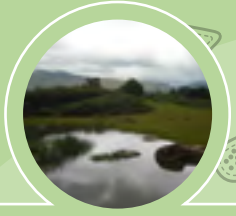


THESE FOOTPRINTS ARE THE SANDAL OF A ROMAN SOLDIER



**SECTION THREE**  
**Where does the water on the Gwent Levels come from?**

Using maps, draw where fresh water comes from the mountains. **p. 22**



**SECTION THREE**  
**Design a commemorative stained-glass window**

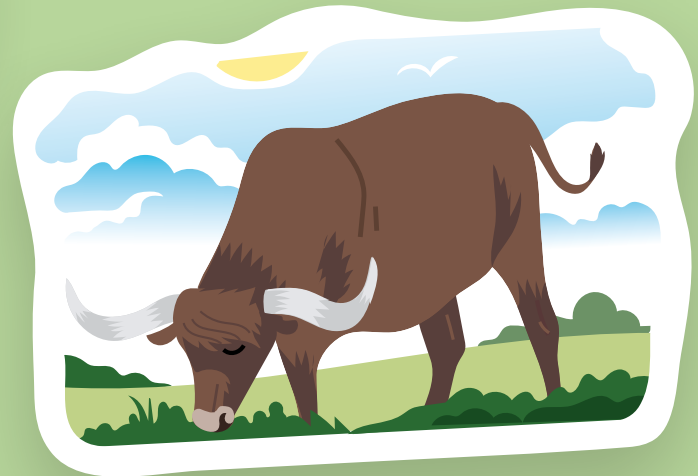
Show off the Levels' inspiring landscape and wildlife features. **p. 22**

**THE BIG PICTURE**  
**A map of the Gwent Levels in 1830**  
How similar is Magor and the countryside compared to a modern map? **p. 23**



**SECTION TWO**  
**Spot different periods of farmland across the Gwent Levels**

Patterns of drainage: which era does a certain pattern belong to? **pp. 20 – 21**



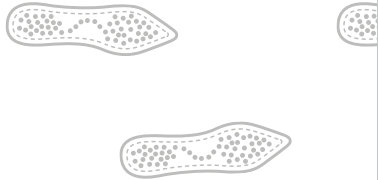
**SECTION ONE**  
**What is still the same?**  
**What has changed?**

Create a timeline tracking the drainage of the Levels into farmland. **pp. 12 – 19**

**PART ONE**

**How has the Gwent Levels landscape changed over time?**

# How has the Gwent Levels landscape changed over time?



## What is still the same?

Incredibly, the Gwent Levels look largely the same today as they did back in the 1700s and 1800s. The way in which the ditches (reens) drain the land and the fields, providing rich, fertile grazing for animals, means there has been little need for change. It has always been an area used to raise cows and sheep because the vegetation is so rich and lush.

## What has changed?

While much of the remaining farmland remains the same, some of the land has been modified.

- There are new buildings, from farm barns to industrial warehouses. Many areas have been built over, particularly the wet marshy land on the edge of Newport.
- Newport used to be a relatively small town. In the medieval period it had a castle to defend the river crossing, a market, a mill, a few houses and a wharf. Now it is a big city.
- The Llanwern Steelworks were built in 1962 across a large expanse of the Gwent Levels. When it opened there were more than 13,000 workers and contractors on site. It was the first oxygen-blown integrated steelworks in Britain. While steel isn't made on site any more, it is delivered in huge slabs. The hot strip mill then rolls the steel into a continuous strip; it was the first mill to be controlled by a computer.

Windmill Reen during the summer, an important drainage ditch and habitat for wildlife.

CHRIS HARRIS



SECTION ONE

# The Gwent Levels landscape



Sheep graze across the Gwent Levels, in this case the foreshore, as they have done for hundreds of years.

Over time people have stopped the sea getting to the Gwent Levels by surrounding them with an earthen bank (the sea wall). However, water still comes in from inland rivers and streams, with water flowing down from the mountains and hills. In the past, people have found different solutions to drain the fresh water off the fields, and maps and photos reveal evidence of this.

The Romans (around 1,900 years ago) were some of the first people to start draining the Gwent Levels, providing dry fields especially during the summer for grazing their cattle, sheep and horses. During the Norman period (around 900 years ago) wealthy landowners

– including several newly founded monasteries – drained large areas of land. The monks in particular were creative engineers and cleverly modified the water channels in fields, even crossing one over the other, like a mini-aqueduct.

Many of the fields found across the Gwent Levels look very similar now to how they would have looked 200 years ago. Farmers have continued to graze sheep and cows on these fields, relying on the old, traditional drainage channels to keep their fields free from flooding. There have, however, been some changes. Some fields or areas have been drained further and used for horse grazing and recreation, while others have

been overgrazed, stopping flowering plants growing or birds nesting. Cow dung and urine being spread onto fields helps the grass to flourish. However, this stops flowers from growing and it also seeps into the drainage ditches, causing algae to spread which kills all the other plants growing there.

Some areas have improved the land for wildlife. For example, Newport Wetlands was once farmland. Holes were dug for the dumping of ash from the power station. This has now been dug out in places to make ponds and reedbeds for waterbirds.

IMAGE: CHRIS HARRIS

## SECTION ONE

# A timeline of changes on the Gwent Levels

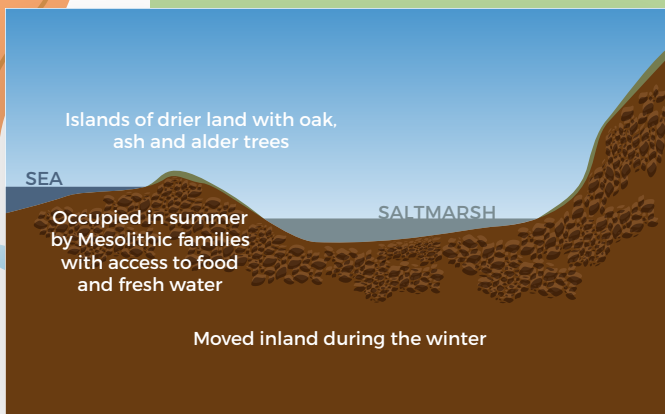
...and how the land has been managed by people

Watch the Lost Landscapes film to see how the Gwent Levels has changed over the past 7,000 years. You can choose specific time periods to watch, [livinglevels.org.uk/lost-landscapes-intro](http://livinglevels.org.uk/lost-landscapes-intro)

This timeline compliments the online version, [livinglevels.org.uk/timeline](http://livinglevels.org.uk/timeline)



LIVING LEVELS LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP/DEXTRA VISUAL



A cross-section of the Gwent Levels near Goldcliff during the Mesolithic Period (when footprints were made in the mud)

### ◀ 7,000 years ago: Mesolithic period

During the Mesolithic period sea levels were lower. The land sloped down from the sea, and a hill at Goldcliff formed an island within the wetlands.

### 1,900 years ago: the Romans

When the Romans arrived in south-east Wales, they set up a major British legionary fortress at Caerleon, with 5,600 soldiers. The Gwent Levels became an important place for rearing cattle, sheep and horses. Local wild birds appeared on the dinner table of senior Romans, including the common crane (now recently back on the Levels after going extinct in Britain in the 1600s). An effort was made to partly drain the Levels, for example through digging ditches, although

large areas will still have been occasionally flooded by the tide. The Goldcliff Stone (displayed at Caerleon's Roman Legion Museum) records some of this work.

A Roman-period boat was discovered during the construction of the large Tesco's distribution warehouse in the 'Europark' development (between the steelworks and Magor). This suggests that a tidal creek flowed inland from Redwick on the coast to a wharf at the back of the Levels where the boat had been moored up.

### 1,500 years ago

At the end of the Roman period sea levels rose and a saltmarsh once again formed across the Gwent Levels.

**800 to 900 years ago  
(1100s to 1200s): the Normans**

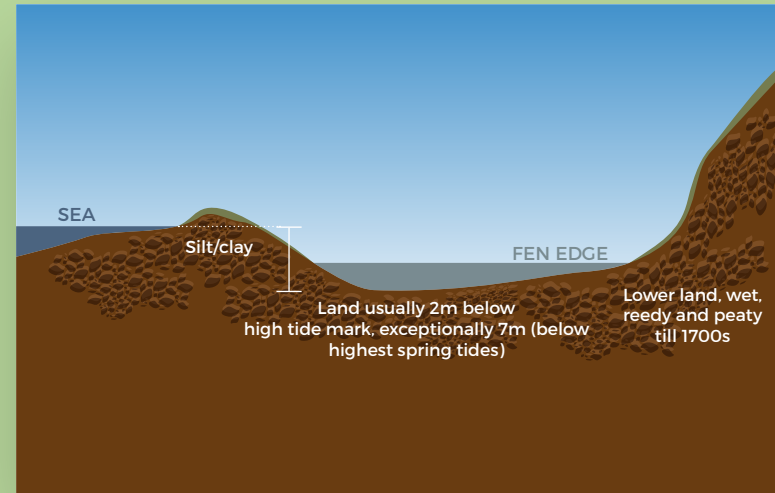
Over 950 years ago, in 1066, the Normans invaded England from France. Over the next 200 years they slowly took over Wales, building castles, occupying the best land for farming and living an affluent lifestyle. The Normans lived in big estates and took the best areas of farmland, leaving the poorer farmland for the monks. The Normans also founded monasteries, several of which held land on the Gwent Levels, and helped to build sea walls and drain the land. One of these was Goldcliff Priory (on the site of Hill Farm), which was established in AD 1113, and dissolved in the 1530s.

**About 500 years ago  
(1400 and 1500s) ►**

From the 1400s onwards the climate deteriorated leading to coastal erosion, which led to the rebuilding of the sea wall inland of where it had been.

**500–200 years ago  
(1500s–1800s)**

During the 1530s the monasteries were closed, and their land was sold off (which is known as the Reformation). During the 1600s and 1700s private landowners were experimenting with their farming practices. In the 1700s and the 1800s common land, used by local villagers for fuel, grazing and other materials, was divided up between all the different landowners in order to create more farmland.



A general cross-section of the Gwent Levels from the 1400s onwards



LIVING LEVELS LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP/DEXTRA VISUAL

**Monastic lands (around Newport and Chepstow)**

The monks were given areas of good agricultural land in the coastal areas, and some poorly drained land in inland areas.

The monks probably came up with the more sophisticated drainage systems, including the ability to send one drainage ditch under another without the two mixing.

The former tenants were offered a one-off financial settlement in return for losing their rights in the common land. Many were glad of the money; some, however, were paid and forcibly evicted from their former lands.

This led to lots of social change. This was timely as the industrial revolution was happening. Many commoners moved to Newport to earn money by working in local industries.

In 1850 the railway was built across the Gwent Levels, often slicing through the middle of fields. A bridge was built across the railway in Magor so that farmers could still access their fields.

**1900s to today**

Many areas of the Gwent Levels remain as farmland, although it may not be owned in blocks by people living next door to it as it once did. As fields have become available, often when landowners have died without anybody to inherit it, land has been broken up into smaller pieces and sold to people further away. Fields today have very mixed ownership, which has its own challenges.

# Activities

ACTIVITY

## Different ways of life



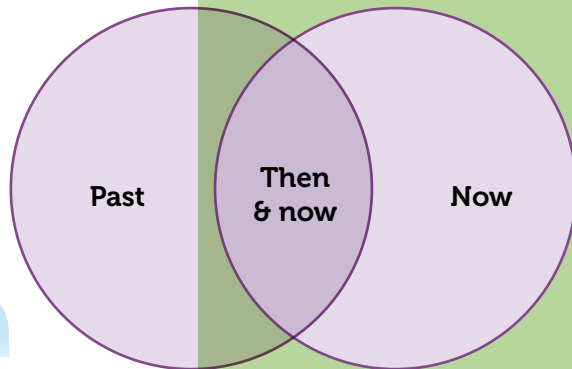
Using the Lost Landscapes (digital reconstruction) film ([livinglevels.org.uk/lost-landscapes-intro](http://livinglevels.org.uk/lost-landscapes-intro)) and Time and Tide: 12,000 years on the Gwent Levels ([livinglevels.org.uk/time-and-tide](http://livinglevels.org.uk/time-and-tide)) choose two periods of time from the list below:

- End of last ice age, around 6000BC.
- Iron age, about 280BC.
- Roman occupation, around AD200.
- Monastic life, around AD1250.
- Industrial revolution, AD1800s.
- Modern day.

Write down some adjectives and adverbs to describe the landscape, the water and the environment in which families lived (or live) during your chosen periods.

Complete a Venn diagram (like below) showing the similarities and differences between the two time periods. Include how the water influences or influenced people's lives, the houses they live or lived in and their use of the land.

APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE



ACTIVITY

## The Levels through the ages

Watch the Lost Landscapes (digital reconstruction) film ([livinglevels.org.uk/lost-landscapes-intro](http://livinglevels.org.uk/lost-landscapes-intro)) and Time and Tide: 12,000 years on the Gwent Levels ([livinglevels.org.uk/time-and-tide](http://livinglevels.org.uk/time-and-tide)); both reveal how landscapes and life has changed over thousands of years.

Use the information to fill in the table below showing how the land was used, how the people lived and how the water influenced their way of life.



Information for the rows marked with \* are found in the Lost Landscapes film.

Following on from completing the table lead a discussion about how the water has influenced people's way of life and how people have tried to change the water's impact on the land.

APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE

Age	Describe how the water covered the land	Describe how and where the people lived	Explain how the people used the land
End of last ice age, around 6000BC *			
Iron age, about 280BC *	Wet marsh lands with some higher drier areas.		
Roman occupation, around AD200AD *		Wetland enclosure. Larger, more substantial dwellings.	
Monastic life, around AD1250 *			Farming the drier areas.
The time of the act of sewers, around AD1500.		Progressively more permanent settlements.	
The flood, AD1607 *		Stone and wooden buildings.	
Industrial revolution, AD1800s	Roads, fields, towns and villages develop.		
Modern day			Industry leisure activities road and rail.

For suggested answers, see p. 75

ACTIVITY

## What could it mean?



Watch Time and Tide: 12,000 years on the Gwent Levels ([livinglevels.org.uk/time-and-tide](http://livinglevels.org.uk/time-and-tide)) and ask students to listen out for the following quotes and think about what they could mean. Replay the animation and pause following each quote to discuss their significance.

WORKING CREATIVELY

0:45

**“They leave footprints in the shore for those that follow, to follow ever more.”**

There are some physical footprints that have been found at Goldcliff, but what else have the generations who lived on the levels before us left behind and how have we followed them?



1:41

**“as sure as tides rise”  
“change is unending,  
constant like tide,  
as ice turns to water  
and the waters rise”**

The narrator thinks there is an inevitability to change, shown by the quote “as sure as tides rise” and “change is unending, constant like tide, as ice turns to water and the waters rise”. What do you think is meant by this?

2:11

**“turn the wilds of nature to the order of man”**

People have had an impact on nature. Do you think that humans ever “turn the wilds of nature to the order of man”?

2:50

**“and ingenious mosaic of ditches and drains”**

We now have “an ingenious mosaic of ditches and drains” across the Gwent Levels. Why do you think that they have been described like this?

3:33

**“the iron horse is thundering forward”**

What is being described by “the iron horse is thundering forward; the smog of progress covers the land”?

4:04

**“free the people from the tyrannical tide”**

Why did the tunnel “free the people from the tyrannical tide”? What does this quote tell us about how the tides governed the societies and what could happen now there is a tunnel.

5:00

**“This place is a place for all”**

“This place is a place for all.” Can you give some examples of it being true and some where it isn't the case?

ACTIVITY

## Have people and nature reached an accord?

There are lots of descriptions that describe the conflict between progress and nature. Listen to Time and Tide: 12,000 years on the Gwent Levels ([livinglevels.org.uk/time-and-tide](http://livinglevels.org.uk/time-and-tide)) and pick out some quotes that describe this battle between nature and man.

- Describe when and how the water seems to be winning.
- Are there periods of time when humans conquer nature?
- When do man and nature live easily alongside each other?

Write a list of ways that man has tamed the land over the thousands of years shown.

Write a list of ways that nature has reclaimed the land.

Use the evidence that you have gathered from the animation to explain whether you think “Progress is hard” or do you agree more with the idea that “man and nature have reached accord”.

Draw a picture or diagram that illustrates the quote “But after all the Levels endures, through countless centuries, man and nature have reached accord” and shows how nature and man now live side by side.”



CURIOS QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE

# Activities



ACTIVITY

## Levels timeline

Produce a timeline from the Roman occupation to the current day. Different groups can draw the timeline on the same scale and focus on a different aspect of the levels. For example, one group might look at how the water levels have changed as man has drained the land, while another group looks at how man has used the land. Students could illustrate what the Levels would have looked like using pictures, photographs and maps contained in this resource. On completion the timelines can be stuck vertically on the wall so that students can see how the different aspects of the levels have changed. There could be a class discussion about the following questions:

- How has the way humans have used the land been determined by the land and the water?
- Why have humans tried to drain the land over time?
- Why do we continue to try to drain the land, even when it has proved difficult and sometimes failed?
- People have always wanted to live on the levels. Why do you think this is?
- Why do you want to live here?



APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE

ACTIVITY

## Effects of transport

Electrification of the railway line across the Gwent Levels has necessitated rebuilding of many of the bridges and huge visual modifications to the route with the erection of cable supports along the lines.

What has this meant for farmers, local people, businesses and wildlife?

Why does the location of the Levels result in its use for the M4, railway, Llanwern, warehouses and power lines, etc.?

CURIOUS QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE



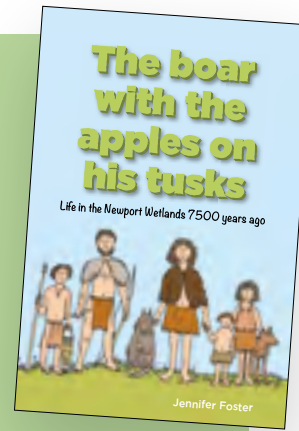
A book to read

## The Boar with Apple in his Tusks

Jennifer Foster

LIVING LEVELS LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP

This story is all about life on the Gwent Levels 7,500 years ago. To download a copy, visit the webpage for this resource.



ACTIVITY

## Why does the landscape look like this?

Ask students different questions as you read through the timeline above.

Describe what Newport was like 200 years ago. What is Newport like today? What reasons can you think of for why it changed?

How did the Romans use the land? Why did they drain and clear the land?

The land might have been drained to provide engineering experience and work to keep the legionary soldiers busy whilst barracked at Caerleon.

How did monasteries influence and change the landscape? How did they make best use of the land?



CURIOUS QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE



SECTION TWO

# Magor Marsh & Newport Wetlands

For more information on the historic drainage system visit [livinglevels.org.uk/the-historic-drainage-system](http://livinglevels.org.uk/the-historic-drainage-system)

Stunning aerial images reveal the patterns of fields from the air [livinglevels.org.uk/levels-from-the-air](http://livinglevels.org.uk/levels-from-the-air)



Magor Marsh is a haven for wildlife, close to the railway and lanes, south of Magor  
ED DREWITT



The Newport Wetlands centre provides the perfect venue for visiting schools.  
RSPB

## Newport Wetlands

Newport Wetlands is a National Nature Reserve and was developed to provide homes for wildlife as mitigation when the Cardiff Bay Barrage scheme was undertaken. It is made from lagoons dug out and flooded for wildlife.

Originally the area was a place for the adjacent power station's ash to be dumped. Fields were dug out into lagoons and fresh ash was pumped into them. At a later date these were then dug out again and the water levels re-established. Today the ash is evident along the paths and molehills! The reserve is the size of 437 rugby pitches. Much of it is reedbed, a rare habitat for a range of animals and plants including otters, reed buntings and bitterns. More open pools and grasslands are home to nesting wading birds such as lapwings, avocets and redshanks.

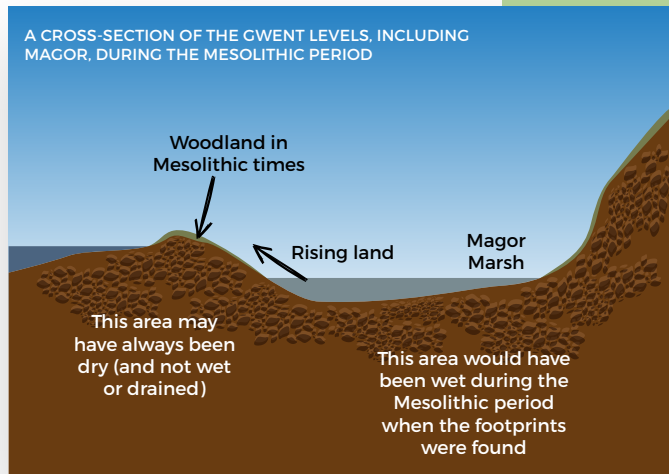
You can visit Newport Wetlands with your class to experience this important habitat and explore the wildlife; facilitated class sessions are available as well as the opportunity to explore on your own. There is a visitor centre with a classroom, toilets, cafe and shop. It is home to a wealth of wildlife; children can investigate habitats and adaptations by pond dipping or watching the many ducks, geese and swans that visit the reserve.

## Magor Marsh

Over the centuries the peaty boglands at the back of Levels were less valuable. They were peat bog/marsh before you got to the higher, drier villages such as Magor. Magor Marsh is still wet and peaty and is at the back of the marsh. The fields between it and the sea are dry and have probably always been dry. Magor Marsh remains an important and rare place for this habitat, and for both rare and common wildlife that needs such a place to live.

You can visit Magor Marsh with your class to experience this rare habitat, explore the trees and birdlife, and go pond dipping in the reens. Facilitated class sessions are available as well as the opportunity to explore on your own.

For more information on Magor Marsh and to download our Memory Treasure Map to accompany a trip there, visit [livinglevels.org.uk/magor-marsh](http://livinglevels.org.uk/magor-marsh)



For more information on Newport Wetlands and to download a Memory Treasure Map to accompany a trip there, visit [livinglevels.org.uk/newport-wetlands](http://livinglevels.org.uk/newport-wetlands)



## Spot different periods of farmland across the Gwent Levels

**The pattern of drainage can show the date when the land was drained. Which era does a certain pattern belong to?**

Across the Levels you can still see examples of the different field drainage systems used over the centuries. Modified fields are common across the Gwent Levels although not always easy to see, especially if you are driving, as they are hidden by the hedgerows. From the train between Newport, Severn Tunnel Junction and Chepstow most of the fields along the railway line show signs of low mounds and troughs that help drain the water away. If you are visiting Newport Wetlands then some can be spotted on the right side of the road as you travel along West Nash Road.

Instead of the field looking even and relatively flat, you might notice deliberate, straight lines in the fields which are regularly spaced; because they are draining the water, the soil beneath them is wetter and allows damp-loving plants, such as rushes, to grow along them, making them more visible.



Monks Ditch: an important drainage ditch, or reen, running through the Gwent Levels.  
CHRIS HARRIS

## Spotting ancient drainage patterns

While aerial photos reveal some of the patterns produced by the drainage systems, LiDAR, a special survey technique, shows these patterns of drainage ditches and creeks in more detail. The website [livinglevelsgis.org.uk](http://livinglevelsgis.org.uk) shows maps of the Gwent Levels during the 1830s. By zooming in you immediately see different patterns of fields by size, shape and arrangement.

**How to use:** If you tick the 'LiDAR' box in the 'View Map Layers' box on the left of the screen and zoom into the maps, you will see black, white and grey patterns – these are the ditches and creeks that drain the water off the fields. Under 'Set Layer Opacity', move the bar on the horizontal line for LiDAR. This will change the contrast and overlap between the patterns and the original maps.

The history of a village can often be worked out by

using historical maps and the patterns of the nearby fields.

Look at the fields near the villages of Redwick, St Brides, Whitson, Caldicot and Nash and draw out the pattern of fields. Then use the information in the table to uncover the age of the farm and drainage systems that you can see.



PATTERN OF FIELDS	WHEN FIELDS/ DRAINAGE SYSTEM WERE LAID OUT
REGULAR LONG STRIPS FORM A LINE	1500S AND 1600S
GRID PATTERN WITH RECTANGULAR FIELDS	1800S

### Look at the arrangements of the houses and discuss:

- Nucleated and dispersed settlements – how the houses in some of the villages are spread out and some have formed around a centre. Think of some reasons why this might have happened.
- The reasons why the patterns of fields and drainage developed differently over different periods of time.
- How different owners of the land treated and used land in different ways.

INTERPRETING DATA



Field system to the east of Whitson, created in the 1500s and 1600s  
LIVING LEVELS LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP

## Variations in field patterns

Roman fields and evidence of farming and some form of occupation (probably seasonal), have been found at **Rhymney, Peterstone Wentlooge, St Brides Wentlooge, Coedkernew, Nash, Goldcliff, Redwick, Magor and Caldicot** as well as elsewhere. Known Roman farms cluster along the fen edge, e.g. Caldicot, Portskewett, Matherm, Rogiet, Ifton, Bassaleg, Langstone and possibly Bishton and Llanwern.

**Whitson (picture above):** fields close to Whitson show patterns from the system used in the 1500s and 1600s. They are organised in a regular pattern with long strips of field all coming off the east side of the village in a long line. These may have come from Belgium via similar field patterns found in Pembrokeshire.

**Caldicot:** fields here are typical of the 1800s – grids of lanes with square or rectangular fields coming off them. Many fields contain undulating traces of former tidal creeks (now silted up). Enclosure of common land (see also Redwick below).

**Nash:** regular pattern of fields.

**Redwick:** unlike many places, Redwick still has some of the larger rectangular fields that were once managed by the monks. Maps from 1830s show strips of farmed land neighbouring these large fields. These strips remained because they stayed under common law where the commoners (local people working and living on the land) retained their rights – they weren't handed back to the landowners, unlike most areas when the Inclosure Acts were introduced. Villagers had what bits were left, or they already had them anyway.

To the west of Monksditch – in **Goldcliff** and **Nash parishes** – the fields are very irregular in shape, and settlement is scattered across a wide area. This landscape appears to have been created in the traditional Welsh way. In contrast, to the east of Monksditch, the landscape has a more English feel with compact villages (such as Redwick) and long narrow fields characteristic of 'open fields'.

# Where does the water on the Gwent Levels come from?

**The sea wall along the coastline of the Gwent Levels now keeps the seawater away from the farmland. So, where does all the water come from?**

Some of the water comes from winter rainfall – many fields have channels that drain the water away from them. Other places, such as Magor Marsh, naturally flood. Most of the fresh water comes from higher ground via streams and springs. During really heavy rainfall, so much water reaches the lowlands that the rivers and streams break their banks and flood into the fields.

## More detail

Water flows down through 45 rivers, streams and canals, forming a catchment area that flows from the Black Mountains to the sea. The main river, the Usk, flows 125km south-east through Brecon, Crickhowell, Abergavenny, Usk and Newport. During heavy rain and snowmelt, more water than usual flows down rivers, naturally flooding fields and marshland known as the floodplain. As the water flows downstream towards the Gwent Levels, some of it is pumped off to feed the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal and the Llandegfedd water storage reservoir, and it is also used to provide water for factories, fish farms, hydropower, watering crops or feeding animals on farms. On the Gwent Levels, a system of gates known as sluices stop too much water flowing onto the fields. The sluice gates and a sea wall running along the edge of the Gwent Levels stop very high tides from flooding the fields.

The River Usk is home to many different fish including salmon. It is a healthy river and provides internationally important places for fish such as twaite shad, lamprey, bullhead and brown trout to live. Some of these need to travel upriver to lay their eggs (spawn); some barriers stop them

## ACTIVITY



### Design a stained-glass window

Design a commemorative stained-glass window celebrating the Gwent Levels. The glass might include part of a story from this resource, or a key animal, habitat or person that makes the Levels special.

It is possible to make a simple stained-glass window using coloured boiled sweets, by crushing similar colours together. A simple frame can be created out of pastry and the boiled sweets put inside. This can then be baked to create the design. If done in hygienic conditions this can then be eaten.

WORKING CREATIVELY

## ACTIVITY

### Mapping a river



Map the route of the River Usk from where it begins in the Black Mountains to where it enters the sea at Newport.

- Which places does the river pass where water might be taken for people and farmland animals?
- Are there any obstacles along the river's length that may stop fish such as eels, salmon and twaite shad getting up to lay eggs (spawn)?

PROBLEM SOLVING

“Most of the fresh water comes from higher ground via streams and springs.”

getting very far, such as a weir at Trostrey, a weir at Brecon and bridges at Llanfoist and Crickhowell. Weirs are steep dams that change the speed of the water.

To ensure clean and healthy water for people and wildlife, the whole river catchment area is cared for in a way that helps:

- habitats be better connected and form corridors for wildlife such as otters, water voles and kingfishers;
- provide more places for wildlife to live;

- remove or control non-native and invasive species;
- clean up, stop or reduce pollution;
- remove or alter barriers so fish are better able to travel upstream to spawn.

During heavy rainfall or snowmelt, the increase in water causes the rivers to overflow into nearby fields. When the water flows over the riverbanks, friction causes it to slow down and leave behind materials such as rocks and clay. This results in the build-up of a natural wall or embankment known as a levee.

# The Gwent Levels in 1830

For more background and other examples of the 1830s maps visit [livinglevels.org.uk/mapping-the-levels](http://livinglevels.org.uk/mapping-the-levels)

This map is of Magor and its surrounding countryside in 1830. During this period, very detailed maps were drawn up by the Commissioners of Sewers of the Gwent Levels, revealing how the land was laid out and recording field boundaries, drainage and sea defences. Two books of maps were produced, one for the Caldicot Levels and one for the Wentlooge Levels. The works costs around £440 (£27,000 in 2018). These beautiful maps are now stored in the Gwent Archives. When overlain on modern Ordnance Survey maps or aerial photographs, they are remarkably similar. The colours relate to different owners of the land at the time.

Look closely at this map. How does it differ to a modern map, such as Google Maps or an Ordnance Survey map? Compare where fields and their boundaries are today; look for similarities and differences. What is present today on a modern map that is missing from the 1830s version? (for example, roads, a railway...)

IMAGE: GWENT ARCHIVES



# Answers

Age	Describe how the water covered the land	Describe how and where the people lived	Explain how the people used the land
End of last ice age, around 6000BC *	Glaciers melt flooding the land, small rivers and streams.	Wooden temporary buildings.	Hunting, gathering and fishing for wild foods.
Iron age, about 280BC *	Wet marsh lands with some higher drier areas.	Wetland settlement. Groups of wooden houses enclosed with a fence. Walkways through the marshes.	Settled on higher drier ground. Summer dwellings on the levels for grazing.
Roman occupation, around AD200AD *	Land was enclosed and partly drained to create drier grassland.	Wetland enclosure. Larger, more substantial dwellings.	Cattle and cavalry horses grazed.
Monastic life, around AD1250 *	Drained the higher land near the shoreline, then the lower-lying areas further away from the sea.	Substantial stone monastery buildings and larger wooden houses. First roads are made and developed.	Farming the drier areas.
The time of the act of sewers, around AD1500	Land drained further and a series of fields laid out. Ditches and drains created.	Progressively more permanent settlements.	Farming more areas as they are drained.
The flood, AD1607 *	Storm and a high tide caused a flood which swept 3 miles inland and rose 3m in some areas.	Stone and wooden buildings	Livestock was killed, houses destroyed, and people displaced.
Industrial revolution, AD1800s	Roads, fields, towns and villages develop.	Railway and factories arrive. Tunnel made under the Severn. Bridges made across local rivers.	Farming. Industry develops.
Modern day	Land is drained and mostly dry.	Populated with houses and industry.	Industry leisure activities road and rail.