

Between 2008 and 2010 Archaeological Research Services Ltd undertook an extensive survey of the archaeology of the North East coast of England on behalf of English Heritage. The survey involved mapping archaeological features using aerial photography, extensive field survey at 15 locations, as well as the mapping and sampling of inter-tidal peat layers.

The project has recorded over 1,500 sites during this process, many at imminent risk from coastal erosion. Features identified include Mesolithic flint scatters, a Mesolithic peat layer with human and animal footprints and worked timber, Bronze Age burials, a Roman signal station, a medieval chapel, post-medieval buildings, and military features dating from the 19th century to the Cold War. Many of the sites identified date from the defence of the coastline during the Second World War.

Additional work included the recording and excavation of two Bronze Age burials which were falling out of the cliff face at Low Hauxley in Northumberland.

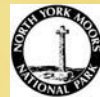
The project has allowed rates of archaeological erosion to be established along the North East coastline. Together with the information from the site surveys, this project has produced recommendations and a priority list for conserving and recording the most vulnerable remains, some of which are experiencing active erosion.



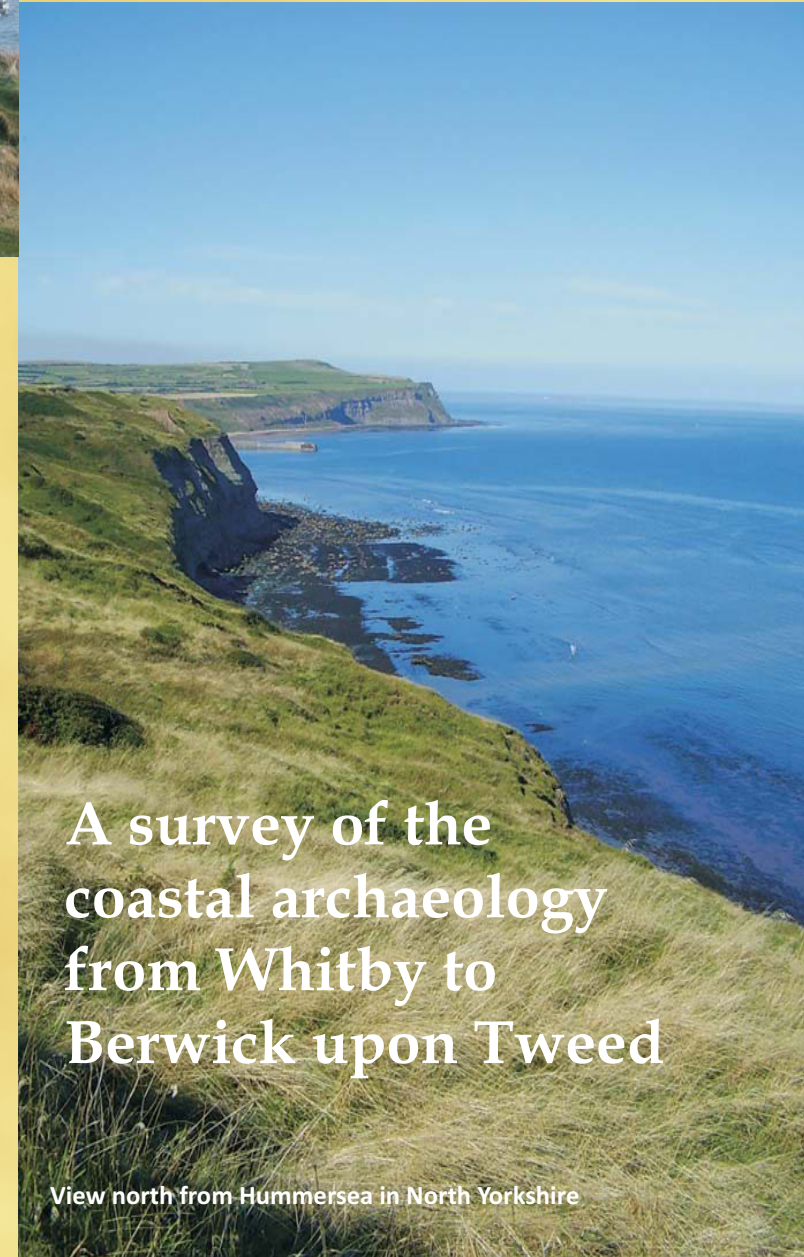
The remains of the 17th century Fort on the Heugh, Holy Island, with Lindisfarne Castle in the background

The information from this project is available from local authority Historic Environment Records and the project reports are downloadable from [www.archaeologicalresearchservices.com](http://www.archaeologicalresearchservices.com) and [www.english-heritage.org.uk](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk)

We hope to initiate a series of monitoring and rescue recording projects over the coming few years at the most threatened sites along this coastline. If you would like to get involved then please register your interest with Archaeological Research Services Ltd at [www.archaeologicalresearchservices.com](http://www.archaeologicalresearchservices.com).



# Protecting the Archaeology of England's North East Coast



A survey of the coastal archaeology from Whitby to Berwick upon Tweed

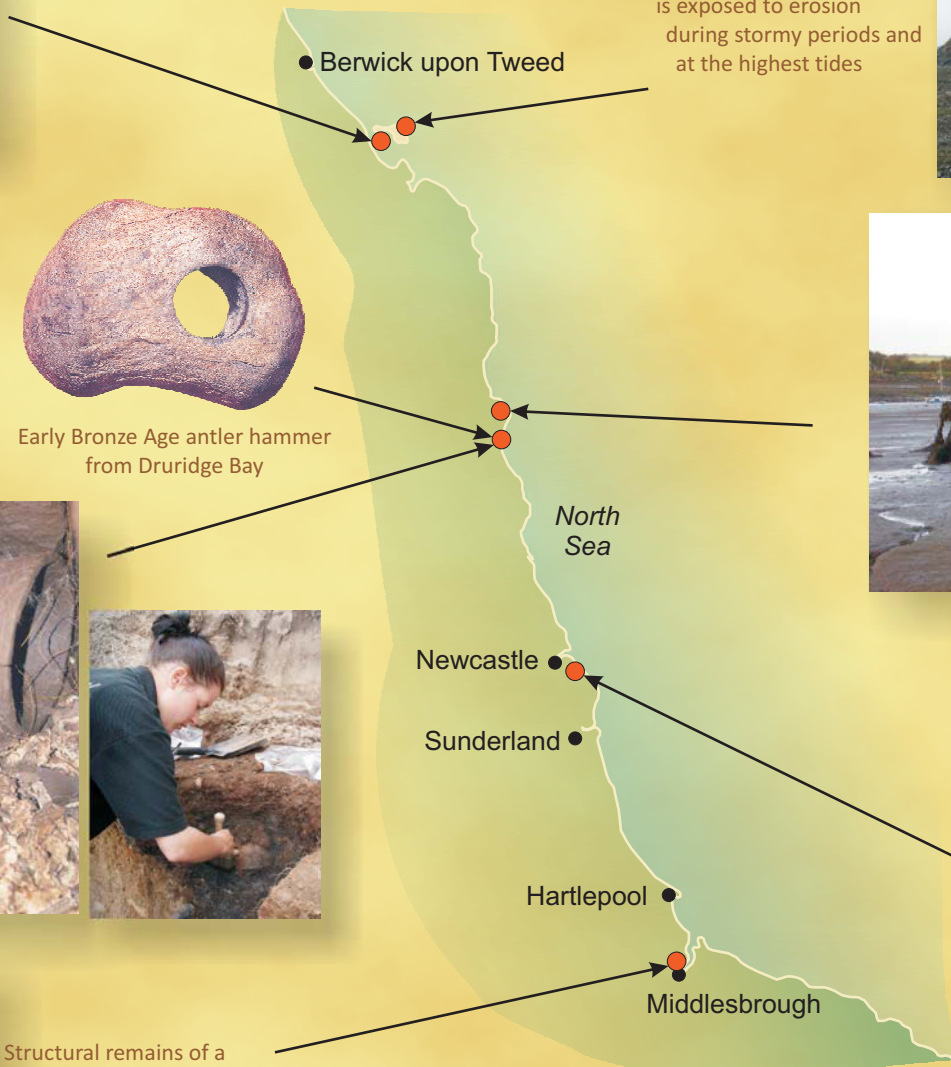
View north from Hummersea in North Yorkshire



The remains of a Second World War pillbox, destroyed due to coastal erosion of the cliffs at Sandsend, North Yorkshire



The remains of a chapel were recorded on the site of the possible 7th century hermitage at St Cuthbert's Isle, to the south of Holy Island, Northumberland. The remains are currently being eroded by wave action and archaeological deposits are lost to the sea at every high tide.



Early Bronze Age antler hammer from Druridge Bay

Lime kilns on the foreshore at Castle Point on Holy Island, with Lindisfarne Castle visible in the background. The site is exposed to erosion during stormy periods and at the highest tides



The remains of several large hulks were recorded lying in the inter-tidal zone of the River Coquet at Amble, Northumberland. These have never previously been subject to any detailed investigation. Survey showed they are most likely to be vessels for transporting coal, known locally as wherries.

Rescue excavation of Bronze Age cremation burials eroding from the cliff at Low Hauxley, Northumberland. Recent excavation recorded two burials at this location but these are located within a much larger cemetery that has already produced six other burials.



Newcastle  
Sunderland

Extensive Second World War military remains were recorded at Trow Point in South Shields. Many of the surviving features here are close to the eroding cliff edge and face imminent collapse. This pillbox has already fallen onto the beach.



Hartlepool

Middlesbrough

Structural remains of a Second World War bombing decoy site located at Greatham Creek, Teesside. These remains are located within a large complex of military remains that forms the best-preserved group of Second World War defences on the North East coast.



Layers of prehistoric peat formed by ancient wetlands are eroding from cliff faces and the inter-tidal zone, such as the one pictured here at Low Hauxley. These peats not only contain prehistoric artefacts, but they also provide a detailed record of past vegetation, landscape, sea levels and prehistoric climate change.