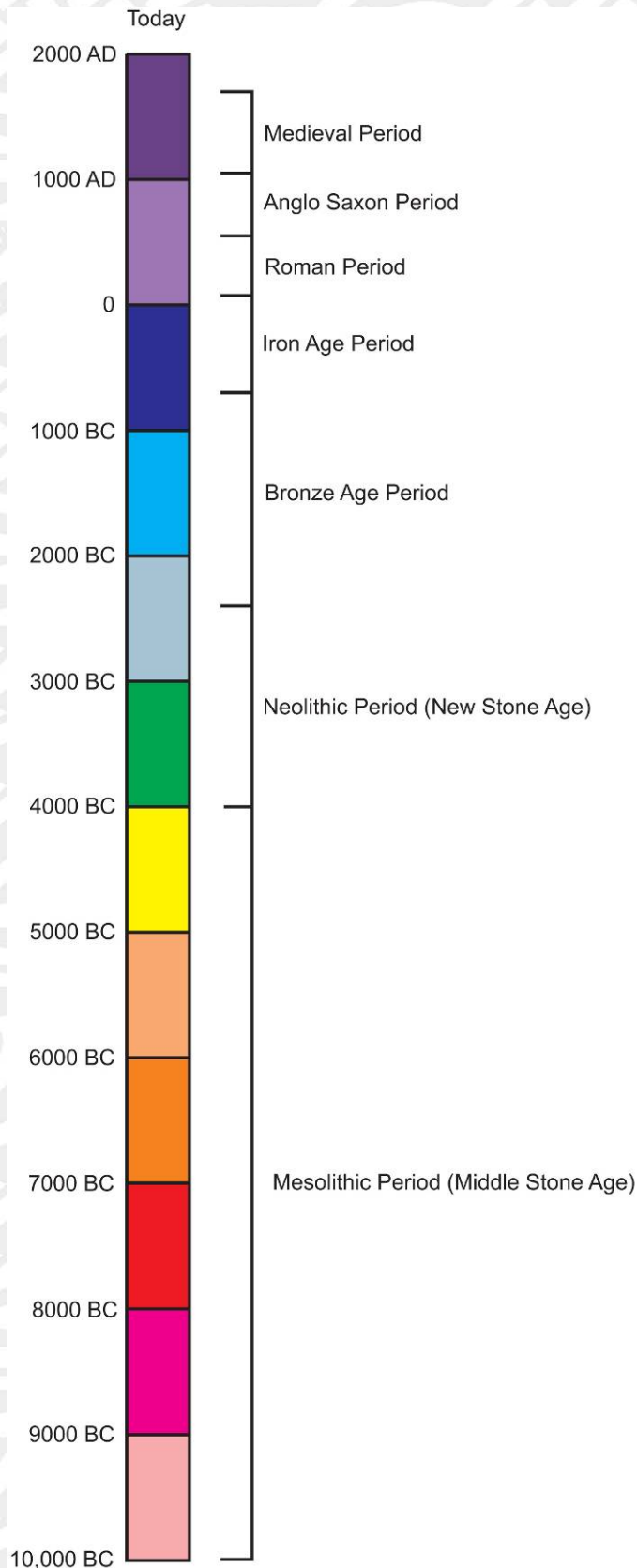




Factsheet: The Bronze Age Period (2,400- 700 BC)

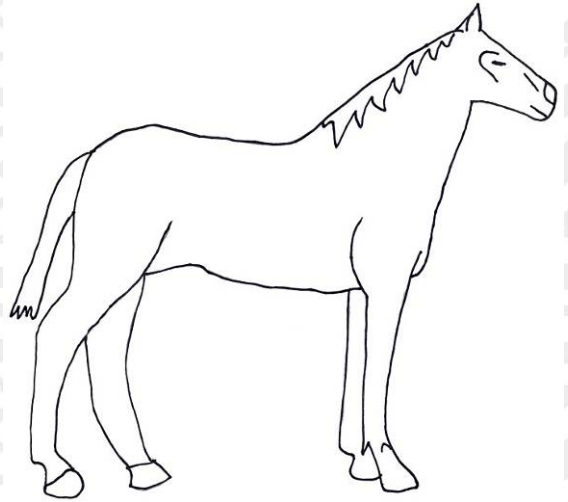
What did people eat? What did people do? Where did people live?



- The Bronze Age is the name given to the period when metal first started to be used.
- The Bronze Age lasted from 2,400 – 700 BC.
- Metal was first used to make jewellery and prestige objects. From around 2000 BC onwards it was used to make tools and weapons.
- The first metals to be used in Britain were copper, tin, gold and silver. By 2,200 BC copper and tin was heated up and mixed together to make bronze. Bronze is a harder metal than copper or tin.
- They still used flint to make some of their day-to-day tools.
- Pottery changed slightly and people started to use different methods to decorate their pots.
- People lived in substantial round houses in the Bronze Age and laid out fields.
- They began to grow different types of crops. Some of the crops that were grown were used to make clothes, such as flax, being used to make linen.

What did people eat?

- People in the Bronze Age grew crops such as **barley**, **emmer**, **spelt wheat** and **flax**.
- **Hazelnuts** were sometimes eaten, but not as much as they were in the Neolithic period.
- People kept **sheep**, **cattle** and **pigs**. **Goats** were also kept for **milk** and **meat** and they may have even had **horses**.
- People would have made **bread** and would have used **honey** to sweeten things.
- They made **beer** from barley and would have used it when they were making bread, although barley would also have been used to make bread and as animal feed.
- They would still have collected **nuts** and **seeds** that they found.
- When they had harvested their **crops** they would have stored them in small rectangular buildings, raised off the ground, known as **granaries**. They were built on stilts to keep out **vermin**.

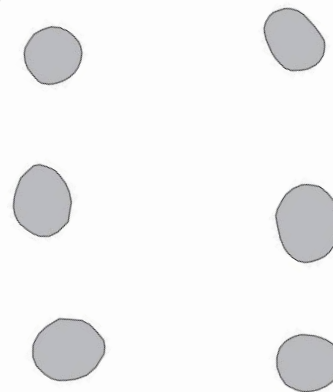


Evidence from Lanton Quarry

At Lanton Quarry, archaeologists have found the postholes of granaries close to the roundhouses. When they were storing their food they would have wanted to keep it away from animals that might have wanted to eat it, like rats and mice. To do this they may have stored all their food in small buildings that were raised a little bit above the ground. Rats and mice would not have been able to get up into these buildings and so the food would have been safe.



This picture shows the postholes after the dark soil has been excavated. The ranging rods in the picture above are 2m and 1m long.

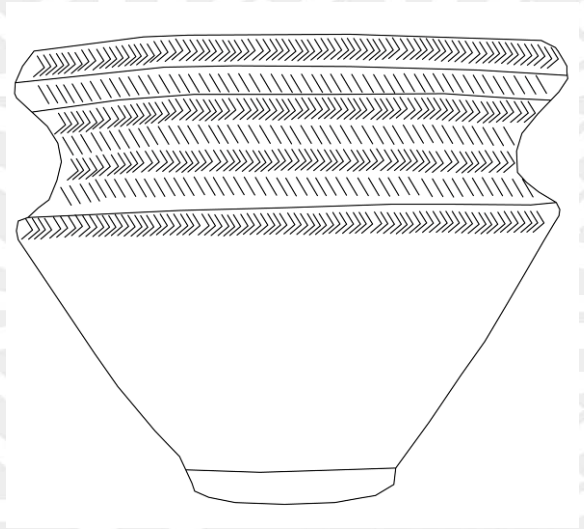


This picture shows the postholes once they had been drawn onto a plan. What do you think this structure would have looked like?

These pictures show the postholes of one of the Bronze Age granary buildings that were excavated at Lanton Quarry. It has holes for six large wooden posts. Can you reconstruct what this building would have looked like? How do you think people would have got up to it?

What did people do?

- In the Bronze Age period people made their own **pottery** and decorated it in new styles.
- Pottery was still made out of **clay** from the ground but it had different patterns on and was made into **different shapes**.
- People used bronze to make **weapons** and **jewellery**. Only **rich people** had jewellery made out of bronze.
- Some tools were still made out of **flint**. This is because flint was still very useful.
- Some of the most common Bronze Age flint objects are **arrowheads**. These would have been used to **hunt** animals.



Evidence from Lanton Quarry

At Lanton Quarry we have found evidence that people were making flint arrowheads to catch animals. People were also making pottery and sometimes decorating it. Pottery that was used for cooking and storage was usually quite plain with no decoration on. Decoration was saved for pottery that was used for special occasions. Very often people had decorated pottery put in their graves with them.



This type of arrowhead is called 'barbed and tanged' arrowhead. It was made to fit on the end of a thin piece of wood to make an arrow.

This Bronze Age pot was discovered next to a burial on a site near Wooler. This pot would have contained food when it was placed in the burial. This is because people believed that the dead person would need to take food with them to the afterlife.



Where did people live?

- In the Bronze Age period people built **roundhouses**.
- Houses would have had **fire** in the middle.
- The fires would have kept people warm and they would have **cooked** their meals on them.
- Houses in the Bronze Age period were mostly made out of **wood** with **thatched roofs**, although sometimes stone was used as well.
- Houses would have measured between **eight** and **12 metres** from one side to another.

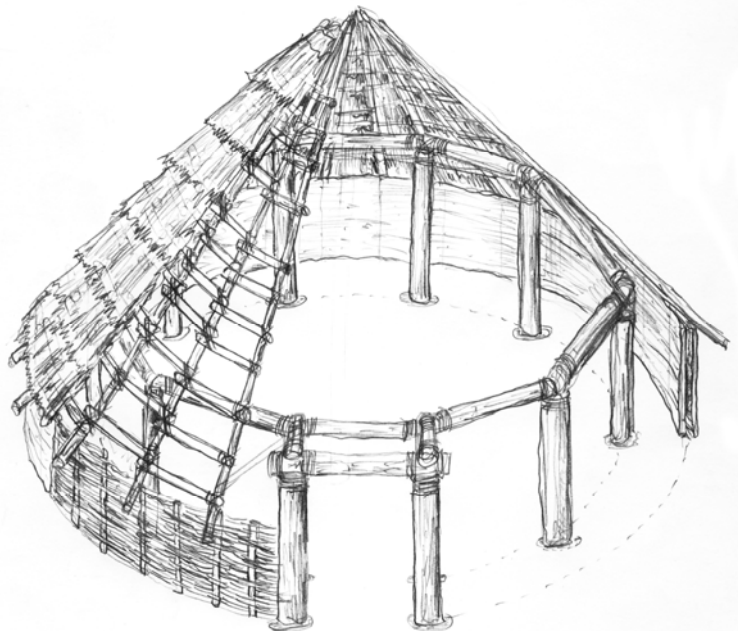


Evidence from Lanton Quarry

Archaeologists at Lanton Quarry have excavated three Bronze Age roundhouses. They are made up of postholes in a circle, sometimes with pits inside the circle. The roundhouses at Lanton Quarry also had porches. We know this because there were two double postholes at one side which would have held two wooden posts instead of just one. Thatch for the roof would have been made from turf, heather, straw or reeds.



This picture shows the postholes of a roundhouse in a circle



This drawing shows what the roundhouse probably looked like.

This Bronze Age roundhouse was excavated at Lanton Quarry. If you look carefully you can see the double postholes at the far side. This is where the porch would have been. Can you colour in the roundhouse to see how it would have looked?