

Working like a Scientist

We can find out about how people lived by exploring evidence from massive prehistoric feasting sites and the huge middens (rubbish dumps) they left behind. Other than pottery and food remains at these sites, scientists can also analyse human bones, teeth and poo.

Take a look at some of the discoveries and discuss what they might tell us about food and diet during the time of Stonehenge.



1. Pottery and evidence - Many pieces of decorated flat bottomed pottery, called Grooved Ware, have been found at Durrington Walls and other similar sites.





Grooved Ware pots (replicas) | English Heritage

2. Scientists can identify different types of food found absorbed in pieces of clay pots. At Durrington Walls, the pots were mostly found to contain milk, port and beef fats.



DW Burnt pig humerus | Credit & permission Umberto Arbarella SRP

3. Around 80,000 animal bones, probably from at least 1,000 animals, have been found in the middens at Durrington Walls.



Durrington Walls pit excavation | Credit & permission: Stonehenge Riverside Project

4. Some of the animal bones found were connected together by a joint.



DW Burnt pig astragali | Credit & permission Umberto Arbarella SRP

5. Some of the limb and foot bones of animals, such as pigs, were burnt.



Durrington Walls excavations | Stonehenge Riverside Project

6. Some of the bones of animals were found to have cut marks made by flint tools.



Pig teeth with sampling | Stonehenge Riverside Project

7. Pig teeth found at Durrington Walls suggest that some of the pigs were reared in different places, such as west Wales, northern England and north-east Scotland.



Coprolite | Stonehenge Riverside Project

8. Scientists have found samples of over 4,000-year-old mineralised human poo at Stone Age sites such as Durrington Walls.