

Andy Crabb

Managing the archaeology.

Merrivale, being such a unique and well preserved landscape is obviously very well protected as well, legally, it's a Scheduled Ancient Monument, which is an archaeological area which is protected by law; it's also a Property in Care, which is a guardianship area designated by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. Now Properties in Care are areas where the National Park take on day to day management of the monument in question, or in this case landscape in question, and carry out routine repairs, erosion repairs, that type of thing, and its also partly funded by English Heritage; there's a Local Management Agreement between the two organisations. In the past we've had quite a few problems at Merrivale with stock erosion, animals have come up, trying to cross the leat, and that causes areas of poaching, and broken down leat banks and water has flowed out across the monument, they also like to rub and scratch themselves on a hot summer's day, or a cold winter's day as well, against the stone uprights on the stone rows and round the stone circle, and that creates erosion hollows, and obviously that can loosen the stones and cause them to fall over and expose any buried archaeological deposits which maybe surviving there.

So is there any specific work that's been done here on this site?

Yes, we've done quite a lot of work on the leat over the years, so we have started to line the leat with granite slabs, and that's been going on for about ten or so years, we did a big phase of it last autumn, and that has helped the problem no end, water is no longer breaking out in these vulnerable areas and so the ground has recovered and the grass has come back.