



ALGAO:Scotland *news*

2012

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



Welcome

Welcome to the fifth annual newsletter of ALGAO:Scotland. The Association represents archaeologists working for, or on behalf of, Local Government and the National Parks in Scotland and whose task is to protect, manage and promote the historic environment. Our members' work ranges from working with planning officers and elected officials, to community interpretation and outreach projects, to research and conservation. The newsletter is an annual review highlighting the activities of our members through the last year. This edition is themed around our work with local communities.

Value for Money – A Reflection on the Last Year

The importance and value of the historic environment is recognised at all levels. What may not be recognised so readily is that nearly 93% of the buildings, archaeological remains and landscapes that make up that historic environment is undesignated, having no national statutory protection. As such it falls to the Local Authorities and the work of our members to protect, manage and promote the bulk of Scotland's Heritage.

To achieve the successful management of this majority of Scotland's Historic Environment, ALGAO:Scotland needs to be able to demonstrate to everyone, from Ministers and elected officials to the general public, that we are doing something worthwhile, and that we're doing it well.

Fundamental to the evidence base for proving this are Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). While distilling the complexities of what we do down into over-simplified figures on the one hand – see the case studies in the rest of the newsletter to begin to understand this – the end result is an easily presentable set of numbers which everyone can understand.

Reviewing the last 12 months' KPIs we can tease out details on just how much work ALGAO:Scotland has undertaken on behalf of the historic environment. A total of 22 staff working within the archaeology services of the 27 member Local Authorities advised on nearly 7000 planning applications, of which nearly 1,500 required archaeological mitigation. Furthermore these same staff also dealt with nearly 600 agri-environment applications, hundreds of forestry applications, while also undertaking 70 guided walks, 65 public lectures and 14 major community events.

All of this work is essential in not only protecting and managing the historic environment for the future, but also for ensuring that everyone in Scotland benefits from it as well.

Bruce Mann

Vice-Chair ALGAO:Scotland

A Sense of Historic Place – Creating Benefits for Local Communities



As we commute to and from work, shop around our city centres and relax in the countryside, we often don't realise that the everyday views that we experience are inevitably the result of hundreds or even thousands of years of human interaction with our landscape. What makes the area where you live and work feel like it does, and which gives it its unique character, is based on the look and shape of the buildings, the layout of the streets, fields and woodland, and the use that the land is put to.

By understanding the historical processes that have led to today's urban and rural landscapes, ALGAO:Scotland's members attempt to not only protect the resulting sense of place but also to enhance it where possible. The community examples presented in this newsletter demonstrate not only the power of these projects in generating economic growth at a local level, but also how to safeguard these historic places for the benefit of future generations.

A recent example of such a project from Aberdeenshire is the Rhynie Environs Project. The project is being led by staff from Aberdeen University's

Archaeology Department, with partnerships including the local community of Rhynie, a local Development Trust and Aberdeenshire Council Archaeology Service. The ongoing excavation by the University of a Royal Pictish site just outside the village, first identified from aerial photographs taken by the Archaeology Service, has led to several internationally important finds. This has sparked renewed community interest in their local heritage and work is underway to create a historical tourist trail, new interpretation boards and leaflets, and the erection of a full size copy of the 'Rhynie Man',

an important Pictish Class I symbol stone found near the site that is now housed in Aberdeen.

The project will not only contribute significantly to our understanding of the Picts and the key role they played in Scottish history, but will also create a community that can take pride and ownership of their local archaeology, and economic benefits in the long term from tourism coming to this previously little visited part of north-east Scotland.

Bruce Mann
Archaeologist, Aberdeenshire, Moray & Angus Councils
www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/archaeology/index.asp



Craw Stane, Rhynie (© Aberdeenshire Council)



Rhynie Man (© Aberdeenshire Council)

Revitalising an Island - The Viking Unst Project

The island of Unst, Britain's most northerly island, suffered two economic blows in quick succession with the closure of the air strip, which had served the oil industry, and the closure of the RAF base at Saxa Vord. In both cases around 100 civilian jobs were lost, in addition to the knock on effects on schools, shops, etc. Although most visitors to Shetland would travel to Unst for the day, in order to see the "most northerly" island, this brought little money into the economy.

The Viking Unst project began by bringing in teams of archaeologists to excavate three longhouses. They stayed in the islands and used the local facilities. The active Unst Archaeology Group got involved in the excavations and the community took a pride in the rich Viking heritage of the islands. Weekly evening lectures were packed out and visitor days on site were well attended. The excavated sites have now been consolidated and interpreted and a series of Viking themed walks are being planned. We have worked with the local secondary school to develop a module based on Viking archaeology which links science and social subjects, and involves years S1-S3 within the Curriculum for Excellence.



Viking Unst excavation (@ShetlandAmenityTrust)



Skidbladner longship (©Shetland Amenity Trust)

The project has included restoring a replica of the Gokstad ship, a Viking camp and the building of a Viking longhouse based on the excavated evidence. These have been the focus of “living history” events which have involved visitors and local folk in Viking style games and craft activities, and have provided seasonal employment for a small team. Last summer, in a period of 4 weeks there were around 1,000 visitors to the replicas alone. People living in Unst are noticing an increase in the number of summer visitors, staying for longer, since the project began. New accommodation providers have started up and two cafes have also opened since the project started in 2006.

Val Turner

Shetland Archaeologist, Shetland Amenity Trust

Climbing the 'Lottery Ladder' - Providing Community Benefit from the Voluntary Sector

As a 'third sector' organisation based in Perth, Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust is well-placed, in many senses, to deliver its mission 'to provide and promote high quality opportunities for the conservation, enhancement and promotion of the historic environment of Perth and Kinross'.

The Trust has delivered Doors Open Days for over fifteen years and Perthshire Archaeology Month since 2003, both of which now feature prominently in the cultural calendar of the area. Both also rely greatly on local community input, and bring together local, regional and, occasionally, national organisations to work in partnership. Similarly, the Trust's extensive suite of publications has been developed over the last decade through partnership working with local communities and other heritage organisations to inform both residents and visitors to the area about the rich and varied historic environment of the area.

Community involvement is also central to all project work carried out by the Trust, whether archaeological or historic building related, providing conservation through outreach, and outreach through conservation. This principle has been clearly demonstrated by two ongoing projects supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF): the highly successful Bridging Perthshire's Past, a three year programme of conservation and outreach focussing on 18th century military roads and bridges, and the ongoing Historic Churchyards of Eastern Perthshire project. The Trust is now developing a Landscape Partnership Scheme for the Tay Estuary, to deliver projects with topics as diverse as 'the Early Settlers' to the regeneration of historic orchards on the Carse of Gowrie. The Scheme will aim to reconnect residents with the estuary, and conserve built and natural features that make the landscape distinct, while improving physical and intellectual access to the overall cultural heritage of the area (www.taylp.org).

David Strachan, Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust
www.pkht.org.uk



School-children from Meigle help to conserve their historic churchyard. (© Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust)

Working Together - Enhancing our Historic Assets in Dumfries and Galloway



Historic environment services are located in the environmental planning team that falls within the Planning and Environment Services. The team provides expertise across the Council with many opportunities for joint working towards shared goals with Council and community partnerships. Within the last 5 years a number of key projects to revitalise and assert the quality of the historic environment have delivered community and economic benefits.

The Whithorn Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme has improved important parts of the town including buildings and streets. Jointly funded by DGC and Historic Scotland, the scheme enabled £470,000 of public investment in the built heritage in addition to the owners' contributions. The Council provides ongoing support and advice to the Whithorn Trust as plans and activities are developed and implemented to ensure that the status of Whithorn as the 'Cradle of Christianity in Scotland', and the numerous archaeological and historic of the Machars are widely recognised and community and economic benefits maximised.

At the other end of the region, The Annan Townscape Heritage Initiative has delivered £590,000 of repair and improvement and works within the historic burgh.

A separate project run under the Sulwath Connections HLF Landscape Area Partnership Scheme and led by the Friends of the Annandale and Eskdale Museum, focused on improving management of the mottle that was the first base of the Bruce family in Annan, as they began their rise to power in Scotland.

These headline and many smaller projects are delivered against a background of ongoing partnership working with agencies and people who value their historic environment, recognise that it is a key asset for economic activity and resilient communities.

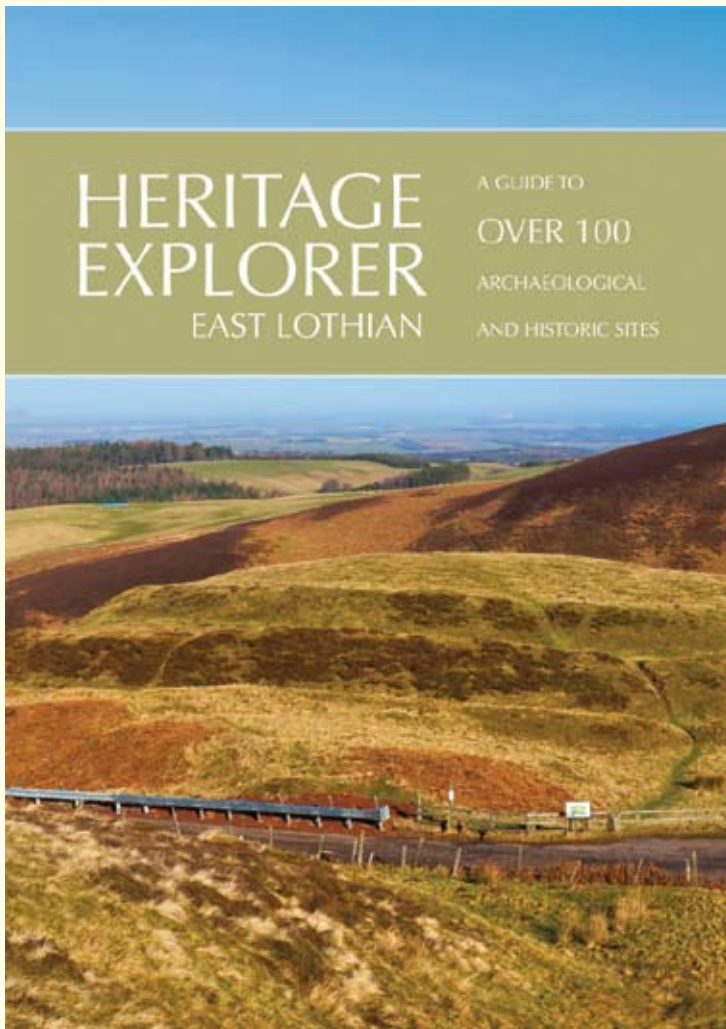
Jane Brann
Archaeologist, Dumfries and Galloway Council



George Street, Whithorn looking inland to Cairnsmore of Fleet (©Dumfries and Galloway Council)

Engaging Minds - East Lothian Council Archaeology Service

East Lothian is rich in archaeological remains and historic sites, and this is seen as having a key role in attracting tourists, particularly in conjunction with golfing holidays and day trips from Edinburgh. Recent surveys have indicated that interaction with East Lothian's heritage, both natural and cultural, is second only to golf as an income generator for the county. To further encourage tourists and residents to explore this heritage, East Lothian Council Archaeology Service has published the 'Heritage Explorer': a guide to over 100 archaeological and historic sites to visit. From prehistoric standing stones to World War II remains, the booklet encourages the reader to get out and explore the sites and landscape of East Lothian, with handy maps of each area and notes about visiting.





Extract from the Roy map 1755

The benefits to the community that archaeology and heritage bring to East Lothian are manifest on several levels, but perhaps the most important of these is the work that ELC Archaeology Service does with schools. Several times through the year we hold hands-on activities for local primary schools, including explaining the work of archaeologists and meeting Sam the Skelly! However, the most ambitious project at the moment is one with Preston Lodge High School funded by the Creative Learning Network and in conjunction with Archaeology Scotland and the John Grey Centre. Aimed at secondary teachers, this project explores the cross-curricular nature of the Curriculum for Excellence which sits very well with the discipline of archaeology. Through a number of practical sessions and fieldwork, the Geography department is being trained in site survey skills and the use of historic map regression to explore sites local to the school. While the Chemistry and Art departments are exploring the potential of creating Salt and Galt glazes for making pottery, two historic industries which helped shape the growth of Prestonpans. In turn the teachers will prepare Teachers' Packs which can then be passed on to other teachers and schools through the GLOW network, creating a lasting legacy to the project, at the same time as encouraging students to discover the heritage of their own area.

Stephanie Leith,
Archaeologist, East Lothian Council

Community and Archaeology in Stirling Year 1

The bulk of what planning archaeologists do is necessary and important but rarely engages with the public and can be easily dismissed as red tape blocking progress! Archaeology is an adornment to a civilised society, however, if we wish to keep taxpayer support for what we do we must demonstrate the value of archaeology to the public.

I have been in post as Stirling Council's Archaeologist for just over 18 months and my main aim (while keeping on top of the HER and planning applications!) has been to develop a sustainable community heritage programme with partners within and outwith the Council. Despite being a city Stirling has some of Scotland's best archaeology, which includes standing stones, hillforts, an abbey, a royal mausoleum, battlefields and of course the Medieval Old Town with the Castle at its core, all of which is within a 15 minute walk of the city centre.



Test pitting at Killearn (© Stirling Council)



Young archaeologists at Abbey Craig (© Stuart Dinning)

Between my first two Scottish Archaeology Months (September 2011 and September 2012) Stirling Council Archaeology and Ranger Services ran 32 heritage events which involved 1800 people: a combination of local volunteers, schoolchildren and tourists. These included work at the vitrified fort of Abbey Craig; two standing stones; a Roman road; a 17th century designed landscape at Killearn; a 19th century gatehouse at Plean and possibly the first evidence from the Battle of Stirling Bridge of 1297! These have all been used to raise awareness of Stirling's heritage and to increase the local community's capacity to develop their own schemes.

With thanks to the following partners and sponsors:

Torbrex Community Council, Central Scotland Police, The Cowane Trust, Visit Stirling, Stirling Local History society, Fiends of Logie Old Kirk, GUARD Archaeology Ltd, Northlight Heritage Ltd, AOC archaeology Ltd, St Ninian's Primary School, Borestone Primary School, Allans Primary School, Riverside Primary School, Killearn Primary School, Sons of the rock, the Mackichan Trust.

For more information on Stirling's fantastic past contact Murray on cookm@stirling.gov.uk.

Murray Cook
Stirling Council Archaeologist

Community Working in the Scottish Borders: An Organic Process

Working on community archaeology projects is often an organic process of reacting to local concerns, needs and aspirations for their heritage. In 2010, SBCAS was contacted by a member of the public concerned about metal detecting in a field called Mantle Walls near Ancrum, Roxburghshire. The feeling was that the local site was being nighthawked (illicit metal detecting whereby finds are not reported to Treasure Trove Scotland). Local tradition suggested the field was the site of a large medieval building, and the Council's HER vaguely indicated it could be a Bishops palace.

After an initial meeting on site between residents from Ancrum and heritage managers from Historic Scotland and Scottish Borders Council, we decided that we should try to mount an archaeological investigation to determine what was in the field, how well it was preserved, and what the impacts of metal detecting were. SBCAS, with grant support from Historic Scotland, designed a project which involved staff and students from Glasgow University and volunteers from the local community. As a first phase of the project, a geophysical survey was conducted in 2011 which located probable buried walls and other features. These positive results were followed by a key-hole excavation combining excavators from Glasgow University, local residents and metal detectorists. The results were stunning. There were pits sealed by demolition rubble containing 12-13th century pottery, the remains of substantial stone walls and the survival of finely carved stone-work. While post-excavation work is on-going, the feeling is that the buried ruin was indeed a bishops palace constructed by the medieval Bishops of Glasgow.

Over the course of the survey and excavation, local residents, school children and people from the wider area were involved at every level. Judging from their reactions, the residents of Ancrum are now excited by what else could lie in the field and are considering moving forward with interpretation and research projects. For SBCAS, the project has been a satisfying success. The Mantle Walls project raised awareness about a potentially nationally important site, added to our own knowledge of the area and more importantly reconnected a vital part of Ancrum's history with its modern people.

Dr Chris Bowles
Scottish Borders Council Archaeology Service (SBCAS)



Local residents and children excavating at Mantle Walls, Ancrum (© Scottish Borders Council)

Gulliver's Travels: Niddrie Burn Flood Prevention Scheme



2012 will see the completion of the 1.8km Niddrie Burn Flood Prevention / River Restoration Scheme started in 2010 to facilitate further development of Edinburgh's Bioquarter surrounding Edinburgh's Royal Infirmary along with the creation of a meadow area, park and arboretum. CEAS provided the in-house archaeological project management of the project from the design stage through to post-excitation with AOC Archaeology being engaged to undertake the fieldwork.

The scheme ran through Hunters Park and sports fields created in the 1970s across the southern core of the historic landscape associated with the Niddrie Marischal House demolished by the Council in the 1960s. The results of the excavations provided new insights into this important Estate dating back to its inception in the 12/13th centuries through to the 20th century including: medieval sand quarry pits; an unknown earlier post-medieval phase of the estates Home farm and 20th century military occupation.

Community engagement was of key importance throughout the project and this took various forms from contributing to local newsletters and opening up the excavation to public open days. Although it was not possible to employ local volunteers during the excavation of the site, local amateur metal detectorists did play an important role during the evaluation and excavation phases and provided the only evidence for the area being used by the military as a training ground during both world wars.

Local community support was important in arguing for the successful retention of not only the 18th century Ice-house (which required some redesign of the river corridor) but also in the recording by laser scanning and partial retention of the Gulliver Statute. This 30m long concrete statute designed by Jimmy Boyle as a children's play area and opened by Billy Connolly in 1976 was an important local landmark built during the first phase of regeneration at Craigmillar.

John Lawson
City of Edinburgh Council Archaeology Service



Gulliver Statue, Niddrie, Edinburgh (© West Lothian Archaeology Group)

Recording the boundaries - Rutherglen

In 2011, the West of Scotland Archaeology Service was approached by members of the newly-formed Rutherglen Heritage Group, who were working with the Museum Service of South Lanarkshire Council to develop a project to locate, photograph and record all of the surviving boundary stones marking the limits of the medieval royal burgh of Rutherglen.

Rutherglen is believed to have been made a royal burgh by King David I (1124-1153), meaning that it is older than its nearby neighbour, the baronial burgh of Glasgow. The town's royal status did not ensure its prosperity however, and it was soon eclipsed economically by Glasgow. Nevertheless, throughout its history the town remained fiercely protective of its independence, and erected a large number of boundary stones to physically delineate the burgh lands as a means of asserting its separate trading rights and distinct identity.

The system of burgh boundary stones was vigorously maintained into the latter part of the nineteenth century, but suffered from increasing neglect and erosion during the succeeding century. Records indicate that at one time there were around 370 stones, but only 130 had survived by the 1950s. Fifty-seven stones were known to exist in the 1980s, but the Heritage Group hoped to establish how many were still standing, and to record their exact locations. As part of the project, staff from the Archaeology Service provided members of the Heritage Group information and assistance, in the form of detailed maps and site reports on the recorded locations of known stones, and advice on recording techniques. The Heritage Group has recently completed the first stage of the project, and has located, described, photographed and mapped 60 stones. While some of those recorded in the 1980s could not be found, 14 previously-unrecorded examples were identified, and information on these, along with updated details for the other stones, will be integrated back into the HER to ensure that these locally important monuments are protected into the future.

Hyperlink to news story in local press -

<http://www.rutherglenreformer.co.uk/rutherglen-news/rutherglen-local-news/2011/03/23/museum-service-hunt-lost-boundary-stones-63227-28382375/>

Hugh McBrien
West of Scotland
Archaeology Service



Rutherglen boundary stones (© West of Scotland Archaeology Service)

This is the fifth 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 highlights the importance of locally-based curatorial archaeologists who are able to provide a wide range of services and functions which benefit the preservation of our shared archaeology, while contributing to both learning and engagement and sustainable regeneration.**

For details of the ALGAO:Scotland committee see the website: general enquiries to the Association should be directed in the first instance to the administrative assistant, Caroline Ingle at admin@algao.org.uk

ALGAO:Scotland welcomes financial support from Historic Scotland to help us meet common objectives in the conservation, management and promotion of the historic environment.



*Back cover: Chamfered stone door check at Mantle Walls, Ancrum (© Scottish Borders Council);
Boundary stone Rutherglen (© West of Scotland Archaeology Service)*

www.algao.org.uk



