

WHV – BE Silex

Neolithic Flint Mines at Spiennes (Mons), Belgium

◆ Cultural property inscribed on the
World Heritage List since 2000

15/08/2016 - 02/09/2016



The Neolithic flint mines at Spiennes, covering more than 100 hectares, are the largest and earliest concentration of ancient mines in Europe. They are also remarkable for the diversity of technological solutions used for extraction and for the fact that they are directly linked to a settlement of the same period. The men who started to dig mines in Spiennes, some 6,000 years ago, are among the oldest miners in the world. They had just discovered a profuse deposit of quality, which was to be exploited for more than 1800 years.

Project objectives: The project will mainly focus on promoting the site and putting emphasis its preservation by carrying out pedagogic activities about the site. The project also aims at raising awareness among volunteers and local population about the importance of their involvement in the preservation of the site.

Project activities: The volunteers will participate in practical and educational activities such as archaeological excavations in the mines, post-excavation operations in the research laboratory, and restoration of the site by weeding. They will participate in all stages of the ongoing excavations as well as in the processing of the artefacts. The volunteers will also learn archaeological methods and techniques and take part in the scientific study, conference, and workshop.

Partners: Société de Recherche préhistorique en Hainaut, Service Public de Wallonie, City of Mons, and Hainaut Province