The first structures of this complex burial monument were built about 6,500 years ago. It is one of the earliest monuments in Europe. The site was discovered in 1977 when the furze (gorse) died back after a very dry summer. Les Fouaillages means ‘furze break’ in Guernsey French. The site was excavated for the then States of Guernsey Ancient Monuments Committee between 1979 and 1981.

**The Earliest Monument 6,500 years ago**

The monument as it is seen today is much as it would have appeared in 4,500 BC. Four separate stone structures were used for burial and served as special places in an elaborate Neolithic ritual concerning death, burial and the afterlife.

These structures were covered by stacked turves and an impressive stone surround. The small chamber with an entrance through the stone façade seems to have been secondary to the central open chamber bounded by two massive slabs. No human bone was recovered but within this central chamber two complete decorated pots (now crushed) were placed as grave offerings. Post holes were also found indicating a timber structure associated with the chamber.

To the west of the central chamber was a cairn which is no longer visible. This rectangular cairn covered a small cist with a shouldered marker slab at its eastern end. This has been left visible. Further west was a stone platform on which lay sherds of a decorated pot and part of a stone bracelet.

**A New Phase 5,500 years ago**

Around 3500 BC the site entered a new phase. A large boulder foundation was laid over the first mound and a timber structure was built on top. Two sockets for large wooden posts marked out the burial area. After some time the area was redefined by a rectangular boulder enclosure.

**The Final Monument 4,000 years ago**

Later in the Iron Age period there is some evidence that the mound was used as a field boundary and during medieval times the whole area was covered by wind-blown sand which created the heathland of the common today.

Over 35,000 finds were made during the excavations on the long mound. Material from the site is on display at the Guernsey Museum and Art Gallery.