shaped flakes. These were made from fresh flint from the North Antrim coast.

Access: Parking in Knockmany Forest car park. Access to passage tomb via forest walk. For access to the chamber, arrangements must be made with Historic Environment Division.