

**The Stone Age Park**  
**European Heritage Volunteers**  
**English translation**

The Stone Age park Dithmarschen in Albersdorf is a landscape-integrated archaeological open-air museum. It has been designed and developed since 1997 on an over 40 hectare-sized landscape containing nine original archeological sites, based on an image of Neolithic cultural landscapes. The stone age park Dithmarschen includes the museum of archeology and ecology which holds original artefacts as well as a model of a reconstructed stone age settlement dating from the early to the late Neolithic period. The Stone Age Park Dithmarschen serves for the mediation of scientific archaeological results.

Nonetheless, the connection between the natural-households and landscape development driven by the increase of the population is emphasized and be used for the protection of natural and cultural goods.

The theory and practice, as well as the awareness and feeling of the integrated approach of interpretation are thought with the main purpose of making sure that the knowledge gained about the past aids the understanding of the presence and – in result – develops in the visitor an interest in a deep-reaching engagement in the reconstructed content.

Stone Age Park Dithmarschen works as a certified educational institute, for a sustainable ecological, cultural and financial development of the region Albersdorf.

With the support of a scientific committee, an experience-oriented, educational concept was developed for the expansion of the outdoor park area. The project was developed with the support of the regional government Schleswig-Holstein (from the EU-funded program “Zukunfts program Wirtschaft”), the metropolitan region of Hamburg (Foerderfonds Nord), and the “Bingo environment Lottery”, and was realized in 2012.

Two new stone age houses, built in original dimensions based on excavations discoveries in Schçeswig-Holstein, were erected in cooperation with the Archaeological State Office of Schleswig-Holstein. The results included a ritual-house, an area dedicated to “sacrifices” with a boardwalk, and a wooden platform next to a newly created pond compound. The park compound also has an erosion simulation where the probable phenomena of loss of fertile soil of the Neolithic period and the Medieval period can be seen.

New additions to the park include info-pavilions in the forest, an audio guide system for the entire park grounds, the reconstructions of various large stone grave formations, and a reconstructed bronze age burial mound.

A shortcut was created for the visitors leading from the service building at the parking lot to the stone age village. This path leads visitors chronologically in a curved fashion along reconstructed structures. In 2014, a mid-Neolithic dwelling was reconstructed of the “last hunter and gatherers” of northern Germany from around 5000 BC.

Alongside these building projects, which are part of a bigger framework of knowledge and content development as well as tourist attraction, the park regularly supports geological and archaeological research projects. Part of these research projects is for example the historical countryside research of the Institute of Ecosystem Research of the University of Kiel, pollen analysis, and excavations of megalithic graves in the region and of groundworks from the Funnel-Beaker time at the Dieksnou near Albersdorf. The latter is in cooperation with the institute for Pre-and Protohistory of the University of Kiel and is part of the framework of the multilayer project called “Early monumentality”.

The results of the research done in Gieselautals, which is located in the south of Albersdorf, had important new discoveries. In one of the studied areas, an early (late-Mesolithic) phase of a soil erosion was recorded, that occurred around 4700 BC. This area is now secured through multiple C14 data. A possible connection with the first use of agriculture is being discussed.

In one study area of the mid-Neolithic time in the 4<sup>th</sup> Century BC, there is the possible discovery of a “rotational landscape-use”, that shows a rather remarkable small-scale variability in methods and intensity.

The data provided will be used for the landscape development of the Stone Age Park as it was used in the Middle Neolithic times. Furthermore, the areas of the park are available for regular archeological experimental questioning. Some examples include the project in the frame of “house trials” in cooperation with the Institute of Archeology of Hamburg University (2004), and the “fire safety” trials in the forest area (2007).

The construction of an exhibition and educational center at the entrance area of the park is being planned as a mid-term goal. This so called “Stone age house” will eventually replace the current permanent exhibition which is 2 km away from the entrance area in rented museum rooms.

The Stone Age Park is accessible throughout the whole year free of charge (with parking fee). You can visit the Stone Age village from the end of March until the end of October, from Tuesday to Sunday, 11am to 5pm.

On Sundays and holidays join-in activities and presentations are offered  
For further information visit [www.steinzeitpark-dithmarschen.de](http://www.steinzeitpark-dithmarschen.de)