

MIKE MIDDLETON RCAHMS DAY OF ARCHAEOLOGY

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My name is Mike Middleton. I am an archaeologist, specialising in mapmaking and survey, working on two archaeological mapping projects.



Out on fieldwork, getting a better view!

The first is the Defining Scotland's Places Project which aims to defining the extent of monuments in the landscape so that people know where they are, where they are and who they need to contact if they need more information. ([click here](#) to see more about this project from last years Day of Archaeology)

The second project is the [Historic Landuse Assessment Project](#), a partnership project with Historic Scotland, which aims to map the change in land use over time.

It is difficult to choose just one site as my favorite. Growing up in Shetland I could have chosen [Mousa](#), [Jarlshof](#), [Clickimin](#) or [Scatness Brochs](#). Living on the east coast I considered choosing the [Aberlemno](#) pictish stones, the [Abernethy Round Tower](#) or [Norman's Law hill fort](#) but instead I have gone for a site I visited on my recent field visit, [Hut Knowe](#).



Knowe and the surrounding cord rig field system



Piers Dixon walks along a small track between fields of cord rig running in different directions

What is special about Hut Knowe is the amazing preservation of an entire prehistoric landscape. Not just the settlement but entire field systems. I've been lucky to visit many prehistoric sites over the years and, with colleagues, I've mapped and attempted to tease out field banks and boundaries. But, this can be frustrating with only tiny fragments surviving from which to interpret the whole. What is so great about Hut Knowe is that the prehistoric fields of cord rig stand out so clearly. An entire c2000 year old landscape of rig, fields, trackways and settlement is there for all to see. A time capsule and one I recommend everyone to visit and certainly one for all students of Scottish landscape archaeology.