

The prehistory of Bexley

There have been many archaeological finds in the Bexley area.

In Bexley there have been numerous discoveries of items from the Palaeolithic (c.500,000 - c.9,000 BC), Mesolithic (c.9,000 - 4,300 BC), and Neolithic (c. 4,300 - 2,000 BC) periods, and from the Bronze (2,000 - 650 BC) and Iron (650 BC - AD43) Ages. For example, in 1962, four Palaeoliths (stone tools) were found behind Bexley Hospital during ground works for a new house construction. Separate finds of Palaeolithic and upper Palaeolithic flint flakes were also discovered in a trench in 1914, evidence of a previous settlement in that area.

Furthermore, at 47-51 Parkhill Road seventeen Mesolithic waste flakes were found. Six flint blades/flakes were also found in a garden surface, along with flint axes and implements and a damaged flint axe head found elsewhere in Bexley.

A Neolithic axe was found in Upton, as well as an isolated Neolithic sickle, which was found elsewhere. During an evaluation of the construction work at Bexley Baptist Chapel, Bourne Road in 1993, a light scatter of Neolithic/Early Bronze Age flint flakes were also located.

A large quantity of Belgic (late Bronze Age to Late Iron Age - 800 BC to AD42) pottery was found at 99 Coldblow Crescent. A fragment of Bronze Age axe was also found in Bexley woods in 1980 and two shards of late Bronze Age to Late Iron Age pottery were found at Basing Drive.

Evidence of a settlement during the Iron Age was found in Bexley. In 1957, a V-shaped ditch was discovered; it was four foot deep and was cut by another ditch at an acute angle. The ditch included shell tempered ware, terra nigra (both pieces of Iron Age pottery), a triangular piece of baked clay, bones, pot boilers, part of a quern (a corn grinder), an iron knife and possibly a loom weight, which was dated to the mid-late Iron Age.

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Sources (available at Bexley Local Studies and Archive Centre):

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