



Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Gwynedd
Gwynedd Archaeological Trust



Pot Making Activity

Make your own clay pot!

- First get everything you need (read the list, below)
- Read the information section (page 4) to learn about some examples of pots and pottery pieces found by Gwynedd Archaeological Trust (GAT)
- Watch the video and make a pot with us!



You will need...

Air drying clay

Ask your parents / guardians nicely if they can order some online, if you can't go to a shop. We got ours [HERE](#) (click). But you can buy it in smaller amounts, for example [HERE](#).



If you haven't got any air drying clay

You could try making the pot out of plasticine (or any other kind of modelling material) if you haven't got any air drying clay. If you don't have enough modelling material you could experiment with just the pattern-making part of the activity on a flat piece of plasticine or blu tack. Or, if you've got the ingredients, you could try making a pot out of play dough. [HERE](#) is an example of a play dough recipe.

Tools for making patterns

For the patterns on the pot in the video we used the edge of a shell, a piece of straw, a piece of dead vegetation from the garden shaped like a tube, our finger nails and a biro. But you can be inventive and use anything, as long as it makes a nice pattern – such as twigs or stones or things found in the house. Don't use anything sharp!



Flat surface

You'll need a flat, hard surface for modelling the clay. When we made our pot we put some plastic on the table so we didn't mark the wood. You can use a little water to smooth cracks etc., but this WILL make things a little messier!



Read the information section (starts on page 4)

Read through the information section just before watching the video to learn about examples of pots and pottery GAT have found.

Watch the video!

Once you've got everything you need and have read through the information section you'll be ready to start. The video can be paused if you need to catch up with things like smoothing or shaping the pot and doing the decoration. To watch the video, click on the link:

English: [CLICK HERE](#)

Cymraeg: [CLICK HERE](#)



Remember to wash your hands after the activity.



Information Section

Here are some examples of pots and pieces of pottery found by GAT. These were discovered during archaeological excavations carried out before the development, by Welsh Government, of the Parc Cybi business park, near Holyhead, Anglesey.

Archaeological work was carried out so that traces of the past could be investigated and recorded, helping us learn how people may have lived here and made use of the land, from nearly 6000 years ago to more recent times.

Here's a photograph of the site from the air of the Parc Cybi excavation site. If you look *very* closely, you can see the archaeologists at work.



You can learn more about some of the archaeology found at Parc Cybi [HERE](#) (the Parc Cybi section on GAT's website).



Bronze Age Pottery

At Parc Cybi GAT found lots of artefacts and the remains of different buildings and structures. They also found various pots and pieces of pottery.

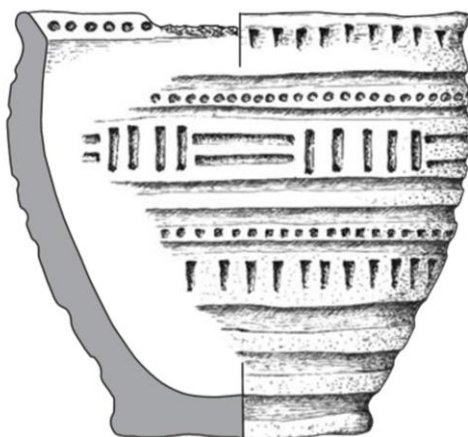


This Food Vessel was found at Parc Cybi when the capstone from the top of a burial cist was removed. The Food Vessel is from the Bronze Age, so that's about 4000 years ago.

- It was probably believed that the food vessel could be used in the afterlife
- A cist is a stone chamber set in to the ground, usually to hold a single burial, sealed by a large capstone
- There was no skeleton in this cist as the acid, well-drained soils caused the bones to dissolve away

The striped stick and pole in the photo are a photo scale and ranging rod. They help us tell the size of the things we're looking at in an archaeological photo, a little like a ruler.

Here's an archaeological drawing of the same vessel (drawing by Frances Lynch):

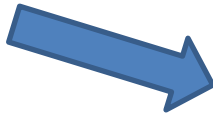


When you've made your own pot why not have a go at making an archaeological drawing of it? Include a scale if you want, like in Frances' drawing.

Or you could make your own photo scale and take a photograph of your pot. Using a ruler, draw, colour, then cut out your photo scale, making sure each box is one centimetre square.

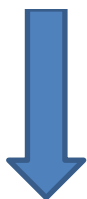


Click [HERE](#) to see an interactive 3D model of the Food Vessel.

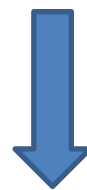
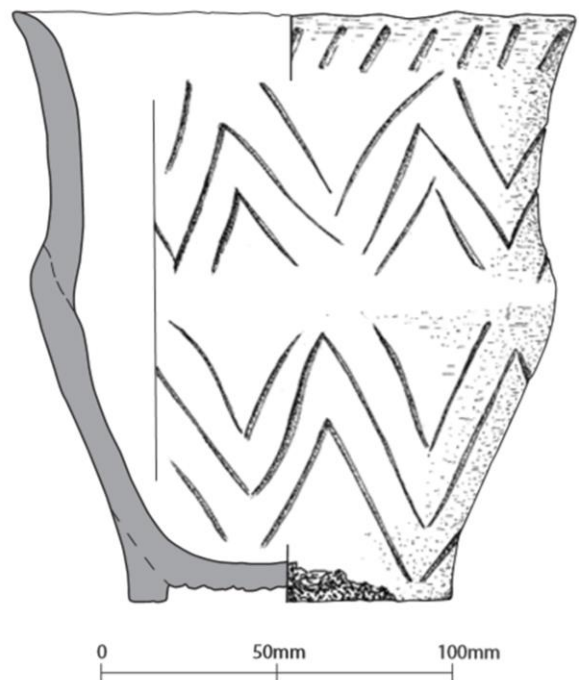


Beaker

The pictures below are of a Beaker, found in another cist at Parc Cybi. Pots like this are called Beakers because archaeologists think they were drinking vessels (a beaker is a container for holding drinks). The pot, or Beaker, is from the “Beaker Period”. The period is named after these types of pots because those pots were common at that time. The Beaker Period was between the end of the Neolithic Period and Bronze Age (about 2,500 to 2,000 BC).



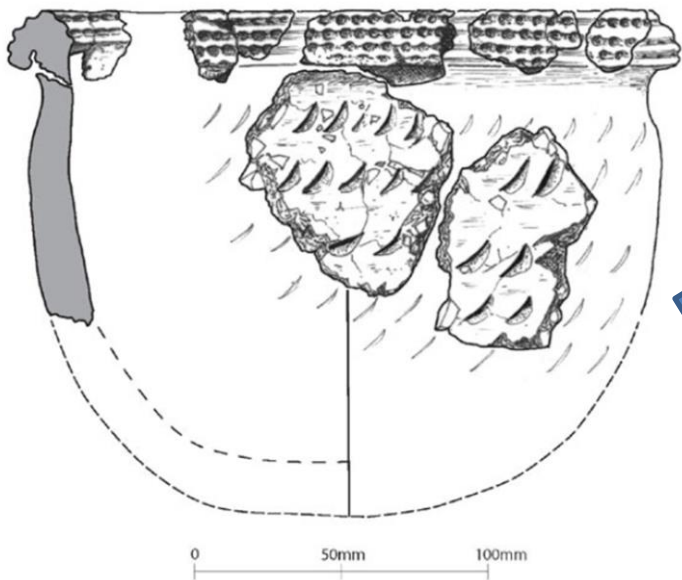
The broken pieces of the Beaker were put back together by staff at Cardiff University.



Another drawing by Frances Lynch, this time it's of the Beaker.

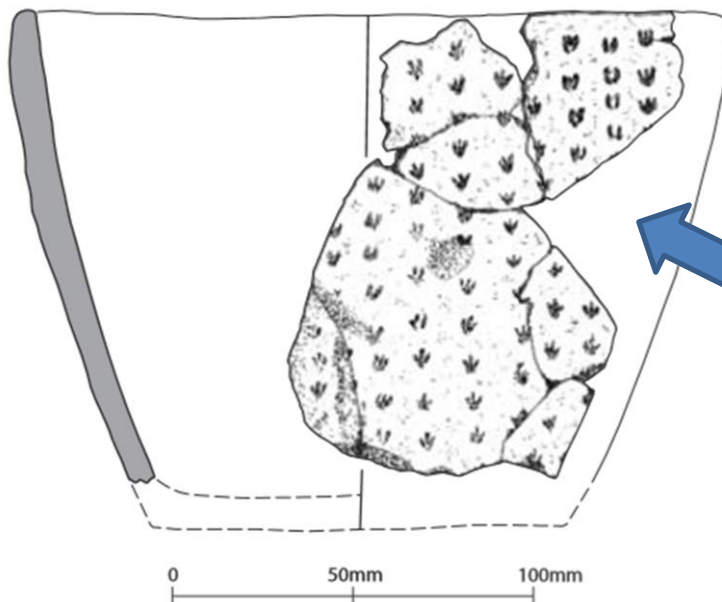
Neolithic Pottery

GAT also found pieces of Neolithic pottery at Parc Cybi (from about 5000 years ago). Here some examples:



Here are sherds from a decorated Neolithic pot. The decorations may have been made by finger nails and the end of a piece of bird bone. A sherd is a broken piece of pottery.

This is a thick rim from another style of Neolithic pottery.



It was thought the marks on this pot may have been made using mice feet! But the markings were probably made using bits of twig. (Drawing by Frances Lynch).

The pots found at Parc Cybi were coil pots (made joining 'sausages' of clay). But we will make pinch pots as it's a little bit easier.

Let's make our own pot!

If you've read the information section and have everything you need, you're now ready to make your own pot! Good luck! Click on the link below to watch the video which will show you how. Send us a picture of your finished pot!

English: [CLICK HERE](#)

Cymraeg: [CLICK HERE](#)



For more information on GAT's work at Parc Cybi, click [HERE](#).

Visit the 'things to do' section of the YAC website by clicking [HERE](#).

If you have any questions, or would like to join the YAC Bangor branch (Gwynedd), you and your parents / guardians can get in touch with us at Gwynedd Archaeological Trust (we run the Bangor branch):

Email: dan.amor@heneb.co.uk.

Click [HERE](#) for the YAC website.

