

Preseli stone circle suffers damage following 'ritual'

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POLICE are appealing for information after a ritual caused damage at a Pembrokeshire stone circle.

What was performed at the bleak site, in the shadows of the Preseli hills, full of portent and memories of aeons past, remains unknown.

The ritual, believed to have taken place between important pagan dates Beltane and the summer solstice, caused fire damage at the Gors Fawr stone circle near Mynachlog-ddu.

Dyfed-Powys Police's rural crime team is actively patrolling at the stone circle following the damage, which is being treated as arson and a heritage crime.

The team is working in partnership with Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority (PCNPA) rangers. It is believed the damage



Gors Fawr. PICTURE: Dyfed Powys Police Rural Crime Team.

would have been caused some time between Beltane – a festival where bonfires are burned – on May 1, and summer solstice – when fires are lit on mountains – on June 21. Police are concerned that an important ongoing time in the pagan calendar this month may lead to further damage.

With Lammastide – the halfway point between the summer solstice and autumn equinox – falling this month,

officers are patrolling at Gors Fawr, along with other ritual sites to prevent further damage being caused.

Signs have also been placed at the gate to the site to deter further fires being burned in the area.

A Dyfed-Powys police spokeswoman said: "We are urging people to remember that heritage crime can have an incalculable cost, particularly in rural communities.

"With the long spell of dry weather we have had, there is the potential that bonfires could spread easily and cause severe damage to the area and the wildlife living in it.

"We will be patrolling known ritual sites over dates we suspect there could be activity to deter further fires being lit and further damage being caused."

The exact nature of the enigmatic Neolithic or early

Bronze Age stones at Gors Fawr is not fully known, but there is speculation it was a ceremonial site, marking the route taken by people transporting bluestones to Stonehenge.

One of the outlying stones is known locally as the 'dreaming stone'.

Anyone with information that could assist police in their investigation is urged to call 101.