



PRESS RELEASE

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Cheddar Man and the Prehistory of Britain

The extraordinary story of Cheddar Man is the subject of a talk to be given on 11 July at the Museum of Somerset by Dr Tom Booth of the Natural History Museum. The remarkable skeleton of this early human featured recently in the Channel 4 documentary *The First Brit*.

Cheddar Man lived around 10,000 years ago and is the oldest almost complete skeleton of our species, *Homo sapiens*, ever found in Britain. The skeleton was discovered in 1903 at Gough's Cave in Cheddar Gorge, Somerset.

New research into ancient DNA extracted from the skeleton has helped scientists to build a portrait of Cheddar Man and his life in Mesolithic Britain. Dr Booth is among those working on a project funded by the Wellcome Institute which involves researchers from the Natural History Museum, University College London and Harvard University.

In his talk Dr Booth will explore the archaeological evidence of what life was like for Cheddar Man and the other Mesolithic inhabitants of Britain. He will consider what Britain's landscape looked like 10,000 years ago, what people ate and how they treated their dead. He will also examine the changes to human populations in Britain after Cheddar Man lived, including the extraordinary upheavals which accompanied the arrival of new cultures.

Tickets cost £9.50 with booking advised via [Ticketsource](#) or by calling 01823 255088. Talk starts at 7.30 pm.

The Museum of Somerset is part of The South West Heritage Trust, an independent charity that protects and celebrates Somerset and Devon's rich heritage.

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The South West Heritage Trust is a charity supported by Somerset and Devon County Councils and other generous funders

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Company number: 09053532 Charity Number: 1158791 VAT Registration Number: 197221592

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Photo Captions:

New research into ancient DNA extracted from the skeleton has helped scientists to build a portrait of Cheddar Man. Credit Channel 4 Plimsol Productions

Notes to editors

1. The South West Heritage Trust

The South West Heritage Trust is an independent charity committed to protecting and celebrating Somerset and Devon's rich heritage. As well as the widely-praised Museum of Somerset and the redeveloped Somerset Rural Life Museum, in Glastonbury, the Trust manages state-of-the-art facilities in Taunton and Exeter to care for the extraordinary archive collections of the two counties. The Trust also provides essential advice about the historic environment and manages historic sites. Individuals and businesses are invited to support the charity through its Supporters' scheme. Visit swheritage.org.uk #SWHTdiscovery

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