

What do we know about the lives of those who walked on these islands before recorded history began? How much can we know? In this book Alice Roberts uses seven burial sites as a focus for considering both the strengths and limitations of archaeology and related sciences to obtain some understanding of the lives of some of our ancestors during periods of time ranging from the old stone age to the iron age.

Most of our group reacted positively, helped by the engaging style of writing adopted by Roberts. She is always willing to share personal insights and, although an enthusiast of these scientific developments, never loses sight of how we cannot help but view the past through the lens of our own present-day culture.

Some found the detailed accounts of the scientific developments demanding ("it felt like homework") while others adopted a more pragmatic approach and skimmed over these parts.

The burial sites serve as a focus to various topics and the group would have liked to have seen some more external structure imposed on the text, especially when Roberts meanders her way, always entertainingly, through related topics.

Overall, despite these caveats, a book to recommend.