

Field Walk Report

- **Gower Peninsula 4 x Locations: Arthurs Stone/Maen Ceti (Dolman) at Cefn Bryn, Broughton Bay Beach, Longhole Cave at Porteinon Point, Hunts Bay.**
- **Grid Reference(s): SS 4913 9055/SS 4196 9363/SS 4512 8506/SS 5610 8690**

Since the 19th Century the Gower Peninsula (pic1) has been considered an area of outstanding natural beauty and archaeological significance (Bates 2019). During the Palaeolithic period, Britain's northern regions were entirely glaciated. During this ice age, there were interglacial periods of thaw and it is thought that much of the interesting geology found on the Gower coast was formed during this period. It is well established that the foot of said glacier lay across the south of Wales and England (pic4). As a result, the area south of this border remained undestroyed by the effect of glacial movement, and houses some of the earliest evidence of Homo sapiens and Neanderthal activity in the UK (Davis 1986, Oldham 1978, Bowen and Henry 1984, Bates 2019).

Arthurs Stone (Pic 2), otherwise known as Maen Ceti, is a prehistoric Dolman that sits in the Landscape of Cefn Bryn Ridge. This region is sparse upland, mostly covered in bracken and other wild flora and fauna. The stone itself was named during the Medieval Period, at a time when Arthurian legend was considered historical and not fictional. The story goes that Arthur threw a pebble from the other side of the valley and where it landed it grew and grew (Explore Gower 2019). This story is arguably based in part on the geology of the surrounding area. Cefn Bryn Ridge's geology is composed predominantly of red sandstone, yet the Dolman itself is made from a quartz conglomerate stone, of the type found on the other side of the valley (Bates 2019, Oldham 1978, Davies 1986). Evidence of phenomenological interaction is clear at the Dolman (Pic 3), in this case, with the presence of a modern day memorial (Tilley 1994).

The beaches of the Gower provide valuable insights on the geology of the region, and there is ample evidence of a glacial presence (Pic 4) and processes occurring in the area at some point in pre-history. This evidence is predominantly on the Gower beaches; such as Broughton, Brandy Cove, and Hunts Bay, where the cliffs and exposed rock tell the story of the Gower's past. Freeze and thaw evidence is particularly present at Porteinon Point in the exposed angular limestone (Pic 5), which contrasts vastly to the smooth limestone caves along the coast, a result of the natural and sea erosion of the Carboniferous limestone there (Oldham 1978, George 1970, Owen 1973). The presence of raised and fossilised beaches are very apparent in the stratigraphy of the cliffs we see in Pic 6 (George 1970, Bates 2019). Preserved ancient woodland roots sitting on a raised peaty surface (pic 7+8) further out to sea confirm how low the sea level once was in this area, and just how different the landscape must have been during the pre-history of this region of the world (Owen 1973, Oldham 1978, George 1970, Bates 2019). The Gower's Welsh community take a Phenomenological approach at its coast also, as evidence of interaction with the landscape appears on the beaches as well as on the uplands near Arthurs Stone (pic 9).

Pictures

Picture 1: View of Porteinon Point, Gower Peninsula.

Picture 2: Arthurs Stone (Dolman).

Picture 3: Phenomenology at Arthurs Stone – Modern memorial.

Picture 4: Ice sheet movement South Wales

Picture 5: Porteinon Point, angular limestone.

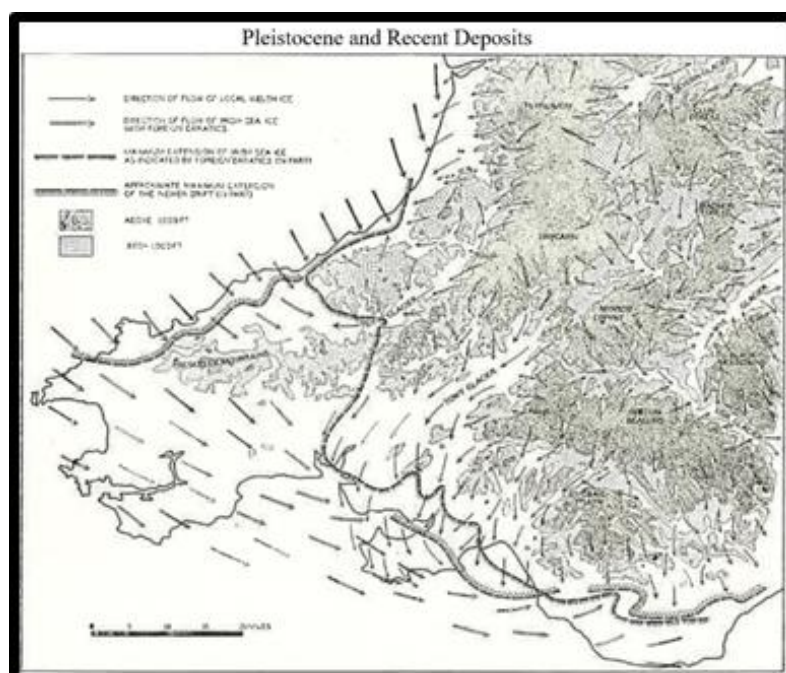
Picture 6: Brandy Cove cliff stratigraphy, showing evidence of raised beach and angular stones.

Picture 7: Ancient tree's preserved in peat like preserved surface on Broughton Beach.

Picture 8: Preserved peat like surface on Broughton Beach.

Picture 9: Phenomenology at Hunts Bay.











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