

# Cairnpapple Hill – free event this weekend

To coincide with Scottish Archaeology Month and West Lothian Walking Week, one of mainland Scotland's most important prehistoric sites – Cairnpapple Hill near Torphichen – has a special free event this weekend.

Sharing the secrets of this fascinating ancient monument with visitors will be the site's expert stewards who invite you along between 9.30am to 5.30pm on Saturday 25th and Sunday 26th September to explore Cairnpapple and learn about its use by hundreds of generations of local people, from the 4th millennium BC through to the Christian era.

When excavated in the late 1940s, the summit of Cairnpapple (which boasts stunning views over Central Scotland, as far as Arran's Goat Fell on a clear day) was found to be crowned with ceremonial and burial monuments. The earliest relics, dating from around 5,500 years ago, had been covered over in the later Neolithic period by a great oval enclosure known as a 'henge monument'. This ceased to be used for ceremonial purposes around 4,000 years ago, during the early Bronze Age, however local people still clearly revered it, for they then used it as a burial site.

Steward Christine Thompson said: "Whilst the findings of archaeological studies have shed a great deal of light on Cairnpapple Hill's past and that of the people who used it, there remains much that we don't yet understand about it, so it is an enigmatic and fascinating site."

Also on hand at Cairnpapple at the weekend will be members of the Historic Scotland Rangers Service. From 10am to 4pm, they'll be hosting a series of fun educational activities aimed at both adults and children.

Ranger Ian Lewis said: "We'll be getting kids involved in creating their very own Bronze Age artwork, with pot-making and painting. And all ages should find our archaeology demonstration interesting; we'll be using kite photography to highlight the important role of aerial archaeology in helping us learn about the development of sites through the ages."