

2010



ALGAO:Scotland
news

*The newsletter of the
Association of Local Government
Archaeological Officers:Scotland*

Welcome

Welcome to the third annual newsletter of ALGAO:Scotland, the association for archaeologists working for, or on behalf of, local government in Scotland. Our members carry out a wide range of tasks, from working with planning officers, to community interpretation and outreach projects, to research and conservation.

ALGAO:Scotland news is an annual review highlighting the activities of members through the year: in this edition the theme is developer funded archaeological work.

Developer Funded Archaeological Works

ALGAO:Scotland represents Scottish Local Authority and National Park archaeological services and is part of the UK-wide organisation ALGAO:UK (www.algao.org.uk). Membership of ALGAO is open to the senior professional archaeologist employed directly within the authority, or in some cases by independent joint services or Trusts on behalf of the authority, whose primary responsibility is to advise, principally through the planning process, on conservation and management of the archaeological resource. ALGAO:Scotland members have a crucial role in protecting and managing archaeological resources which may be threatened by proposed development.

The national policy, supported by local development plan policy, is to preserve archaeological resources *in situ* as far as possible. This however is not always possible, whilst allowing a desirable development to go ahead, so in some cases archaeological excavation or historic building recording takes place instead, so that a full record is made of the resource before development commences. Developers fund the full costs of excavation and/or historic building recording, including post-excavation analysis and publication of results. The excavation or historic building recording work is normally undertaken by commercial archaeological contractors working for the developer, but ALGAO:Scotland members have an important role in specifying the level and standard of work which is to be carried out.

Statistics gathered by ALGAO:Scotland indicate that in 2007-08 about 11% of all planning applications for development in Scotland were identified as possibly raising archaeological or historic building issues. Following further investigation and advice by ALGAO:Scotland members on each of the planning applications, a final 2.85% of planning applications in 2007-08 resulted in the need for archaeological excavation and/or historic building recording, either in advance of determination of the planning application, or in response to conditions attached to planning consent for development. This statistic demonstrates that developer funding of archaeological excavation or historic building recording work is not a large burden for developers in Scotland, but the value of the archaeological or recording work is very high as the following articles demonstrate.

The articles in the 2010 newsletter provide examples of how ALGAO: Scotland members respond to development proposals; details of some of the development funded excavations which have taken place; and the significance of the results of those excavations.

Developer Funded Archaeology in NE Scotland: Aberdeenshire, Moray & Angus



Over the last three years Aberdeenshire Council has introduced Major Planning Application meetings once a month, at which developers can arrange to discuss their proposals and speak to consultees on all issues. This speeds up the process of the application itself when submitted and leaves no surprises for the applicant. They know what they have to do in terms of mitigation. Most developers appear to have welcomed this process and enjoy the chance to meet consultees face to face. In the case of archaeology it has helped us to give the developer a bigger picture and a better understanding of why sometimes we ask for evaluations and at other times a watching brief.

A considerable number of recent development applications have involved new quarries or quarry extensions, wind farms and housing developments on which Conditions of evaluations have been placed. The majority produced evidence of archaeological features of varying dates and extended our knowledge of the Neolithic in particular. At Powmyre Quarry near Kirriemuir in Angus a variety of features were recorded, including long cists, a pit-circle and a number of pits, some of which contained Grooved ware. Another quarry at Stoneyhill, Aberdeenshire produced local variants of both Impressed ware and Unstan ware, as well as an important and valuable lithic assemblage. A watching brief during ground preparation for a wind farm at Tullo Hill in Aberdeenshire recorded a group of small pits, one of which again contained Neolithic pottery. An evaluation at Midmill industrial development at Kintore, near a long cairn, produced evidence of prehistoric cultivation, as well as a large central pit surrounded by a ring of smaller pits. Again Neolithic pottery was recorded along with Bronze Age pottery and flints.

Developer funded evaluations have made an important and valuable contribution to the corpus of Neolithic and Early Bronze Age pottery in NE Scotland.



Powmyre, Angus.

Moira Greig
Archaeologist, Aberdeenshire Archaeology Service

Wind Farm Developments in the Borders

Scottish Borders Councils Archaeology Service works within the Planning Department and is consulted widely on a variety of developer funded activities. Whether for house extensions or wind farms, for each planning application where an archaeological opinion is sought the Service conducts a thorough investigation. Typically this involves an assessment of our Historic Environment Record, historical maps, aerial photos and often a site visit. If it is felt that a development is likely to encounter archaeology then a condition to conduct further investigation, funded by the developers, is recommended to the planners. The results of this further work help to record anything that is found and adds to our wider knowledge of the Borders' heritage.

With the current financial climate, the number of housing developments has decreased over the last few years. However, the number of wind farm applications for the Borders have increased markedly and the major archaeological work that has taken place in the region has been in support of these large schemes. Wind farms tend to be located in upland environments surrounded by sparse rural populations. As a consequence, they have generally escaped the keen eyes of archaeologists over the years. When a wind farm application is approved, the Archaeology Service expects full landscape surveys, avoidance of heritage assets where possible and the monitoring of excavations for the wind farm infrastructure such as turbines, roads and connections to the National Grid. Within the last few years, wind farm developments have been responsible for identifying previously unknown archaeology and for increasing our knowledge of some of the more rural cultural landscapes. One important discovery has been a series of prehistoric or medieval ditches near Friardykes Farm in the Lammemuir. The place name Friardykes may refer to a walls or ditches that were dug when the area was used as a penitentiary for 'behaviourally challenged' monks from Melrose Abbey. While there was no datable evidence from the site, the ditches found during CFAs evaluations could have been the results of the medieval equivalent to ASBOs. Whether this is the case or not, these ditches would not have been discovered without the developer's funding of the archaeological work that took place at Friarsdykes.

Christopher Bowles

Archaeology Officer, Scottish Borders Council

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Developer Funded Archaeology in Dumfries and Galloway



Dumfries and Galloway is a very rural area with relatively low levels of development. The current local development plans have been drawn up with reference to identified and suspected archaeological sites. If an identified development site contains interest, the need for archaeological evaluation and mitigation to support any forthcoming applications is identified in the site notes. Developers are therefore aware of issues at the outset.

As they are keen to avoid archaeological costs, avoidance is frequently the preferred mitigation. This can be achieved through, for instance focussing open space on an area of archaeological interest that has been defined through evaluation. Large scale developer funded archaeological projects are therefore a relatively rare event in the region.

In recent years the most significant developer funded excavation took place in advance of the construction of Lockerbie Academy where the potential of the site was identified through the local development plan. Extensive



Anglian Hall - Lockerbie Academy.

evaluation confirmed the presence of significant remains that could not be avoided and a scheme of excavation was carried out by CFA Archaeology Limited, with fascinating results! The remains of a Neolithic timber hall, dating from around 3700 BC were located on the western part of the site. A rounded knoll was the focus for a Bronze Age cemetery activity producing a well preserved collared urn and a copper alloy dagger. At the base of this knoll a sequence of early historic timber halls were identified, with an Anglian style hall, overlying an earlier structure. A well preserved late medieval corn drying kiln cutting into the Bronze Age remains on the knoll was the latest phase of activity identified on the site.

Site tours during the excavations were enjoyed by members of the public and CFA have also given talks to local groups. Publication as an online SAIR report is due shortly.

Jane Brann

Archaeologist, Dumfries and Galloway Council



Bronze Age Urn, Lockerbie School.

Perth and Kinross: Revealing archaeological landscapes



One of the many ways in which Perth and Kinross Heritage's Trust carries out its remit to protect, promote and enhance the historic environment of Perth and Kinross is through the provision of an archaeological advice service to the Council Planning Authority. To ensure compliance with national guidelines and in line with local plan policies to protect the historic environment, the Trust identifies where development will have an impact and makes recommendations to the Planning Authority to mitigate this impact.

As part of this work, the Trust maintains the Perth and Kinross Historic Environment Record – a database of all known archaeological sites recorded, for example, by aerial survey, fieldwork and research, and this database is key in identifying where development will impact on known sites. However not all archaeological sites are known and so professional judgement – the 'advice' part of the PKHT's archaeology service – is essential, particularly in areas with little history of archaeological research.

The best example of a previously 'archaeological blank' with the most fruitful results is the archaeological project carried out in advance of the GWest residential and golfing development. The results of this project will create a prehistory of the local area and contribute to the regional understanding of prehistoric settlement. The new course



Evaluative trenches at GWest: over 6ha of trial trenches were excavated.

and complex covers 250 ha of undulating pasture to the north of Blackford and little was known about this vast area with only three sites – two fortified settlements and a 19th century record of a removal of a burial cairn – within the vicinity of the development. Consideration of the topology informed phased evaluative trial trenching of some 130ha that in turn identified eight areas of archaeological activity with a suite of prehistoric features, including 15 round houses and a palisaded settlement enclosure.

Following seven months of fieldwork carried out in 2007-2008, the post excavation analysis of this previously unknown archaeological landscape is currently underway with publication as a monograph in the regional archaeological journal completing the project. The value of the archaeological works carried out at GWest is demonstrated in the major contribution the results will make to our understanding of prehistoric settlement in Tayside informing the currently fragmented narrative that, reliant on a small number of disparate excavations, has evolved piecemeal.

The archaeological project at GWest has been carried out by CFA Archaeology and is funded by Ochil Developments (UK) Ltd.

Sarah Winlow

Perth & Kinross Heritage Trust.

www.pkht.org.uk



Hi-spy view of the palisaded enclosure containing two roundhouses: the site of these remains is zoned for two of over 100 new houses at GWest. Image courtesy and copyright of CFA Archaeology Ltd, Landlines Heritage and Topshot Photography.

McArthur's fisherman's stores, Dunbar

East Lothian Council Archaeology Service (ELCAS) carries out the archaeological development control duties for both East and Midlothian. Both counties are rich in archaeological and historic remains from cropmarks to historic buildings. All planning applications from both counties are assessed for possible impacts upon archaeological and historic remains and if necessary appropriate conditions are requested through the respective planning authorities, each planning condition is individually tailored to mitigate against all impacts upon archaeological and historic remains.

As well as dealing with development impacts on buried archaeological remains, ELCAS also places a strong emphasis on recording historic structures, from undesignated rural vernacular steadings through to A listed buildings. Very often a single development will have impacts upon both buried archaeological remains and standing historic structures.

One such project was undertaken by Addyman Archaeology and involved the renovation of the B Listed Fishermans Stores at the Old Harbour, Dunbar, East Lothian which was thought to date to the early 18th century. A programme of desk-based assessment, historic building recording and field evaluation, has shown a long and complex history of not only the building but of the evolution of the harbour as well. The date of the store has now been pushed back to at least the 17th century with hints of earlier structures.



The ground floor of the building contained a number of re-used ships timbers possibly from a mid-18th century fishing or coastal trading vessel, probably inserted into the building during the early 19th century. This itself generated a large amount of interest from maritime and architectural specialists as they comprise the largest assemblage of ships timbers found in-situ within a building in Scotland.

External intrusive investigations not only revealed remains of an earlier phase of building but also the evolution of the harbour itself. The landward side of the harbour appears to have originally been a natural outcrop of bedrock, into which were cut a series of steps. Successive episodes of infilling were identified as was a feature thought to be a small dock which was marked on historic maps as Holy Quay.



At the end of the archaeological fieldwork, ELCAS worked in close partnership with the developers (Dunbar Harbour Trust) to consolidate and display as much of the historic remains uncovered as possible. Glass panels were inserted into both walls and floors so segments of the original building fabric could be seen; the ships timbers were conserved and left in-situ as much as possible. Externally the remains of the earlier building was retained and the development of the harbour can be clearly seen through sympathetic stabilisation of the original cobbled surfaces using differing materials and coloured pointing.

At completion the building received much acclaim and is very in keeping with the historic harbour where it sits. The final publication amalgamating all the disparate strands of research and recording is expected shortly.

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The ongoing Edinburgh Tram project



The ongoing Edinburgh Tram project by Tie and the City of Edinburgh Council is one of Scotland's largest transport infrastructure projects of recent years. Since the pre-Parliamentary Bill Environmental Assessment stage in the early 2000s the City's Archaeological Service has been and continues to be involved closely in managing the archaeological mitigation of this complex project with Tie and their appointed main contractors. Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd and GUARD were appointed and continue to undertake individual aspects of the archaeological field work.

Field work commenced in 2005-6 with archaeological evaluations undertaken between Gogar and Edinburgh Airport. The results of this work saw the excavation by GUARD in 2008 of the eastern limits of the early medieval village at Gogar and a newly discovered, complex multi-period prehistoric settlement site towards Edinburgh Airport comprising a palisaded enclosure, hut circles and pit groups.

Service diversion work has been up until the end of 2009 been the focus of fieldwork with the city, effectively providing an archaeological cross section from Haymarket in the east across Princess Street, down Leith Walk to Leith. In addition to the expected remains of the original tram system and urban medieval remains associated with Leith including the towns 16th -17th century defensive ditch, this work has also resulted in the discovery several nationally significant sites. In 2009 works at the junction of Leith Walk at London Road unearthed the NE corner boundary wall and 9 inhumations from what is believed to be the 1590s Leper Hospital was built on the site of the 1520s Carmelite Friary at Greenside Place. This was a rather unexpected discovery as it was recorded as being located some 100m to the SE.



Excavation of the 1590s Leper cemetery, Leith Walk, in 2009.



*Excavation of graveyard burial below modern services at
Constitution St, Leith.*

The discovery of graves in Constitution Street Leith below 20th century services resulted in a major excavation through 2009 of c.300 burials by a team from Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd. Although lying immediately out with the current graveyard for South Leith Parish Church the extent and existence of this graveyard was nevertheless unexpected. Not only did Church records relating to the construction of Constitution Street in 1790 indicate that the church itself thought that the area was free of graves but significantly no record of discovery of human remains in this area has been made. This despite clear evidence for major disturbances caused by not only the construction work in the 18th century of the nearby tenements but significantly the construction of Victorian and modern (20th/21st century) services, the later having cut through many of the existing bodies and removed a figure estimated in the hundreds.

Evidence suggests that the burials date from the 1480s to the 17th century. Detailed analysis of the skeletal material before reburial, will hopefully reveal a lot more information on the medieval and post medieval population of Leith including their age, sex, build, diet and any diseases or injuries from which they suffered and will tie into similar research being undertaken on burials from Edinburgh.

Stirling & Clackmannan



In common with other areas in Scotland development pressure in the Stirling/Clackmannanshire area has reduced in recent times and large scale developer-funded archaeological projects are now a relatively rare event in the area, although significant exceptions have included publicly-supported infrastructure projects such as the Stirling to Kincardine rail link and the new bridge over the River Forth at Kincardine, both producing a range of features dating from the Neolithic through to the post medieval period, concentrated on the old raised beach. A range of other smaller scale projects, which have delivered important archaeological results, have also been publicly funded either as part of local authority projects or public utility schemes.

Included in these is a rare and fascinating insight (courtesy of Scottish Water) into daily activities within the medieval town of Stirling gleaned from an examination of midden material. The unusual survival of uncarbonised seeds included imported high status foods indicated by a single fig pip, and commercial quality fibre plants in the form of cultivated flax seed and hemp seeds. These last are an extremely rare and highly significant find within the Scottish archaeological record, having only been found previously in Medieval Aberdeen and Elgin. Prompt approval and implementation of the post excavation scheme was a key element in accessing this material in its optimum condition.

Further work was also undertaken at Doune Primary School in advance of the construction of an additional classroom. Here excavations within the Roman fort revealed exciting evidence for two phases of buildings and a re-examination of the metalwork from the earlier excavations revealed a wonderful iron intaglio ring with a grey chalcedony bezel (illustrated).

Both these projects serve to highlight the importance of the role of the local authority archaeologist in ensuring not only that developer-funded excavations take place where necessary but that, where appropriate, they are seen through to post-excavation and ultimately to publication, the next stage for the two sites described above.

Lorna Main

Stirling Council

www.stirling.gov.uk/index/services/planning/archaeology



The intaglio ring from Doune Roman fort.

Throwing light on the Dark Ages

The West of Scotland Archaeology Service covers a large geographical area which is home to about half of the population of Scotland. As a result there are many planning applications which lead to developer funded excavations. Many of these excavations have contributed new archaeological sites or new knowledge about the past. We have found whole burial cairns on the Ayrshire raised beach completely buried in imported topsoil for the early potato fields; we have found medieval domestic settlement in the countryside where none has been known before; we have found more medieval high status sites than we already knew we had; and we have found several previously unknown pre-Reformation chapels and burials grounds. One site however stands out for us as being the most significant contribution to archaeological knowledge in the large area which we cover.

At first sight it did not look like much, appearing to be just another Iron Age palisaded enclosure. But this much ploughed out archaeological site produced radiocarbon dates which made it the most significant archaeological site to be found in the west of Scotland in many years. The site was located near Titwood Road, Newton Mearns on the route of the new Glasgow Southern Orbital road to the south of the city of Glasgow. On excavation it proved to be a homestead enclosure dating between the 8th and the 10th centuries AD, the first Early Historic domestic site to be found in the west of Scotland. The Early Historic period, often known as the Dark Ages, is characterised by its lack of known archaeological sites. We can hazard guesses at the locations of high status royal sites or early churches of the period, but little is known about domestic settlement and land use at the time. The palisaded enclosure was fully excavated in 2002 by CFA Archaeology Ltd in advance of the road construction with funding provided by East Renfrewshire Council.

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General enquiries to the Association should be directed in the first instance to the administrative assistant, Caroline Ingle at: admin@algao.org.uk

*Back Cover Images: The Neolithic timber hall at Lockerbie Academy (top);
MacArthur's Store, Dunbar, with the original harbour surface being revealed (middle);
and evaluation work at Friardykes Farm, Borders (bottom).*



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