Life in the British Iron Age: Ellie’s Historical Guide

Step back in time with Ellie the Elephant to discover how our ancestors lived, fought, and thrived in Iron Age Britain!

- **The Iron Age began when people discovered how to smelt iron ore to make stronger tools and weapons, replacing the softer bronze used in the previous era.**
- **Many people lived in circular wooden houses called roundhouses, which featured wattle-and-daub walls and thatched conical roofs to keep the interior warm.**
- **Communities often built massive hillforts on high ground, using earthworks and ditches to protect their homes and livestock from rival tribes.**
- **Society was organized into tribes led by chieftains, who held power and status, sometimes burying their leaders with rich treasures in elaborate graves.**
- **Towards the end of the Iron Age, tribes began to mint their own gold and silver coins, suggesting a sophisticated system of trade across Britain and with Europe.**

> *Did you know? Did you know? Iron Age people were highly skilled craftspeople! They didn't just use iron for weapons; they created beautiful, intricate jewellery and decorative patterns on bronze mirrors and shields using a style known as La Tène art.*

Key vocabulary: Hillfort · Roundhouse · Celts · Iron smelting · Tribes · Currency · Hilltop settlement