

Introduction to Peatland Archaeology

ADS | Training
ADS | Training

Introduction to Peatland Archaeology

Such are the unique properties of Peatlands that archaeologists can actually look into the faces of our ancient ancestors, preserved in the form of bog bodies. The wealth and diverse nature of archaeological sites, artefacts and environmental information that are preserved in Irish peat bogs is unparalleled, certainly in Europe and possibly the world. Evidence both under and within Peatland deposits provides detailed information about communities who lived in the early periods of Irish history as well as about the food, clothes and tools which were used from the earliest human communities on the island to recent times.

With ADS Training, you will be getting the highest quality instruction from practising professional archaeologists. The Peatland courses are an invaluable source of knowledge for those seeking an introduction to the specific methodologies for dealing with archaeology within a Peatland environment. The training provided will be of interest to many who work in archaeology, including current students of archaeology as well as professionals who seek to learn more about working in Peatlands. The courses have been developed with the aim of providing participants with practical training of the highest professional standard.

OUR EXPERIENCE

ADS are archaeological consultants to Bord na Móna (BnM) since 1998 during which time over 200 excavations have been carried out in their Industrial Peatlands. Since 2003 ADS have also carried out the Archaeological Survey of Ireland, Peatland Survey on behalf of the DOEHLG.

For the past five seasons our palaeoenvironmental work has been overseen by Dr. Nick Branch (formerly Royal Holloway, University of London, RHUL), senior lecturer of Palaeoecology at Reading University. This analysis includes Peat Stratigraphy, Pollen cores, Plant macrofossil remains, Insect remains, Peat Morphology and has been supplemented by 16 undergraduate dissertations, 2 Masters theses and 2 PhD's, one of which has just been completed on Tephrochronology, part-funded by ADS. An account of this work will be published in the Journal of Environmental Science.

ADS and RHUL were awarded INSTAR funding in 2008 to compile a high-resolution chronological and palaeoclimatic framework for six ombrogenous bogs and their associated archaeology in the Midlands of Ireland using tephrochronological and stable isotope research.

COURSE OUTLINE

Option 1 is a two week course which is classroom-based with an element of fieldwork. During this course the participants will learn the techniques particular to surveying and excavating Peatland archaeology.



Topics covered will include:

- An introduction to Irish Peatland archaeology
- Examples of Peatland excavations
- Landscape archaeology
- Archaeological field walking
- Data processing
- Site recording

Option 2 is a four week field-based course, following on from **Option 1**, where students will get hands-on experience using the techniques learned in the previous two weeks. This site work includes excavation, detailed recording and sampling, wood species identification, and worked wood recording. **NOTE: Option 2 is only available in conjunction with Option 1.**

The aim of these courses is to provide the participant with the skills to locate, identify, record and excavate archaeological structures in Peatlands and to interpret the sites in order to gain an insight into human interaction within marginal landscapes. This information can be put into context with the surrounding archaeological monuments in the 'dry land' areas and provide a more detailed picture of the particular social group and their way of life.

At the end of the course Participants will:

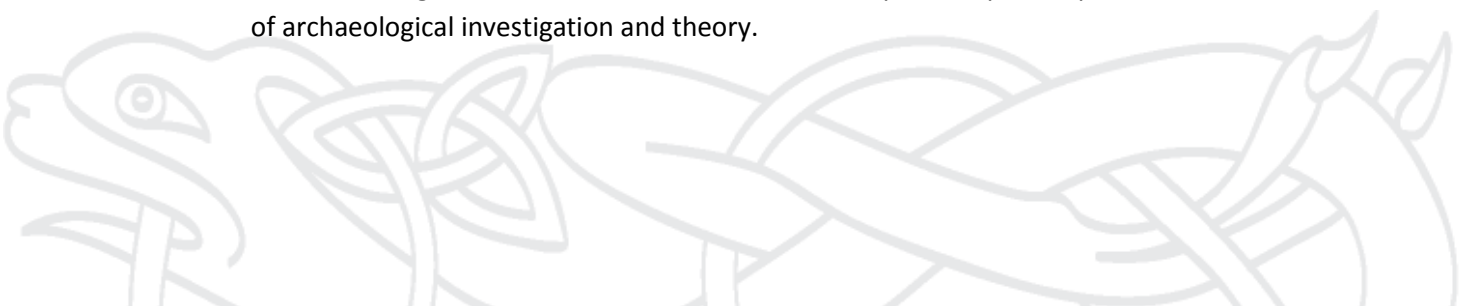
- have knowledge and understanding of Irish Peatland Archaeology
- be able to identify archaeological sites through field walking survey
- be able to distinguish archaeological wood from naturally occurring wood remains
- be able to record, excavate and interpret different Peatland sites
- have an understanding of the techniques involved in wood species identification and tool-marked wood recording

MISSION STATEMENT

ADS is dedicated to the dissemination of knowledge within archaeology and related disciplines. Through research, education and a multi-disciplinary approach, it is possible to reveal exciting new information about our ancestors, and how they interacted with their environment.

The aims of ADS in delivering these courses are:

- To equip participants with the specialist skills to bring work, research, and development within their discipline, to higher levels.
- To work with community groups, state heritage bodies, educational authorities, and the archaeological communities worldwide to develop and improve upon methods of archaeological investigation and theory.



- To enhance the understanding of Irish Archaeology.

ADS follows the European Association of Archaeologists Code of Conduct.

BOOKING A PLACE

To book a place on either of the courses, follow the guidelines below. Early booking is advisable, as places are limited.

1. **Option 1** of the Peatlands course runs from June 22nd, 2009 to July 3rd, 2009.
Option 2 runs from July 6th until July 31st, 2009. **Note** that this four-week course is only available to participants who have completed **Option 1**.
2. A deposit of 50% of the fee secures your place on a course.
3. Payment is only accepted in Euro (€). Accepted payment methods are: cheque or Electronic Funds Transfer. See details on the Booking Form.
4. Complete ALL sections of the Booking Form. If you have any questions, please contact us via email.
5. Complete the Health Information Form.
6. Send the completed Booking Form, Health Information Form, and booking deposit to:

Archaeological Development Services Ltd
110 Amiens St
Dublin 1
Ireland

Tel: 00353 1 8849114

Fax: 00353 1 8849222

Email: info@adsireland.ie

COURSE FEES

Fees for **Option 1**, the two-week course, are €1,750.00 including self-catering accommodation, tuition, and any course-related travel from Monday to Friday during the course.

Fees for **Option 2**, the four-week Field School, are €2,200.00 including self-catering accommodation, tuition, and any course-related travel from Monday to Friday during the course.

Accepted payment methods are: cheque or Electronic Funds Transfer. See details on the Booking Form.



Upon receipt of deposit, Booking Form, and Health Information Form, your application will be assessed to determine your suitability for the course. Occasionally, a telephone interview may be conducted if any further clarification is required on any part of the application. Successful applications will be confirmed in writing.

The balance of the fee is due four weeks before the start date of your chosen course. Failure to pay fees in full by this date will result in your place being lost and deposit retained. When payment is received in full, you will be sent an information pack containing further information about the course.

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

ADS firmly believes that Health and Safety is everyone's responsibility, and while we go to great lengths to ensure the highest levels of safety for everyone in our concern, we cannot overstate the importance of personal responsibility in this regard.

A certain degree of physical fitness is required in archaeology. Some aspects of field archaeology are particularly strenuous, and require stamina. In the course of a day field surveying, it would not be uncommon to walk 10-15km. Similarly, during excavation, it would be typical to remove by shovel more than 1 cubic metre of soil in a day. Therefore, reasonable levels of physical and mental health are required.

If you are affected by any illness or any condition which you feel may compromise your ability to fully participate in the course activities please bring it to our attention before registering.

Cost Basis

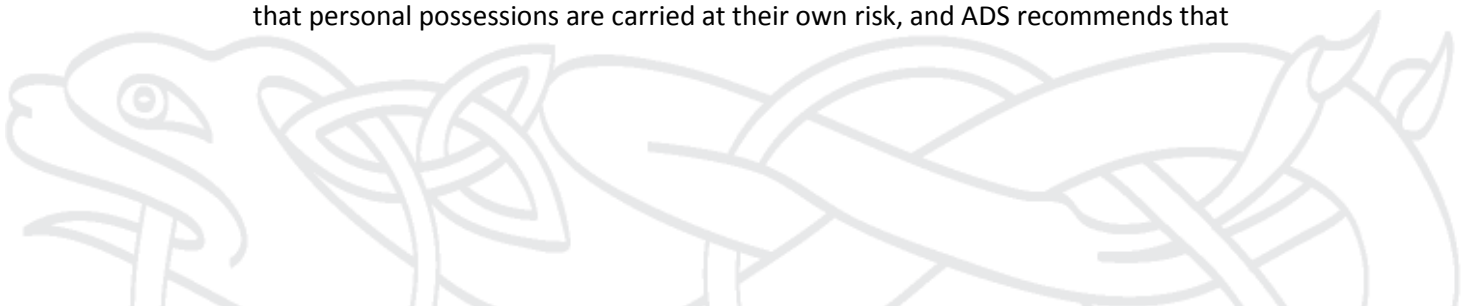
The course fees include tuition, self-catering accommodation, transportation to and from the archaeological site, and the provision of excavation equipment for use while in attendance. All prices are quoted in Euro (€).

It is important to note what is not included in the fee:

- Travel to and from the course location points
- Meals
- Passport/Visa expenses
- Insurance
- Personal items
- Any other items not specifically outlined as included.

GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- Fees must be paid in full at least four weeks prior to the commencement of your chosen course.
- Neither ADS, nor any of our working partners, is liable for any loss, theft or damage to any item belonging to participants during the course. Participants are reminded that personal possessions are carried at their own risk, and ADS recommends that



participants take out sufficient health and personal insurance to cover any eventuality.

COURSE TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- A 50% deposit must be submitted with the Booking Form.
- The balance of fees must be received at least four weeks prior to the start date of your chosen course.
- Cheques should be made payable to: Archaeological Development Services Ltd
- Cancellations made more than four weeks prior to the start date of the chosen course will be refunded, less an administration fee of 15%. In the case of cancellations **within four weeks** of the start date of the chosen course, the deposit will be retained.
- ADS, and its working partners, are not responsible for any injuries sustained, or loss or damage to belongings while attending the courses, or en route to the courses.
- ADS recommends that participants take out sufficient health and personal insurance, prior to commencing the course, to cover any eventuality.
- A current Tetanus vaccination is advisable.
- Any participants requiring special storage for medication should notify ADS prior to arrival to ensure adequate facilities are available.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Location of the courses

Course **Option 1** is located in Tullamore, Co Offaly. Tullamore is the administrative capital of County Offaly. It boasts a wide variety of leisure and recreational amenities, and is within a 30 minute drive of world class heritage sites such as, Clonmacnoise, Durrow Abbey, and Charleville Forest.

Course **Option 2** is based in Thurles, Co. Tipperary. This Cathedral town offers the visitor a great selection of recreational amenities and places of local historical interest like, Farney Castle and the Famine Museum.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **How do I get to the Field School?**

Participants are expected to make their own way to the assembly point of their chosen course.

Further information on meeting points will be sent to participants prior to the course.



Information on transport options and ticket purchase can be found at www.irishrail.ie and www.buseireann.ie. Please note that ADS accepts no responsibility for the accuracy of information on either of the above mentioned websites.

- **In what language is the course taught?**

The course is taught in English.

- **Do I have to be studying Archaeology to participate in the Field School?**

Due to its specialised content, the course is intended for those who have completed at least one year of archaeology at third level, **or** have built up the requisite knowledge through fieldwork experience. The course is also suitable for professional archaeologists who are new to the methodologies particular to Peatland archaeology.

- **Is there a minimum age for participants?**

The minimum age is 18.

- **Is there a maximum age for participants?**

There is no maximum age, once you can satisfy the health requirements.

- **What is the accommodation?**

The accommodation provided is self-catering which means that participants have the responsibility of buying and preparing their own meals. Accommodation is close to the amenities of the town, including shops and restaurants. Participants are reminded that a packed lunch will be necessary to bring to site.

- **Is it possible to gain ECTS/university credits for taking this course?**

University accreditation is pending.

- **Can I do volunteer work at the Peatland field school?**

No. We are unable to offer volunteer places at the field school. The courses, and their activities, have been designed specifically to train participants in the methods of fieldwork which are particular to Peatland archaeology.

- **What are the working/instruction hours?**

The working day is 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday, with half an hour for lunch, and two coffee breaks; one in the morning and one in the afternoon.

- **Is there anything to do outside of course hours?**

There are bars, cafes and leisure facilities in the towns of Tullamore and Thurles. Participants are free to pursue their own interests outside of the course. However, participants are reminded that this should not interfere with their participation of the course, and any disruption to the courses as a result of outside activities will not be acceptable.

- **Can Friends/family visit me?**

Your friends and family are welcome to visit you while you are attending the course. Thurles and Tullamore offer a good selection of accommodation including B&Bs and hotels.

- **Is there a bank or ATM in Tullamore or Thurles?**

There are banking facilities and ATMs in both locations.



- **Are there shops nearby?**

Tullamore and Thurles are large commercial centres providing the following:

- Supermarkets
- Pharmacies
- Laundry facilities
- Medical facilities

- **What type of clothing and equipment do I need to bring?**

Irish weather has a reputation for being very changeable, so come prepared! The Peatland areas we work in are generally vast exposed tracts of land. This means that when it is hot, there is little or no shelter, so protective sun creams, summer clothing, and adequate drinking water are essential. Similarly if the weather is bad, conditions will be very wet and usually very windy, so wind and rain-proof clothing is a necessity.

- Protective Sun cream
- Drinking water
- Wind- and water-proof jacket and trousers
- Selection of warm and cold weather clothes
- Hardwearing boots for walking (e.g. hiking boots)
- Second pair of shoes for use off-site
- Towels and toiletries
- All excavation and other course equipment will be provided

- **Can I travel independently while on the course?**

Participants are free to travel independently while attending the course. ADS accepts no responsibility for participants while undertaking such trips.

- **Can I bring my own car?**

Yes, but participants do so entirely at their own risk. It must be emphasised that ADS accepts no responsibility for any damage, accidents, or injuries arising from incidents involving participants' private vehicles during the field school.

- **Is food provided during the course?**

No. Food arrangements are on a self-catering basis. The accommodation provides cooking facilities, and supermarkets are within close proximity.

- **Do I need insurance?**

ADS strongly recommends that participants ensure they have appropriate health, travel, personal insurance to cover illness, injury or any other incident. Please check with your insurance provider in plenty of time prior to the course to ensure necessary amendments/provisions are in place – this is especially important for participants who will be travelling to Ireland.



- **Photography and Recording**

ADS reserves the right to use or reproduce, for any purpose, any photograph, audio or video recording that is taken of participants by, or on behalf of, ADS and it is understood that participants agree that ADS, or parties acting on their behalf, may do so without compensation. Any such photo or recording will be owned only by ADS and may be used in various print and online media for research, educational and promotional purposes.

Data transfer, personal photography or audio/visual recording, by any means, is not permitted.

- **Other information**

If you have a question(s) that have not been answered in this document, please contact us at info@adsireland.ie and we will do our best to address it. While every effort has been taken to ensure this document has been compiled according to best practice; the information herein is subject to change and /or update.

Deposits, Cancellations, Itinerary Changes, and Refunds

- All cancellation notices must be received in writing and will become effective as of the date received. Handling fees for cancellation prior to the final payment date are 15% of the course fee. Cancellations after the final payment date of a program will result in forfeiture of all money paid.
- Failure to pay the final balance by the date due can result in your reservation being cancelled.
- No refund will be made for leaving a program in progress.
- ADS reserves the right to withdraw, without penalty, any announced course (in such a case, a full refund of the cost will be made) or to make necessary changes to a course or course schedule.
- ADS reserves the right to cancel courses while in progress and to take action as needed on an individual or group basis, when in ADS's sole opinion, it is deemed as necessary for the health, safety, or well-being of participants. ADS's only obligation shall be to refund to any such person that portion of his or her payment allocated to unused services. Refunds are not otherwise granted for unused services.
- ADS is not responsible, in the event of cancellation or alteration of a course, for any airline or other commercial transportation cancellation penalty incurred by purchasing a non-refundable or restricted ticket.
- Additional terms and conditions may apply to some programs and will be provided in writing prior to commencement of a course.

