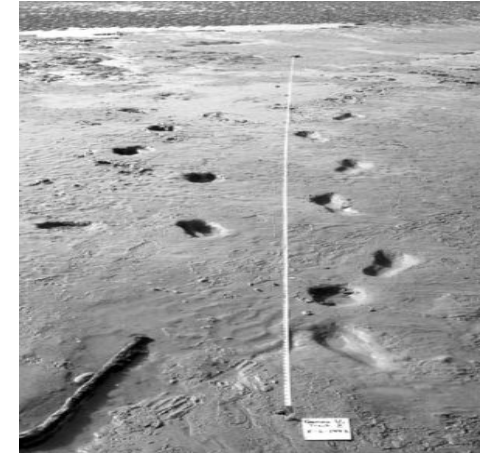
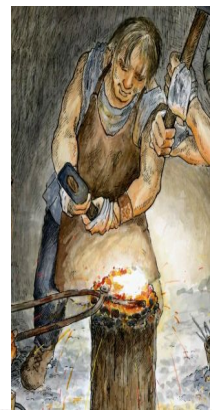
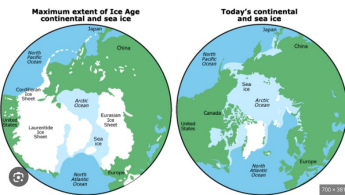




# Prehistoric Footprints Formby



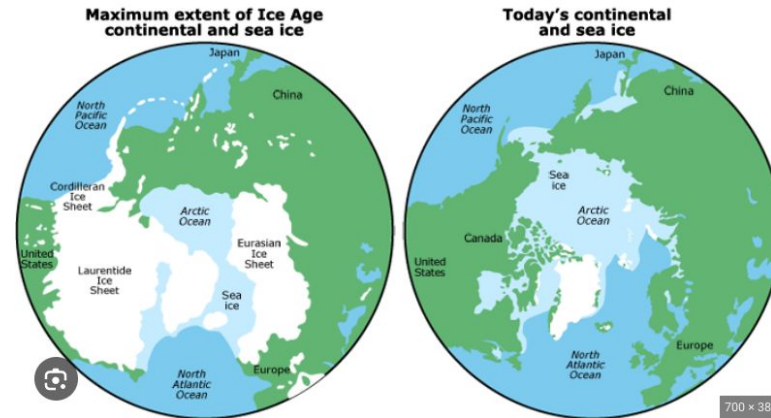


<p><b>Ice Age Ends</b></p> <p>Beginning of the Mesolithic Age in Britain (Hunter-gatherer)</p>	<p>Sandbar forms and reed beds grow</p> <p>House structures on the River Alt at Lunt</p>	<p>First footprints form in the sediment</p>	<p>Beginning of the Neolithic Age in Britain (Farming)</p> <p>3,000 - 2,400 BC Stonehenge</p> <p>Formation of footprints on the beach ends at the beginning of the Bronze Age</p>	<p>Beginning of the Iron Age</p>						
10,000 BC	9,000 BC	8,000 BC	7,000 BC	6,000 BC	5,000 BC	4,000 BC	3,000 BC	2,000 BC	1,000 BC	0 BC



# The creation of Formby Coastline

Around 9500 BC, Britain went through its on climate change going from cold to warm. The ice sheets that covered the northern part of Britain melted. As the ice melted it led to a rapid rise in sea levels. The melted ice immersed areas of land and led to the creation of the Irish sea. Formby was originally inland, but it now had its own coastline and with that came benefits and it was changed forever.





<https://www.science.org/content/article/watch-ice-sheet-melt-and-great-britain-and-ireland-emerge>

# How Formby changed...

Rich minerals from the streams and rivers landed at the coastline and created a salt-marsh environment. Vast beds of reeds grew in the mud and woodlands began to appear. The lush coastline environment attracted animals and birds to graze. As more animals began to make home in this rich environment, humans found the area attractive given them food, water and shelter. They would forage for seafood, birds, eggs and wild plants. They hunted red deer, roe deer, wild boar and the occasional aurochs. They also use animal hides to make clothing.



# The formation of the prints




For the prints to be preserved for thousands of years, they would have been made in perfect conditions. That would be when the weather was very warm and the water level was low enough to enable the reed beds to dry in the sun, to the extent that the mud hardened, capturing the impressions of the life moving through them.

This means that they were formed during late spring, summer and early autumn.

As the impressions were made , sand was blown into the cavities left by the footprints, filling the hardened impression.

All the evidence suggests that the prints were formed between 5,400 BC and 2,300 BC.



Footprints in the sand	Footprints	A Picture of who they belong to?	Added Information
			
			
			



## FOOTPRINTS MOST COMMONLY FOUND AT FORMY POINT

**Humans**  
**Print Size**  
 Adult males: 22-31cm, 4-13 UK shoe size, 9" - 10"  
 estimated height  
 Adult females and adolescents: 18-25cm, 1-7 UK shoe size, 8" - 9" estimated height  
 toddlers and children: 5-16cm, 0cm - 1 child's UK shoe size 1-16cm = child's size 9, 12" - 23" estimated height

The people of the ancestral moorby had built more houses, gathered, danced to the area by the openness of the environment and its rich food supply. The rock-boat enabled groups to forage for food such as eggs, shellfish, seaweed, weeds and fish in the shallow water. Hunting for red deer, a very important resource at the time, may also have taken place in several areas of red deer and human prints have been found appearing to run together.

The footprints of men, women and children can be found in the mud along the whole length of the beach. Some prints ran parallel to the sea and probably indicate that people walked between communication. Others, such as those seen at Crayke Wood Path, suggest people moving from their excavation further inland onto the sub-marine.

**Aurochs**  
**Print Size**  
 Prehistoric range: 22-26cm  
 Modern Average: None Extinct

A very large type of wild ox, the aurochs was approximately 6 feet high at the shoulder and 11 feet long, with large, downward-pointing horns. It would have been a creature right to the hilt on the beach if encountered unexpectedly. Aurochs prints can be found in the southern area of the beach, usually at Lifeboat Road and Blundell Path.

**Red Deer**  
**Print Size**  
 Prehistoric range: 16-16cm  
 Modern Average: 1cm

There are more red deer prints on the beach than those of any other animal. They can be found along the whole beach but most can be seen in the mud between Lifeboat Road and Victoria Road. These red deer were much larger than the breed living today.

**DID YOU KNOW...**  
 that the Red Deer living at about 9,000 BC were a third again the size of our present Red Deer?

**Roe Deer**  
**Print Size**  
 Prehistoric range: 4-5cm  
 Modern Average: 6-5cm

Roe deer frequently graze in the marshes, probably with the red deer at dawn and dusk. Their prints can be found with red deer and look similar, but they are much smaller and rounded at the back, with a distinctiveness of the hoof at the front.

**Wild Bear**  
**Print Size**  
 Prehistoric range: 8cm  
 Modern Average: Variable

The prints of the wild bear are seldom spotted, but have been seen recently at Blundell Path. The wild bear would have eaten shoots of the reeds and would have enjoyed shooting about in the mud.

**Dysenterycatcher**  
**Print Size**  
 Prehistoric range: 4-7cm  
 Modern Average: 6 cm

Flocks of seabirds came to the reed beds to shelter, feed and breed. Dysenterycatchers were one of the most common birds along the coast. Their footprints can often be found in the mud.

**Crane**  
**Print Size**  
 Prehistoric range: 15cm  
 Modern Average: 15cm

Crane are no longer found in the north of England, but during prehistoric times were commonly found in coastal regions. They would have roosted at the edge of the wetland.

**Dog/Wolf**  
**Print Size**  
 Prehistoric range: 8cm  
 Modern Average: Variable

The prints of the wolf and dog are so similar that they would probably have looked the same on the mud. They are rarely spotted and are difficult to distinguish from prints left by modern dogs on the beach.

A portion of a Neolithic dog was discovered some 2000 years ago. Its dating, along with that of a set of red deer antlers, helped in establishing the age of the prints. Dogs were domesticated at this time and would have associated with the humans on the beach.

## Activity 1:

Look at the footprints in the sand.

Cut out the correct footprint and match it to the one in the sand.

Using the fact sheet, see who they belong to and information about them.

# Matching up the footprints

## FOOTPRINTS MOST COMMONLY FOUND AT FORMBY POINT



### Humans Print Size

Adult males: 22-31cm, 4-13 UK shoe size, 5'6"-6'2" estimated height

Adult females and adolescents: 18-25cm, 1-7 UK shoe size, 4'8"-5'9" estimated height  
Toddlers and children: 5-16cm, 9cm = child's UK shoe size 1, 16cm = child's size 9, 1'2" -3'8" estimated height

The people of the intertidal marshy reed-beds were hunter-gatherers, drawn to the area by the openness of the environment and its rich food supply. The reed-beds enabled groups to forage for food such as eggs, shellfish, seaweed, seeds and fish in the shallow water. Hunting for red deer, a very important resource at the time, may also have taken place as several sets of red deer and human prints have been found appearing to run together.

The footprints of men, women and children can be found in the mud along the whole length of the beach. Some prints run parallel to the sea and probably indicate that people walked between communities. Others, such as those seen at Gypsy Wood Path, suggest people moving from their encampment further inland onto the salt-marshes.



### Aurochs Print Size

Prehistoric range: 22-28cm  
Modern Average: Now Extinct

A very large type of wild ox, the aurochs was approximately 6 feet high at the shoulder and 11 feet long, with large, forward-pointing horns. It would have been a fearsome sight to the humans on the beach if encountered unexpectedly! Aurochs prints can be found on the southern areas of the beach, usually at Lifeboat Road and Blundell Path.



### Red Deer Print Size

Prehistoric range: 10-15cm  
Modern Average: 9cm

There are more red deer prints on the beach than those of any other animal. They can be found along the whole beach, but most can be seen in the mud between Lifeboat Road and Victoria Road. These red deer were much larger than the breed living today.



**DID YOU KNOW...**  
that the Red Deer living at about 5,000 BC were a third again the size of our present Red Deer?



### Roe Deer Print Size

Prehistoric range: 4-5cm  
Modern Average: 4-5cm

Roe deer frequently grazed in the marshes, probably with the red deer at dawn and dusk. Their prints can be found with red deer and look similar, but they are much smaller and rounded at the back, with a division of the hoof at the front.



### Wild Boar Print Size

Prehistoric range: 8cm  
Modern Average: Variable

The prints of the wild boar are seldom spotted, but have been seen recently at Blundell Path. The wild boar would have eaten shoots of the reeds and would have enjoyed rooting about in the mud.



### Oystercatcher Print Size

Prehistoric range: 4-7cm  
Modern Average: 6 cm

Flocks of seabirds came to the reed-beds to shelter, feed and breed. Oystercatchers were one of the most common birds along the coast. Their footprints can often be found in the mud.



### Crane Print Size

Prehistoric range: 15cm  
Modern Average: 15cm

Cranes are no longer found in the north of England, but during prehistoric times were commonly found in coastal regions. They would have nested at the edge of the wetland.



### Dog/Wolf Print Size

Prehistoric range: 8cm  
Modern Average: Variable

The prints of the wolf and dog are so similar that they would probably have looked the same in the mud. They are rarely spotted and are difficult to distinguish from prints left by modern dogs on the beach.

A jawbone of a Neolithic dog was discovered some years ago. Its dating, along with that of a set of red deer antlers, helped to establish the age of the prints. Dogs were domesticated at this time and would have associated with the humans on the beach.



# Significance of the Formby Footprints

- The footprints are still around today and attracts lots of tourists
- Gives us an idea of what life was like at that time
- Allows us to see what animals were living in Formby around that time period.
- From knowing what was living here at that time, allows us to build a picture of the habitat that was here.

# Activity 2:



Formby Schools Local History Project	
Event	Prehistoric Footprints
What do we know about the footprints? 5 Key Points	
What happened to Formby to have a coastline?	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
How did Formby's environment change?	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Who and what lived in Formby at this time?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> </ul>
When were the footprints first created?	<hr/>
What seasons would they most likely have been created?	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Why are they significant today?	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

## Vocabulary Bank

Irish Sea      Humans      climate change      Wolves      coastline

Red Deer      Vast beds of reeds      cold to warm      mud      Roe Deer

woodlands      melted      ice      tourism      environment

between 5,400 BC and 2,300 BC