

## **Newgrange Farm Excavations**

**Name:** Geraldine Stout

**Amount Awarded:** €6500

In 2015, Joanna Leigh conducted a geophysical survey in the field immediately south of Newgrange Passage Tomb. Detailed gradiometer and resistance surveys clearly identified a substantial site consisting of parallel rows of pits and linear ditches. This structure terminates in a clearly defined and elaborate entranceway. A trial excavation of this site took place in July 2018.

The 2m by 25m trench revealed that the pits and ditches identified in the geophysical survey were present. The largest of the pits measured 4.30m in diameter and 1.80m deep. It had charcoal and animal bone in its upper fill. Charred cattle bone, burnt stones and evidence for intense burning were found at the base of this pit. The ditches were found not to be continuous but segmented; a linear feature created by digging a series of oval pits. These were filled with very compact clay. Some worked flint was found in the fill of the pits, but no pottery. The date of this site and its function was confirmed by a radio-carbon date from the basal fill of the outer most 'ditch'. The site was a cursus (ceremonial routeway) in use during the Late Neolithic period between 2632BC and 2472BC.