Great Archaeological Sites in Blaenau Gwent

3. TREFIL HUT CIRCLE

In the same area of upland as no.2 the Trefil Range round cairn, north of the Tafarnaubach industrial estate but to the north of the headwaters of the River Sirhowy, is a site showing that people not only raised cairns in this area to the dead in prehistoric times, but also lived here. At SO115126 is a low bank some 8m in diameter, where the turf and vegetation almost obscures a stone circle. Two of the larger stones seem to be located on either side of an entrance, which indicates that this is a hut circle.

Hut circles are the bases of the walls that once enclosed round houses. They occur in upland areas of Wales, most commonly in the north, where the land has not been ploughed and the settings of stone have not been disturbed. The stone bank was probably a reinforcement to a timber wall supporting a conical roof covered with thatch or turf, but nothing now remains of any of these biodegradable materials.

Very few of them have been excavated. The ones that have been excavated are North Wales, but the ones in the south were probably of similar form and date – Bronze Age and Iron Age. Although many hut circles are associated with

enclosures, none were recognised here. However, this may be because the ground level of the time has now been obscured by peat growth and vegetation.

The site is on open access land west of Trefil village. Maps: OS Landranger Series sheet 161, Explorer Series sheet outdoor Leisure 13.

Timeline (the asterisk indicate the possible time-span)

5000 BC	4000 BC	3000 BC	2000 BC	1000 BC		1000 AD	2000 AD
Mesolithic	Neolithic		Bronze Age	Iron Age	Romans / Early Medieval	Medieval	Post-medieval

****

You can learn more about this site, and other similar archaeological sites in Wales, by going to https://www.archwilio.org.uk/arch/. Please read and observe the Conditions of Use. The Trefil hut circle has the PRN (Primary Record Number) 02302g, and you can search for other similar sites here too. You can contact us via social media or through the methods given at the bottom of the page.