

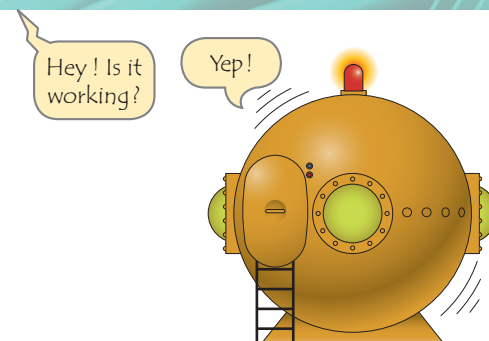
## 4.1 Your place ... 20 000 years ago!

Find out what your place was like, and why, 20 000 years ago!

### It's time to travel

Climb into your time machine. Press the button. And whoosh!  
Travel back in time, to see your place ... as it was 20 000 years ago.

What will you find? It depends on where in the UK you live!



If you live in the white area on the map below, you'll find a thick sheet of ice, when you arrive. There are no humans or other animals. No grass. No trees. It's bitterly cold.



If you live in the grey area, there's no ice sheet. But it has been snowing, and it's very cold. There are no humans – but you may see woolly mammoths, and bison!

### Why was it like that?

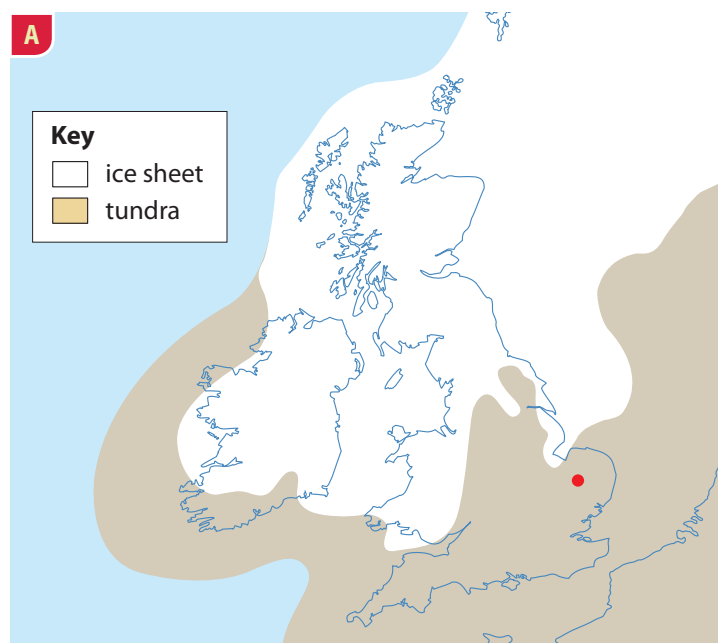
Why was your place like that, 20 000 years ago?

Because around 110 000 years ago, Earth got colder and colder. A new **ice age** began. (There had been many others before it!)

Over time, an ice sheet spread over much of northern Europe, and most of the British Isles. Look at the map and key.

It did not reach the grey areas. But these were still very cold. The ground was frozen deep down. The surface thawed only in summer, giving thin boggy soil. Then small plants grew. This type of environment is called **tundra**.

About 10 000 years ago, Earth warmed up again. The ice age ended. The ice over the British Isles melted away.



### There was more land then!

During the ice age, water levels in the ocean were much lower than today. (Up to 120m lower.) That's because so much water was locked up in ice. The water drained away from shallow parts of the ocean floor. They became land.

Look at map B. It shows that when water levels were low, the British Isles were joined to the rest of Europe!

### What about people?

20 000 years ago, there was nobody in the British Isles.

We had turned up earlier in the ice age – 40 000 years ago. We had walked here from other parts of Europe. But as the ice sheet spread, it got too cold for us, so we left.

Then about 12 000 years ago, when the ice sheet was shrinking, we came back to the British Isles again.

### The animals

But there *were* animals here, 20 000 years ago. There were woolly mammoths and bison and Arctic foxes, which could survive the tundra winter.

And in summer, when plants grew in the tundra, large herds of reindeer and antelope arrived from other parts of Europe, to feed.

### When the ice age ended

As Earth warmed up again, the ice melted. The water levels rose again, and cut us off from the rest of Europe.

But the ice had changed the landscape – and we can still see the results today. You'll find out more on later pages.

► Mammoth tusks found in a quarry in Norfolk (at the red dot, on map A).



### Your turn

- 1 What is: **a** an ice age? **b** tundra? (Try the glossary?)
- 2 How long did the last ice age last? And when did it end?
- 3 **a** Look at map **B**. It shows that the British Isles were joined to the rest of Europe, in the last ice age. Why was this?  
**b** Then they separated from the rest of Europe again. Why?  
**c** Suppose they had not separated. How would your life be different today?
- 4 Get ready! You'll travel back 20 000 years, in your home place – and stay for three days. You can take only 20 items.  
**a** First, pick out where you live, on map **A**. Is it in the white part or the grey part? (The map on page 139 may help.)  
**b** Now write a list of what you will take with you. Beside each item, explain why you will take it.  
**c** Good. You've arrived! What's it like there? Write a blog for us!