

Hillforts: Britain, Ireland and the Nearer Continent

Papers from the *Atlas of Hillforts of Britain and
Ireland Conference, June 2017*

edited by

Gary Lock and Ian Ralston



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Acknowledgements

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Many of the maps in Chapters 2-4 are the work of Dr Paula Levick, who worked as the IT and GIS specialist on the Atlas project.

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Preface

Hillforts are one of the most immediately apparent archaeological features in the British and Irish landscape. They have always had a significant place in the popular imagination, both in folktales and in the works of many authors, of whom Thomas Hardy is only the most immediate example. According to the OED, the expression ‘hill(-)fort’ itself only goes back to the earlier 19th century, but we know that these structures, from the most magnificent to relatively humble enclosures, have always been recognised as major features in the landscape by those who have encountered them there, as is demonstrated by the very high proportion of known hillforts for which names of Celtic, Anglo-Saxon or Norse origin survive.

In view of their prominence in the landscape, it is hardly surprising that hillforts have always played a large part in the imaginative recreation of the past, and that they formed one of the primary points of attention of the first generations of antiquarian scholars in Britain, amongst whom hillforts, together with the great stone circles, generated most interest and study. Thereafter, the work of the Ordnance Survey provided a major impetus to identification and recording, and at this point the eternal preoccupation with description and classification of this really quite heterogeneous group of monuments began. More recently, excavations have significantly widened the date range of sites we call by this name, as well as demonstrating the complex construction histories and chronology that they offer. Fashions swing, too, between the most fundamental ‘explanations’ of these sites – whether they are for defence or display – while it is only in the last few decades that they have regularly been studied in their wider landscape and archaeological context.

It is true to say that hillforts have varied in their vogue among archaeologists over the last century or so. The foundation of the Hillfort Study Group (HFSG), initiated in the 1960s, reflects one peak of interest in and study of these splendid monuments, and in itself provided a major impetus to work on the subject. One of the objectives of the HFSG was to visit and catalogue all British sites known as hillforts. The visits did, and continue to, take place, but little formal cataloguing was carried out save for the exceptional work of A.H.A. Hogg. The genesis of *The Atlas of Hillforts of Britain and Ireland*, initiated 40 years after Hogg’s publication by two long-standing members of the HFSG, perhaps reflects another impetus to the study of hillforts.

The hold that hillforts extend over both the archaeological and popular imagination never really goes away. To some extent there is a very sad reason for this, as they now represent a higher proportion of all the immediately visible and explorable archaeological sites of the British Isles than they did say two hundred years ago. The loss of so many sites, field systems, barrows, lowland earthwork enclosures and the like since the inception of mechanised ploughing and enclosure of common land has meant that these great enclosures have survived in disproportionately greater numbers as visible upstanding entities than many other classes of monument. They now constitute one of the clearest focuses for the public appreciation of archaeology as well as being the most important surviving reservoirs of archaeological data that we have.

For this among many other reasons, the continuing study of hillforts and related enclosures has much to contribute to the health of the archaeological discipline in these islands. Mercifully, the days when only the perimeter earthworks of a hillfort were the subject of statutory protection are now past. In the last twenty years, the widespread capacity for extensive geophysical survey of hillfort interiors has demonstrated that despite much cultivation important archaeological deposits still survive within the defended circuit, while excavations such as those at Danebury and Rathgall reinforce this point. Excavations of the defences themselves consistently show a previously unrecognised complexity to the chronology and construction history of hillforts. Survey and reconnaissance, including geophysical surveys and the interpretation of LiDAR data, in the hinterlands of hillforts demonstrate that they did not exist in isolation but were components of wider patterns of settlement and occupation. The present *Atlas* project, with which many Hillfort Study Group members have been involved, will serve as a stimulus to the greater study of our most impressive field monuments, whose ability to capture the public imagination has been demonstrated yet again by the volunteer engagement in this project. The papers in this volume present the detail we can now bring to that study in Britain, Ireland and further afield.

Perhaps the last word should be with one of the Hillfort Study Group’s illustrious founders, the late A.H.A. Hogg:

'No archaeologist is satisfied with the term 'hill-fort', but all the alternatives which have been suggested are open to even more objections...' (Hogg 1975: xv).

Eileen Wilkes
Chair, Hillfort Study Group
Bournemouth
February 2019

Reference

Hogg, A.H.A. 1975. *A Guide to the Hill-Forts of Britain*. London: Hart-Davies, MacGibbon Ltd.

Part 1.
The Atlas of Hillforts of Britain and Ireland

1. The Atlas: an introduction

Gary Lock

Why hillforts?

There are different ways to think about and to experience hillforts. To the Cultural Resource Manager they are assets to be catalogued, monitored and preserved. The academic gaze sees them as central to understanding the settlement record and social relationships of the later prehistoric/early medieval periods, sites to be dissected, analysed, interpreted and represented. While both of these descriptions are admittedly reductionist, the point is that they can be, and often are, carried out without the emotional impact of actually being at a hillfort. When we embarked upon the Atlas we envisaged that the data collected would be useful to both of these interests offering a rich standardised online database that crossed local, regional and national boundaries (Ralston this volume). What we did not fully anticipate was the interest and use of the Atlas in the public domain based on experiences and needs very different to those mentioned above.

On reflection this is not so surprising. Indeed, this wider interest in hillforts runs in parallel with academic thought and writing over many decades; it is the lived reality of embodied connections with place and landscape rather than the theory. Writings in a range of disciplines have sought to explain what it is about these connections that have such resonance within us and archaeology has provided a source of inspiration for many decades headlined by Tilley's phenomenology (1994) to Ingold's *Being Alive* (2011) and beyond. An early writer in this vein was Jacquetta Hawkes whose book *A Land* (1951) she describes as coming 'directly out of my being; emotion had aroused my imagination and imagination had kindled memories' (Hawkes 1978: 1). The essence of encountering landscape, according to cultural geographer Hayden Lorimer (2005: 84), 'offers an escape from the established academic habit of striving to uncover meanings and values that apparently await our discovery, interpretation, judgement and ultimate representation'. It is this aspect of being beyond representation, even beyond interpretation, I would argue, that gives hillforts their wide public appeal that the Atlas has connected with.

Added to this is the fact that many hillforts are set in beautiful landscapes, they are dramatic in location and in form and of course they are mysterious. The doyen of hillfort studies A.H.A. Hogg (Ralston this volume) in the preface to his 1975 *A Guide to the Hill-Forts of Britain* states

that it is 'intended for those who find their enjoyment of the countryside is enhanced by reconstructing the past in imagination. Even companions who do not share this interest will usually find the view from a hill-fort rewarding' (1975: xii). The age-old questions of who built these massive structures and why cannot escape anyone walking around the ramparts of a hillfort on a windswept, cold and rainy day. Photographs, written descriptions and even virtual reality models such as Kieran Baxter's award winning film *The Caterthuns*,¹ despite claiming to model 'something of what it feels like to stand at a particular place... to focus on conveying a sense of place and atmosphere', cannot capture the raw reality of visiting a hillfort. Indeed, six months after the Atlas website was launched, the AHRC (which funded the work) were offering the Top 10 Hillforts for a Christmas Walk² '... to explore some of the most iconic, beautiful – best loved – ancient monuments in Britain, and take the family back in time as you stroll along in the footsteps of our Iron Age ancestors'.

As Jacquetta Hawkes perceptively remarked, some hillforts have 'become features of our national consciousness', for example through literature exemplified by Thomas Hardy's description of Maiden Castle in his short story of 1893 *A Tryst at an Ancient Earthwork*, claimed to be an 'unsurpassed evocation of place and mood' (Kay-Robinson 1984: 29) although the site is perhaps better known through its appearance in the *Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886). In order to finish his gritty novel of 1930's Scotland, *Grey Granite*, Lewis Grassie Gibbon had to travel north from Welwyn Garden City where he was living to find inspiration on the hillfort of Barmekin of Echt, Aberdeenshire, close to where he was born.³

Siegfried Sassoon's poem *On Scratchbury Camp* captures the atmosphere of the downs on a summer day: '... Scratchbury Camp, whose turfed and cowslip'd rampart seems more hill than history, ageless and oblivion-blurred...'. Hawkes goes on to comment that even relatively unknown sites can make 'pleasant uncultivable retreats in an over-crowded island' where

¹ <https://ahrc.ukri.org/research/readwatchlisten/features/the-caterthuns/> (accessed November 2018)

² <https://ahrc.ukri.org/research/readwatchlisten/features/take-the-high-path-top-10-hillforts-for-a-christmas-walk/> (accessed November 2018)

³ <https://www.scotsman.com/lifestyle/culture/books/in-the-chill-light-of-dawn-1-1117703> (accessed January 2019)

we can ‘rehearse the bloodier stormings of other days and where the banks and hollows make picnic grounds or a trysting place for lovers’ (1978: 171). This invocation of memory and imagination is also shown by Mike Tonkin in his poem *Galleons Sailing Across the Sky*:

The site of a hillfort,
Which took me back
To the Iron Age
And gave my young mind
A playground for
My thoughts.

We should not underestimate the power of imagination in experiencing hillforts. Which of us hasn’t walked around one and joined David Cooke in his poem *Hill-Fort*:

Night draws in,
and the mind is a function
of its yielding light;
it makes out smoke
from a further camp,

the sense of it borne
upon a stirring of breeze.
I imagine dogs
and people, their utensils

ranged around fire;
the land burdened
with lumber of settlement;
blood-heat of habitation.

The beauty of many hillfort locations is captured by Seamus Heaney’s *The Old Road*:

And there they were,
Astray in the hill-fort of all pleasures
Where air was other breath and grass a whisper,
Feeling empowered but still somehow constrained.

Of course visiting a hillfort in a group can be a powerfully binding experience as members of the Hillfort Study Group know only too well and is shown by the community arts project *Impressions of the Past* which ‘celebrates the Iron Age landscape’. Their visit to Earl’s Hill, Pontesford, Shropshire, is recorded by Jean Atkin in her poem *Earl’s Hill Translated* with associated images in her blog *Making Poetry on a Hillfort*.⁴

It is not just poetry that is inspired by hillforts, their settings and their mystery. The late Victorian polymath Heywood Sumner’s love of the chalk landscape of southern England and its prehistoric monuments,

particularly hillforts, is witnessed through his drawings and paintings in his three publications *The Ancient Earthworks of Cranborne Chase/the New Forest/the Bournemouth District*. Drawing on his Arts and Crafts movement background, Sumner’s line drawings and water colours are at the same time representational, romanticised and atmospheric. In his accompanying text he describes at length his emotional attachment to his subjects, ‘the spell of mystery and enchantment that veils the outline of prehistoric times’ together with the natural beauty of places such as Hambledon Hill:

‘... with its down scarps spotted with yews and thorn trees, with thickets of ash, elder, white beam and yew, over which great wisps of Traveller’s Joy fling their feathery tangle, with sheep feeding peacefully on the warlike camp, and hawks wavering in the pure air – while North, East, South and West we gaze over hill, and vale, and down, and woodland that stretch and fade into far distance and vacant haze.’ (Sumner quoted in Cunliffe 1985: 80).

In contrast is the artist Simon Callery’s work inspired by his involvement at the excavation of two Ridgeway hillforts: Segsbury Camp and Alfred’s Castle. The work he produced at both is challenging and provocative, not just abstract paintings but a chest full of drawers of photographs and a life-size cast of a finished excavation trench. Simon drew on the physicality of place, the material engagement with earth, sky, view and emotions. Reviewing his work, Tracey Chevalier said:

‘Simon’s response..... was not to recreate the answer, but to set up the question so that we ask it over and over as we look. His work is open-ended. There are no answers, only unresolved questions, and the joy becomes in the asking’ (Chevalier 2003: 38).

Surely this captures the attraction of hillforts for many people: unresolved open-ended questions without answers, where the joy is in being there and asking them. Certainly judging by the public reaction to the Atlas, for most people the act of discovering where hillforts are and walking to, around and within one is an experience of discovery and pleasure (see Pouncett this volume for details of the webmapping launch and reactions to it).

Building the Atlas

The Atlas was inspired by the works of the great hillfort names of the past like Hogg and Forde-Johnston who had attempted to catalogue and map all of the known hillforts, the former in Britain and the latter in England and Wales (Ralston this volume). Between them these two must have visited and listed many hundreds of hillforts, but while our intention was never to replicate their fieldwork we very much wanted to reproduce,

⁴ <https://jeanatkin.com/2016/11/28/making-poetry-on-a-hillfort/> (accessed November 2018)



Figure 1.1 The Atlas project team, from left to right: William O'Brien, Strat Halliday, Johnny Horn, Gary Lock, Jessica Murray, Paula Levick, Ian Ralston, James O'Driscoll, Ian Brown and John Pouncett.

check, enhance and provide easy access to their lists of sites.

The data in the Atlas was collected between 2012 and October 2016 and is not, therefore, guaranteed to be absolutely current. It covers sites in the territory of the United Kingdom, comprising England with the Isle of Man, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, as well as in the Republic of Ireland. All offshore islands are included northwards to and including Shetland, and south to the Scilly Islands (Cornwall) and the Isle of Wight, but the Channel Islands are excluded.

The majority of the time and effort of the Atlas team,⁵ Figure 1.1, was spent on designing, testing and populating the online database⁶ with input from the Project Steering Committee.⁷ The final number of sites

included is 4,147, with 3,354 being confirmed hillforts according to our selection criteria (see below). The database had a possibility of c. 120 fields of data for each site ranging from administrative information, locational data, landscape setting, details of interior evidence, enclosing works and entrances, investigations and references.⁸

Deciding which sites to include in the Atlas was problematic because it is acknowledged that enclosed sites of potential interest form a continuum based on their dimensions (Ralston this volume). Unless a site met at least two of the three criteria as described below it would not be included, particularly as a confirmed site. Exclusions apply particularly to small sites (in terms of their enclosed areas) such as the rounds of SW England, those in SW Wales and many Scottish duns. Irish raths, cashels and ringforts offer a particular problem as they are very numerous (over 40,000 extant examples) and could not be re-assessed within the scope of this project. When assessing a site for inclusion its assumed date was not considered. This is

⁵ The project was co-directed by Professor Gary Lock (Oxford) and Professor Ian Ralston (Edinburgh). The team comprised Dr Ian Brown and Dr Paula Levick (Oxford), Strat Halliday (Edinburgh), Professor William O'Brien, Dr James O'Driscoll and Dr Alan Hawkes (University College Cork). Jessica Murray (Oxford) and Johnny Horn (Edinburgh) were project funded PhD students.

⁶ The database used FileMaker Pro v11. It was designed in conjunction with Jeremy Worth, the School of Archaeology, Oxford, IT Officer. In late 2016 the data was transferred to ArcMap for the final website with online mapping and data analysis: this was done by John Pouncett, the School of Archaeology, Oxford, Spatial Technologies Officer (see Pouncett this volume)

⁷ Thanks are extended to members of the Steering Committee –

Graeme Guilbert, Ken Murphy and Dr Eileen Wilkes (representing the Hillfort Study Group), Robin Turner and John Sherriff (initially RCAHMS then Historic Environment Scotland), Dr Toby Driver (Royal Commission on Ancient and Historic Monuments of Wales) and Mark Bowden (Historic England) together with the Atlas Project Team.

⁸ For details of the database structure see the linked document *Atlas data* at <https://hillforts.arch.ox.ac.uk>

not an Atlas of 'Iron Age Hillforts' and acknowledges for example that some hillforts were *de novo* constructions in the mid-first millennium AD (Noble and O'Driscoll this volume). Sites of different states of preservation were considered, from wholly upstanding to entirely cropmarked.

A site was included as a 'confirmed' hillfort if it achieved at least two of the three following criteria. A site could be included in the database as an 'unconfirmed' hillfort (722 sites) if (a) it met one of the criteria and (b) was considered borderline on one or both of the others. The third category of site is 'irreconciled issues' (71 sites).

Topographic position

This concept causes difficulties within some of the landscapes of Britain and Ireland, for example lowland zones such as East Anglia, and even gently undulating and intensively used arable plains like Lothian. In general, however, the working hypothesis is that the site should take advantage of its local topographic setting so as to be locally in a dominant position, in the sense that those within it achieved some topographic advantage from its position. For example, if a site is positioned in a valley, being located on the bend of a river would be included as a dominant topographic position. Promontory forts, both coastal and inland, by definition normally pass the topographic threshold and thus in their case the other two criteria, scale of enclosing works and size of enclosed area, will be critical measures. In Ireland, coastal (but not inland) promontory forts have normally been considered as a separate category of monument from hillforts, whereas in Britain, making due allowance for their different setting, consideration of hill- and promontory-forts has often been amalgamated. The British convention is adopted here, such that Irish coastal as well as inland promontory forts are included.

Scale of enclosing works

Here the term enclosing works includes ramparts/walls/palisades and ditches together with entrances of any configuration and their outworks if present. The problem is to define workable thresholds given the recognition that many enclosed settlements which are plainly not hillforts, were essentially fenced or barricaded or surrounded by sufficient provision to keep livestock in or out. The lower threshold could, therefore, be described as 'showing some pretension' to exclude or impress people. Multivallate upstanding systems, however slight their component elements, would thus meet the criterion; apparently or possibly single-phase bivallate systems were very likely so to do. Univallate enclosures were more problematical; the amplitude of these systems in their current condition means that their inclusion or exclusion on this criterion

is a matter of professional judgement. For those sites reduced entirely to cropmarks and sometimes set in wholly level landscapes, a minimum ditch width of approximately 4 m was used for inclusion.

Size of enclosed area

Setting an adequate minimum for this proved possibly the most contentious issue. Some consideration was given to setting this threshold high, for example at 1 ha (10000 square metres) but this was felt to be unworkable as notable numbers of small sites which had traditionally been considered as hillforts in some landscapes (e.g. Northumberland) would have been excluded. For inland sites in the Republic of Ireland, 1ha has often been employed as the effective minimum threshold for inclusion in the hillfort category in recent decades. Another consideration in arriving at a suitable figure was the internal, potentially habitable, space within the enclosure, based on the idea of trying to estimate the number of roundhouses and the associated implication that a hillfort was a form of communal enterprise and would be expected, therefore, to have more than just the one or two houses of a lesser settlement or homestead. Again, this was thought to be unworkable in practice and also questionable in terms of interpreting hillfort use. After considerable discussion, 0.2 ha (2000 sq m) was adopted as the figure to be employed; the figure already adopted by A.H.A. Hogg (Ralston this volume). One consequence of this is the exclusion on this criterion of many small sites as mentioned above including certain small vitrified enclosures in Scotland, many of the rounds of the south-western peninsula and the raths of south-western Wales.

It must be emphasised that the first two of these criteria are entirely subjective and no attempt to quantify them rigorously was possible, not least because the site's characteristics had to be assessed remotely from accessible text, cartographic and photographic sources. The third one, size, could have been rigidly quantitatively assessed but it was not considered as the unique criterion as in itself internal area is not a sufficient criterion to define a site as a hillfort and because every site in the Atlas has been assessed according to all three criteria. The balance between the three was assessed on a site by site basis by the Project Team so that, for example, a 'confirmed' hillfort could be of only 0.15 ha internal area if the other two criteria, its topographic position and the scale of its enclosing works, was judged convincing.

Central to the process of inclusion described above is a concept of reliability. In the Atlas this takes two forms: reliability of data and reliability of interpretation, with each having three possible values as already mentioned: (1) Confirmed, (2) Unconfirmed and (3) Irreconciled issues. The last of these is applied if any existing

uncertainty is impossible to resolve in the future, for example if the site has been destroyed. The inter-play between the reliability of data and of interpretation can be subtle so that a site could definitely be a hillfort even if the supporting data is minimal; and conversely the data could be of good quality but the site may not qualify straight forwardly as a hillfort. This latter situation is particularly but not uniquely applicable to small sites and it must be emphasised here that the final decision is based on the Atlas team's application of the inclusion criteria on the basis of the information they could access; in some cases this does not conform to existing interpretations. Some small sites in Northumberland, for example, scheduled as 'defended settlements' have been included as confirmed (interpretation) hillforts on the Atlas criteria, based on their topographic position and scale of enclosing works. For the principal analyses in the Atlas monograph (Lock and Ralston in prep.) and in papers by Atlas Team members in this volume only sites of confirmed (interpretation) have been used unless stated otherwise.

Citizen Science – involving the public

The initial way of engaging the public with the Atlas project was through the Citizen Science programme during the data collection phase of the work.⁹ While many examples of Citizen Science are computer-based and online, and are often called 'crowd-sourcing', the Atlas Citizen Science was paper-based and low-tech with the intention of attracting as many participants as possible. The Atlas Citizen Science was based on members of the public visiting sites and recording information in the field and while it is possible to use technology to do this, again it was felt that paper-based recording was more appropriate and likely to be more appealing to a larger number of people. The Citizen Science initiative took the form of a structured survey of a site using a survey form accompanied by notes for guidance, both downloadable from the project website.

The aims of the Atlas Citizen Science were threefold:

1. To provide information for the Atlas database. This was mainly for known sites although possible new sites were also communicated;
2. To encourage people when visiting a hillfort to critically assess the earthworks they encountered in an informed way;
3. To gather information on the current condition of a site.

The launch of the Citizen Science initiative was announced in the national media through *Current Archaeology*, *British Archaeology*, *History Scotland* and BBC

News, as well as on local radio in Scotland, England and Ireland. The consequent demand for more information was considerable but geographically disparate with most being in England, then Scotland with little interest in Wales, Northern Ireland or the Republic of Ireland. This resulted in Atlas staff giving over sixty talks to various groups and organisations; these sessions provided a background to hillforts, the project and details of how to carry out a survey. Annual reports on the project were delivered to the Hillfort Study Group and several members of that group submitted surveys and offered information.

The results were dominated by England and Scotland. In total 304 returns were received for 279 different sites although considering that any individual survey could involve many people the number of people involved was probably several thousand. In England the 225 returns represent 200 different sites whereas in Scotland all 76 returns represent a different site. North of the border only 12 surveys (16%) were submitted by groups with the other 64 (84%) being the work of an individual, the opposite to the case in England where 190 surveys (84%) were group efforts. Within England most of the groups were existing local archaeological and historical societies which were keen to be involved in field work and a project seen as being of national importance.

Not surprisingly the surveys were of mixed quality although many of them went far beyond the basic survey form and included photographs, drawn plans, LiDAR images and a range of other material. The feedback received from many groups and individuals was very positive and showed that people wanted to engage with earthworks in a critical way rather than just visiting hillforts because they are often in attractive and spectacular locations. The educational intentions of the Citizen Science programme were often achieved even for the many individuals and groups who only surveyed a single site.

It is worth detailing some of the highlights of the Citizen Science programme.¹⁰ Both the Bath and Camerton Archaeological Society (BACAS) and Gloucestershire Archaeology returned over 40 surveys, many of which contained extra information including geophysical surveys for some sites. The Community Landscape Archaeology Group (CLASP)¹¹ surveyed all known and possible sites in Northamptonshire, submitting extensive reports on each and also thoughtful interpretations of the area in the Later Prehistoric period. Two groups came together in the New Forest under the guidance of Lawrence Shaw of the New Forest National Park Authority, the NFNPA Archaeology

⁹ For details of the Citizen Science see the linked document Citizen Science at <https://hillforts.arch.ox.ac.uk>

¹⁰ The Atlas was a winner of the 2017 Oxford University Vice Chancellor's Award for the Public Engagement with Research

¹¹ http://claspweb.org.uk/?page_id=1277 [accessed October 2018]

Volunteers and the New Forest History and Archaeology Group (NFHAG). Between them they surveyed over 30 sites based on LiDAR plots which enabled them to survey known sites and also to identify possible new enclosures within woodland which have subsequently been published (Read 2018).

Within the Chilterns area, the Chilterns Conservation Board organised two one-day conferences on hillforts at which the Atlas was presented together with an appeal for involvement, as well as other papers about local hillforts and Iron Age life. A programme of training and surveying was organised and a tremendous amount of local interest generated which has resulted in a successful Heritage Lottery Fund bid to involve local people in exploring the 22 hillforts of that region, the *Beacons of the past: Hillforts in the Chilterns Landscape Project*.¹²

New groups have been formed, for example the Friends of Berry Castle,¹³ Devon, with a focus on their one local site which was completely overgrown with trees and thus in need of management. The Friends have worked with Historic England and the landowner to fell trees and agree a management plan which involves archaeological recording and exploration including geophysics, guided walks, interpretation boards as well as a range of community events and excavation.

Many individuals submitted surveys and while most people only sent a single one or two, here one individual deserves a special mention – John Lumley who carried out 45 surveys by bicycle in the counties of North, South and East Ayrshire, Renfrewshire, Inverclyde, Stirling, South Lanarkshire, East Dunbartonshire, Falkirk and East Lothian.

It may be fair to conclude that engaging in Citizen Science for a project with limited resources to underpin this initiative was very much a test exercise. The Atlas team acknowledged from the outset that its resources to devote to support for this initiative, both in the field and in terms of processing the data submitted by participants, were limited; for this reason the accompanying notes (including information e.g. about access to private land) were written to make it plain to participants that they were essentially independent workers, whom the Atlas team could not directly support. Our work elicited some disapproval from the online archaeological community e.g. on BAJR, although we would maintain that the attitude we took was realistic in resource terms and the successful

outcomes incorporated into the Atlas results vindicate our approach.

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