

## **Ground-breaking radiocarbon date for Le Trépied!**

A fragment of charcoal recovered during the 2017 excavation at Le Trépied passage grave, St Saviors, has returned a radiocarbon date indicating that it was built over 6,200 years ago making it the oldest tomb of its kind in the Channel Islands.

During the 2017 excavation, a collaboration between Clifton Antiquarian Club and the States of Guernsey Department of Education, Sport and Culture, a tiny fragment of charcoal was recovered from a prepared surface beneath the remnants of the mound that would have once covered the tomb. The date returned by the laboratory was 4400-4300BC and indicates the very earliest stage of construction of the monument. A second sample from the chamber entrance was 3000–2900 BC suggesting the tomb was used repeatedly over a long period.

Two other Channel Island passage graves have previously been radiocarbon dated; Le Déhus, Vale, dates centred on 4100 BC derived from human bone found inside the chamber meaning that the monument was built sometime before this; a construction phase at La Hougue Bie on Jersey has also been dated to a similar period.

The date from Le Trépied is contemporary with passage grave construction dates in Normandy and Brittany, demonstrating that maritime connections between the Channel Islands and the French mainland would have been active during this period in prehistory.

The oldest burial tomb of any kind on the Channel Islands is Les Fouaillages long mound which is dated to c.4900 BC.

Donovan Hawley and Laurie Waite of the Clifton Antiquarian Club will be returning to Guernsey this coming June to instigate a preliminary assessment of possible Bronze Age burial mounds on Vale Commons in a project funded by the Vale Commons Council.