

Time Team returns to Orkney to reveal groundbreaking new discoveries at the Ness of Brodgar

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Time Team, the world's most recognisable archaeological investigation series, has reunited with the Ness of Brodgar research team to unveil a remarkable new chapter in the story of one of Europe's most important Neolithic sites.

During summer 2024, Time Team filmed the final season of excavation at the Ness of Brodgar - a vast complex of monumental Neolithic buildings set between the iconic Stones of Stenness and the Ring of Brodgar in Mainland, Orkney. The trenches have now been backfilled, but the investigation did not stop there. In partnership with the Ness team, Time Team carried out a final phase of cutting-edge geophysical survey across the entire site.

For Time Team's **Dr John Gater**, it was "like coming home". Over 20 years ago, his early geophysical work was key to identifying the astonishing settlement that would later captivate the world as the Ness of Brodgar.

This time, the results of the Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) survey, carried out in collaboration with Guideline Geo and SUMO GeoSurveys, surpassed even the team's highest hopes.

A major new discovery — "We weren't expecting that"

"The survey has revealed the positions of multiple previously unknown Neolithic buildings - some of them monumental in scale - expanding the known footprint of the complex and offering a deeper understanding of its development over five thousand years ago.

But one discovery stood apart.

When Time Team shared the geophysics with the Ness project directors - **Nick Card**, **Professor Mark Edmonds**, and **Anne Mitchell** - their reaction said everything.

"We weren't expecting that," said Director Nick Card.

"The new buildings are fascinating," added Anne Mitchell, "but there's one feature unlike anything we've seen so far."

"Oh dear," laughed Mark Edmonds. "Perhaps I shouldn't have buried my trowel on site."

The findings have raised the possibility that - even after two decades of excavation - the Ness still holds secrets that require a final, targeted look.

Time Team will join the Ness team in summer 2026 for one more excavation season, culminating in a Time Team special to be broadcast later in 2026.

A partnership two decades in the making

The relationship with Orkney is long-standing, stretching back to A Viking boat burial on Sanday in 1998, the enigmatic Iron Age site at Mine Howe in 2000 and more recently at Swandro on Rousay in 2025. The Ness of Brodgar has been a defining project for modern archaeology, drawing international attention and reshaping our understanding of Neolithic Britain.

Tim Taylor, Creator and Executive Producer of Time Team, said:

"We've been privileged to follow the Ness story for over 20 years. To return now - at the end of its excavation phase - and to contribute new discoveries of this scale is extraordinary. The Ness continues to surprise us all."

Time Team's recent renaissance, driven by one of the world's largest global online audiences for archaeology, has enabled the team to reconnect with sites of exceptional importance. Their expansion of

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the classic three-day format into long-form documentaries - including recent work at Sutton Hoo and major projects across the UK - has brought a new level of depth, analysis, and public engagement to their investigations.

A site of global significance

The Ness of Brodgar lies within the **Heart of Neolithic Orkney World Heritage Site**, among the most significant prehistoric landscapes in Europe. Tens of thousands of visitors travel to Orkney each summer to witness the excavations before they closed in 2024.

Time Team's new documentary will share this final chapter - with expert insights, reconstructed models, geophysics visualisations, and exclusive interviews with the Ness of Brodgar team.

What's next

Time Team's films will explore:

- the final season of excavation at the Ness
- the emotional close of two decades of fieldwork
- the new geophysical discoveries
- what they reveal about life, ritual, and architecture 5,000 years ago
- the new month long excavation in 2026

This will be one of the most significant Neolithic investigations Time Team has ever released.

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