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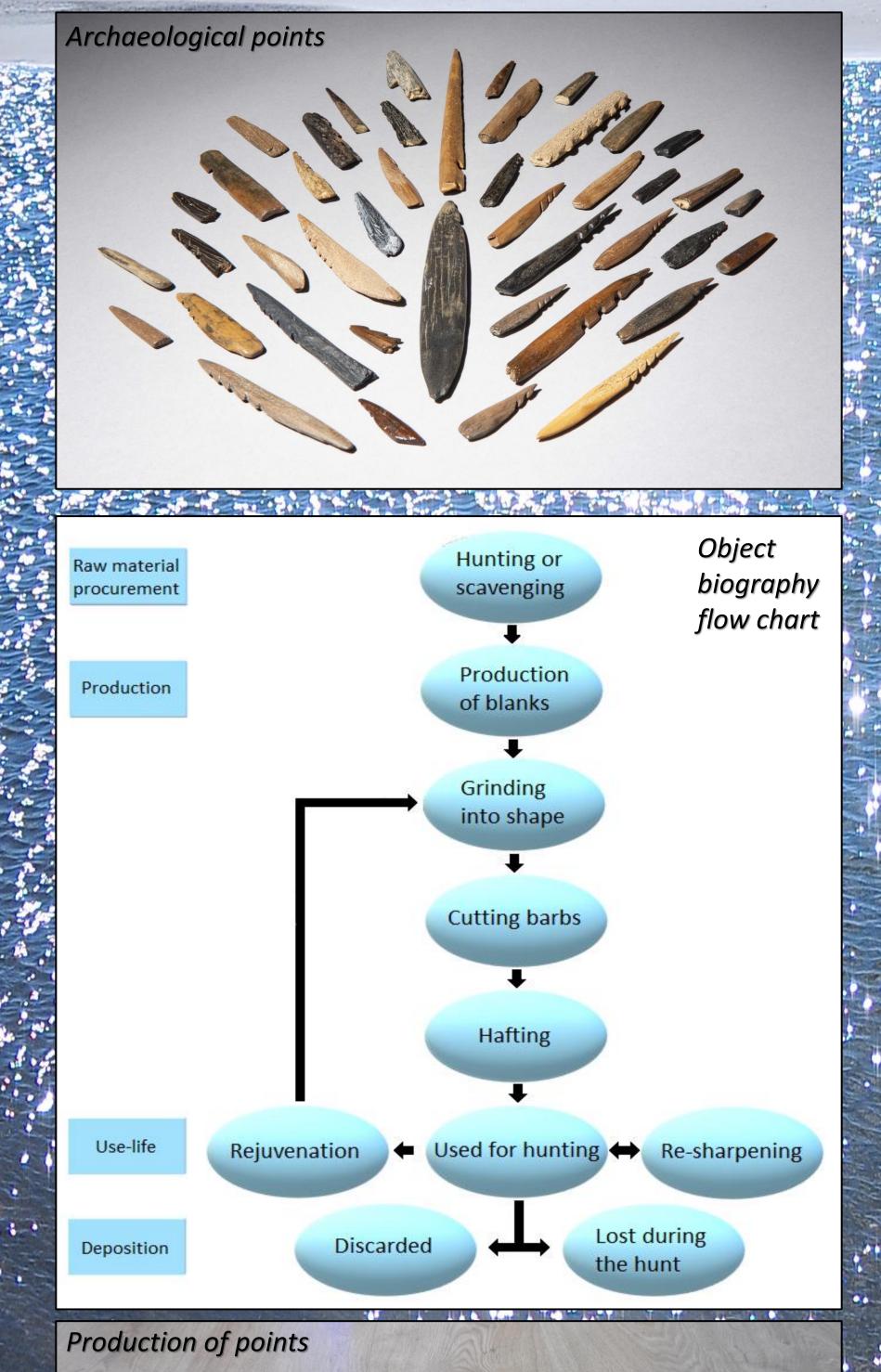


## Diving into the life of a Mesolithic archer Use-wear analysis and experimental archaeology on Doggerland bone and antler points

Merel Spithoven

## Introduction

Mesolithic points are the largest category of bone and antler artefacts from Doggerland (N>1000)(Amkreutz & Spithoven 2019). Isotope research shows that the Mesolithic inhabitants of Doggerland shifted their dietary focus from more terrestrial to more marine resources (Van der Plicht et al. 2016). Given the simultaneous emergence of a large numbers of points, these may reflect a reaction to the changing landscape. Most sampled points are made of red deer, some of human bone (Dekker et al. 2021). This research is part of my PhD project about human-red deer relationships in postglacial Doggerland. The overarching NWO project is called Resurfacing Doggerland.



# Experimental archaeology

A representative reference collection is essential to interpret wear. Various experiments are being conducted:
Quiver experiment
Archery experiment
Taphonomic experiment
Experimental points are made of metapodia and antler from red deer. Flint blades and flakes are used to cut barbs into points. Arrows are shot with a wooden bow. Three different quivers are used:

## **Research design**

I am reconstructing the behaviour of hunter-gatherers by use-wear analysis on these points. What makes the points unique is their relatively short length and intensity of (re-)use (Spithoven 2018). Impact scars and reworked barbs are evidence of the latter. The following aspects will be investigated:

- Binding of points to shafts
- Development of use-wear by carrying arrows in a quiver
- Development of use-wear during use as arrowheads
- Taphonomical processes

- Fallow deer skin hairs on the inside
- Fallow deer skin hairs on the outside
- Birch bark.

2.

3.

## **Expected results**

- Explanation of use-wear on
  archaeological points caused by
  shooting and/or carrying in quiver
  Proving that smaller points are more
  likely arrowheads than larger points
- Broad reference collection

Experimental point



### References

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(Background photo of Maasvlakte 2 by Portpictures. Photos of archaeological points by National Museum of Antiquities)

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