



Summer Newsletter 2023

Dear Scottish Group members,

Summer has come around all too quickly—and with it a veritable treasure trove of updates from the wide array of projects that have been taking place across Scotland.

The new Indiana Jones film has just been released, some of it filmed on location in Scotland—the A Listed [Leaderfoot Viaduct](#) features and I wonder if Dr Henry Jones Jnr walked the few hundred metres west to have a look at [Trimontium](#)?

I'd like to thank Josh for all his hard work compiling the newsletter over the last few years. As I have quickly learned, it is a time consuming (but worthwhile task). From the moment we put out the call for news and project updates my inbox has been pinging away, and given that we did not have the usual spring newsletter, this one is even more of a bumper edition— so apologies for the size, but I think it is worth it.

As you may know, the Scottish Group is currently looking for someone to take on the role of secretary after the diligent Joe Somerville had to step down at the last AGM as he had served his maximum time. If you think you can fill such big shoes please get in contact with Megan via groups@archaeologists.net you can also find the role description [here](#)

If you have any comments or queries about the Scottish Group or any of the following articles, feel free to get in touch with us through our email, secretary.cifa.sg@gmail.com, or on our [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). We also have information on the group's [CIfA webpage](#) where you can also find previous issues of the newsletter.

Until next time,

Stefan Sagrott MCIfA

And the Scottish Group committee



cc-by-sa/2.0 - Leaderfoot Viaduct by Walter Baxter - [geograph.org.uk/p/7540036](https://www.geograph.org.uk/p/7540036)

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Membership

Membership of the Scottish Group is free for CIfA members and is £10 per year for non-CIfA members. Please feel free to circulate this newsletter and we would ask you to encourage your friends/colleagues to join the Group.

For more information, see [here](#).

Newsletters are published four times a year and contributions from members are always welcome.

Our next issue will be released in October/November 2022.

All content and its accuracy rests with the author of each article. Articles have not been edited, and are as submitted by the author(s) except with regards to formatting. All images have been supplied by the authors and copyright is with them, unless specified.

A View from the Chair

It is important to thank all those who make such efforts to promote and strengthen the SGCIfA as without them, we would not have the opportunity to help shape and support the archaeology we would love to see in Scotland. And so can I start by thanking all the Committee members past and present for the work they have done to bring us here.

There is a massive amount of work, research, projects and activities happening in Scotland just now, from dendrochronology to Pictish studies, from prehistoric settlements to community projects, and conferences such as Archaeological Research in Progress. The stability of commercial archaeology, is as ever, based on the factors that may lie out of our control, but the skills and opportunities for our profession do lie squarely with us. The Research Frameworks are currently being revised, and Scotland's Archaeology Strategy is open for consultation right now. Scottish Archaeology Month is asking for events and DIG IT! goes forward as ever. So much is happening, and we should as the Special interest Group for CIfA in Scotland look to what we can do to support, highlight or shape the futures of archaeology.

My question to you all, going forward is how you better involve you, how to better represent you and to listen to what you feel SGCIfA should be doing - remember that this can simply be supporting and advertising events, highlighting training opportunities, and commenting on consultations, as so much is done by other organisations, we should look to collaborative and cooperative work as well as complementary. We will be providing more training days, and visiting university undergraduates, however, at the end of the day, we are here for the members. Let us know what we can do better, and we will become better at presenting our shared views

thanks you

David Connolly

Chair SGCIfA



Shreya at the Holyrood Archaeology Project (© Holyrood Archaeology Project)



Boost the Profile of Your Work with Scotland Digs 2023: Free Days Out

The Scotland Digs 2023: Free Days Out campaign is currently celebrating the country's world-class archaeology and highlighting budget-friendly activities for the public – and it's not too late to get involved.

Now in its fifth iteration, the national campaign coordinated by the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland's Dig It! project is assembling updates and fieldwork events for the public through social media, monthly [e-newsletters](#) and an [online hub](#) until 22 September.

The campaign includes fieldwork which welcomes visitors and/or volunteers (no experience required) in:

- Edinburgh** at Cammo Estate with the Edinburgh Archaeological Field Society and Holyrood Park with students from the University of Edinburgh in partnership with Historic Environment Scotland and AOC Archaeology as part of the Holyrood Archaeology Project
- Shetland** at Hawks Ness Broch with Archaeology Shetland
- Orkney** at The Cairns and Skaill with UHI Archaeology Institute, the Knowe of Swandro with the Swandro-Orkney Coastal Archaeology Trust, and the Ness of Brodgar with the Ness of Brodgar Trust
- East Lothian** at Cockenzie Harbour with the 1722 Waggonway Project
- Fife** at Pittarhie Farm with the Petardy Historic Landscape Project and East Lomond Hill with the Falkland Estate and the University of Aberdeen
- The Cairngorms** at Sgòr an Eòin with University College Dublin
- The Highlands** at Swartigill with UHI Archaeology Institute and Yarrows Heritage Trust

Developer-led archaeology also plays a significant part in the campaign. AOC Archaeology, for example, invited the public to join a free open day at the Forfar Road site where they've been uncovering an Iron Age settlement and structural remains in advance of a new housing development being built in Perth & Kinross.

Fieldwork organisers have also been posting updates on social media using the hashtag ([#ScotlandDigs2023](#)) to help build a buzz around summer fieldwork, increase the visibility of the sector's content, and create a one-stop-shop hashtag for those wishing to follow along.

These campaigns are designed to increase awareness of – and encourage greater engagement with – archaeological fieldwork in Scotland. The hashtag has already received nearly 10,000 engagements (interactions), the campaign webpages have been visited by hundreds of users, and summer fieldwork has been covered by regional and national newspapers, websites such as *STV News*, and more.

Want to boost the profile of your fieldwork and the sector as a whole by getting involved in the 2023 or 2024 campaigns? It's completely free for you and you don't need to organise a public event to participate. Contact DigIt@socantscot.org for more information.

Dig It! is coordinated by the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland and primarily funded by Historic Environment Scotland

Cammo Walled Garden

Christine McPherson, Chair of EAFS

If you come down to the Walled Garden in Cammo any Monday you will find the volunteers of Edinburgh Archaeological Field Society excavating the remains of a large glasshouse. It was 100 foot long when at it's zenith. We have found plant labels that show 4 types of grape grown within it and 3 types of rose grown at the entrance. More importantly we have had a great time excavating an enigmatic structure leading to lots of discussion as to what/when and how. Research in the archives combined with tracking down similar glasshouses and comparing designs has turned prehistorians into fervid Eighteenth Century garden design fanatics. Any volunteers or archaeological garden specialists who can give us information, support and encouragement are welcome to contact us on enquiries@eafs.org.uk



Our link with the University of Edinburgh ArchSoc has brought fresh blood to the Society which is in it's 52nd year. Currently we are giving opportunities for excavation but also for finds cleaning/collation and recording. We encourage a range of volunteers to join us and can find space for complete beginners as well as seasoned hands.

We regularly get involved with Geophysical surveys on behalf of other local societies and charitable organisations having access to Resistivity and Magnetometry equipment and support excavations run by other Societies and City of Edinburgh Council. In the Winter months we have a regular lecture programme and organise visits to sites of interest. Our [website](#) is a good first call for information on our programme.



How Can Archaeology Help? Understanding Audience Needs in 2023

Explore the barriers that people are facing to participating in archaeology at this free webinar with Katrina Gargett, Community Partnerships Manager at MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology) | Part of Dig It!'s [Scotland Digs 2023: Free Days Out](#) campaign

During the presentation, Katrina will share insights into the barriers people are facing to participating in archaeology, drawing on existing research and observations through her work and the work of others in the sector. She will discuss the importance of understanding audiences and their needs to design impactful and inclusive events and engagement programmes – touching on the work of the [Archaeology Audience Network](#) and audience mapping research at MOLA.

Katrina's presentation will be followed by a Q&A session to cover any key issues or questions in more detail and a discussion regarding current needs and considerations (such as the cost-of-living crisis).

For more information and booking, please use the link below

Date and time: Mon, 14 Aug 2023 15:00 – 16:00 BST

Location: Online (Zoom)

Link: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/how-can-archaeology-help-understanding-audience-needs-in-2023-tickets-650756589477>



THE RECOGNITION AND INVESTIGATION OF LITHIC SCATTER SITES IN SCOTLAND

A SHORT GUIDE

CAROLINE WICKHAM-JONES



HISTORIC
ENVIRONMENT
SCOTLAND

ÀRAINNEACHD
EACHDRAIDHEIL
ALBA

Archaeology Short Guides

Kelsi McDaniel, Archaeology Officer, Heritage Recording and Archaeology Team, Historic Environment Scotland

At the end of last year, Historic Environment Scotland and Scotland's Archaeology Strategy launched [The Recognition and Archaeological Investigation of Lithic Scatter Sites](#). This is the first of our Archaeology Short Guides series.

It was written by Caroline Wickham-Jones, well-known prehistorian, writer and communicator. The text is aimed at a broad audience and can be used by anyone who encounters a lithic scatter site to guide their next steps. It takes the reader from initial identification, through assessment, to possible techniques for investigation. Sadly, before we were able to finish and publish the text, Caroline suddenly passed away. As a dedicated prehistorian with a passion for community archaeology Caroline was keen to see this guidance document completed and for it to be as accessible as possible. The guidance was launched in November 2022 at an event in her memory and copies were presented to her family, friends, and colleagues. It is now freely available online.

The background to this new guidance series is Scotland's Archaeology Strategy, which was launched in 2015 after consultation from all parts of Scotland's Archaeological community. One of its objectives is to provide a series of technical guidance to support best practice and improve the delivery of archaeology in Scotland. We worked closely with our colleagues and partners across the sector through Scotland's Archaeology Strategy to release the first guide and will continue to do so for future releases.

We hope that this guidance on Lithic Scatters will be the first in a series that will provide technical guidance to practitioners on a range of different topics. The Short Guides will add to the breadth of guidance on archaeological subjects that already exists, such as professional standards and guidance issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CifA), guidance published by the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers (ALGAO) and national policy and guidance to help inform how conditions may be applied in development-led archaeology or in managing historic environment assets.

They will be around 30 pages in length, well-illustrated and, as much as possible, written in accessible language. Each will be written by expert authors and peer reviewed. They will cover a range of subjects including sharing information about cutting-edge techniques and looking forward to considering possible future developments.

Our second guide, *Identifying and Recording Scotland's Prehistoric Rock Art* has recently been released and the next guide will be on Geoarchaeology, authored by Vanessa Reid who is a PhD student hosted with the Cultural Assets team at HES. HES's Heritage Recording and Archaeology Team are working on guidelines for the use of geophysical survey for archaeology, as no Scotland specific guidance currently exists. Other possible future titles include chronologies and the archaeology of illicit whisky stills. Scotland's Archaeology Strategy would welcome any suggestions for further topics, as well as any support or advice which you can provide. Please contact us at ArchaeologyStrategy@hes.scot.

The Archaeology Short Guides can be found on the [HES website](#). For further updates, keep an eye on the [Scotland's Archaeology Strategy website](#).

Lithic evidence of the Storegga tsunami at Guardbridge in Fife

Torben Bjarke Ballin, Lithic Research

From 2019 to 2021, GUARD Archaeology Ltd. undertook an archaeological excavation at Seggie Farm, Guardbridge, near St Andrews, Fife (Kilpatrick 2021). The site is located on top of the plateau of a promontory running SW-NE, with a height above present sea level of c. 20–30m.

A total area amounting to approximately 12ha was stripped, and many archaeologically significant features and artefacts were uncovered. They include 19 enclosure/ring ditch structures, pits and the remnants of stone-built structures, alongside the ditches of a probable Iron Age fort. Artefacts include loom weights, polished stone axes, spindle whorls, saddle and rotary quern fragments, shale bracelet fragments and pottery dating from the Neolithic through to the Iron Age and Medieval periods, as well as metal working waste and metal objects.

In addition, an assemblage of lithic objects was recovered from the site, including 1,120 artefacts of flint, chert, chalcedony *sensu lato*, quartz and other raw materials (for details, see Ballin forthcoming). In the forthcoming report, the lithics were subdivided into three groups, namely 1) those associated with a discrete Late Upper Palaeolithic knapping floor; 2) lithics which are thought to have been ‘dumped’ on the plateau by the Storegga tsunami (for details on this tsunami, see Dawson *et al.* 2011); and 3) finds from mostly post-Mesolithic features.

The purpose of this note is to characterize the lithic artefacts associated with the tsunami, with special reference to raw-materials, condition and typological composition. From this characterization, it is sought to date and interpret the finds to the degree this is possible. The evaluation of the lithic material is based upon a detailed catalogue of all the lithic finds from Guardbridge (an Access database), and in the present report the artefacts are referred to by their catalogue (CAT) number. It was thought that this sub-assemblage would have special interest to the Scottish archaeological community as, so far, the tsunami has mostly been documented by geological evidence (although see Worsworth 1985).

This lithic sub-assemblage is first and foremost defined by being notably rolled and they were recovered from pits, postholes and ditches throughout the site, from the lowest to the highest levels (the fort), between c. 20 masl to almost 30 masl.

Characterisation

As shown in Table 1, the rolled material includes 117 pieces of mostly chalcedony *sensu lato* (82%), supplemented by a few pieces of flint, quartz and ‘other’ raw materials. This sub-assemblage includes 108 pieces of debitage, seven cores and two tools.

Most of the debitage is chips, flakes and indeterminate pieces, and only three pieces were identified as fragments of broad blades. The cores are either irregular multi-directional specimens (five pieces) or bipolar specimens (two pieces). All cores are quite small, with the irregular ones (CAT 4, 42, 74, 116, 190) having greatest dimensions between 12–30mm, and the two bipolar pieces (CAT 57, 63) between 15–18mm (Fig. 1). The bipolar cores are both

	Flint	Chert	Chalc family	Quartz	Others	Total
<i>Debitage</i>						
Chips	3		17	5		25
Flakes	1		35	6	2	44
Blades	1		2			3
Indeterminate pieces			33	1	2	36
<i>Total debitage</i>	5		87	12	4	108
<i>Cores</i>						
Irregular cores			5			5
Bipolar cores			2			2
<i>Total cores</i>			7			7
<i>Tools</i>						
Short end-scrapers			1			1
Pieces w edge-retouch			1			1
<i>Total tools</i>			2			2
TOTAL	5		96	12	4	117

Table 1. The rolled lithic artefacts recovered across the site.

The short end-scraper (CAT 258) is based on a large tabular piece. It is relatively thick and irregularly shaped, but at one end a convex, steep scraper-edge was formed. It measures 69 x 56 x 21mm. CAT 186 is a tiny flake fragment (GD = 12mm) with fine retouch along one lateral side. Although not all rolled pieces are obviously artefactual, several of the cores and tools are clearly recognisable as worked lithics, such as irregular cores CAT 42, 116 and 190 and bipolar core CAT 57 (Fig. 1).

Distribution

Initially, the excavators divided the Guardbridge plateau (c. 20 masl to almost 30 masl) into areas to be investigated, and rolled lithics were recovered from Areas 3-8, and 10-12, as well as an area referred to as 'the back garden'. These areas included all topographic levels, from the low-lying boggy central part to the slightly higher peripheral parts, including the ditches of the fort at the top of the plateau (Fig. 2; MHT = Main Holocene Transgression).

Fig. 1. Rolled lithic artefacts from the top of the Guardbridge promontory: Irregular core CAT 116 (chalcedony); irregular cores CAT 42 and 190 (both agate); and bipolar core CAT 57 (agate).



Discussion

Unfortunately, this assemblage includes no strictly diagnostic typo-technological elements, but the composition of the collection's raw material – heavily dominated by variants of chalcedony (chalcedony *sensu stricto*, agate and carnelian) – suggests a Mesolithic date. The Late Upper Palaeolithic scatter is heavily dominated by flint, and the post-Mesolithic component of the Guardbridge assemblage, as well as the post-Mesolithic component of the

finds from Freeland Farm in the inner parts of the Tay estuary (Nicol & Ballin 2019), are also notably dominated by flint. In and around the Tay estuary, Early Mesolithic (Morton Site A, a short distance from the present site, is dominated by chalcedony; Coles 1971) and Late Mesolithic sites (the Late Mesolithic bulk of the assemblage from Freeland Farm in the inner Tay estuary is dominated by carnelian) appear to be heavily dominated by lithics of chalcedony *sensu lato* (Nicol & Ballin 2019). The rolled nature of the finds provides a *terminus ante quem* date, as these finds must have been affected by the MHT.

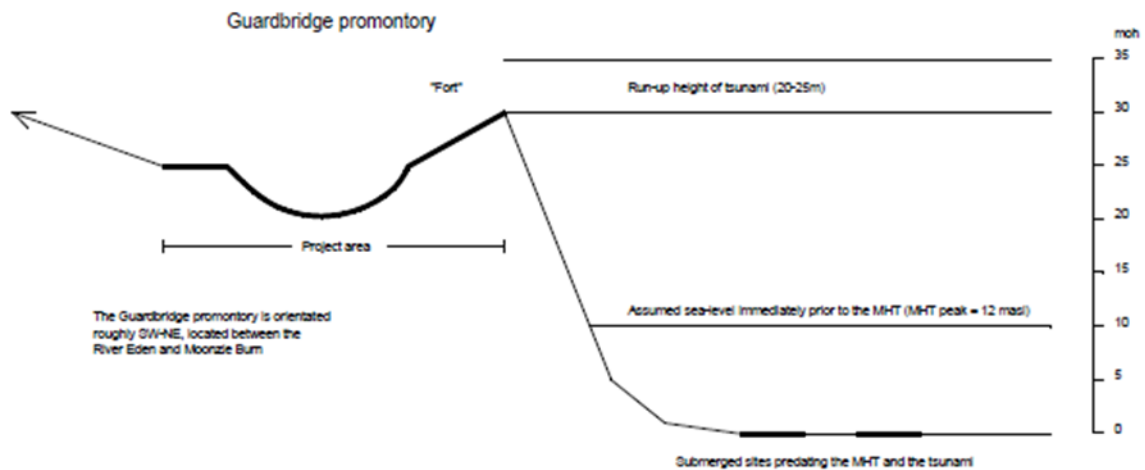


Fig. 2. Plan of the excavated Guardbridge promontory plateau, explaining how the rolled assemblage was interpreted.

Due to the redeposited nature of this assemblage, none of these pieces are directly associated with their parent features and they all entered the features with the back-fill when they were dug in the Neolithic or later periods.

At the beginning of the process of analysing this assemblage, the author initially thought that these artefacts could have been thrown onto the plateau of the Guardbridge promontory by storm surges at the time of the MHT. At this point of time, the sea level is believed in this region to have been approximately 12m above present sea level (Dawson & Cressey 2010). However, as the rolled lithics were found between the plateau's lowest and highest points, from c. 20 masl to almost 30 masl, this is an unlikely scenario.

It is more likely that the rolled pieces represent Early and early Late Mesolithic sites submerged by the MHT, which were located in the water at the base of the promontory. These rolled assemblages were then scooped up by the Storegga tsunami which may have had an impressive run-up height – it has been suggested that the tsunami may have had a height of 20–25m (Bondevik *et al.* 2003). As the MHT occurred immediately prior to the peak of the MHT, the water level at the time may have been approximately 10 masl (Fig. 2).

However, the run-up of the tsunami may have been higher in some parts of Scotland, such as inlets where the water was 'squeezed' from the sides, and adding the height of the tsunami to the already higher water level at the time of the MHT, it is quite likely that a substantial body of water washed straight across the top of the Guardbridge promontory (Fig. 2), depositing a number of rolled lithic artefacts from submerged settlements at its base across the plateau (a 'brief' event like the Storegga tsunami could not itself have abraded the edges of the lithics to the degree characterising the present sub-assemblage).

Geological investigations of locations a few kilometres north of Guardbridge, such as at Craigie Hill and Silver Moss, north of Leuchars, have provided evidence of the effects of a Mesolithic period tsunami, and the dating of this event corresponds to the dating of similar geological locations elsewhere in Britain, as well as in Norway, the Faroes, Iceland and Greenland (Smith *et al* 2004) – c. 6160 cal BC.

Acknowledgements

I would very much like to thank Maureen Kilpatrick and Warren Bailie from GUARD Archaeology for permitting me to produce this wee note on the ‘tsunami lithics’ from Guardbridge. I am also grateful to professor Alastair Dawson from University of Dundee for help and advice, not least in connection with my search for literature relating to the Storegga tsunami.

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Introducing CHROMA: Cultural Heritage Review on Map Accessibility

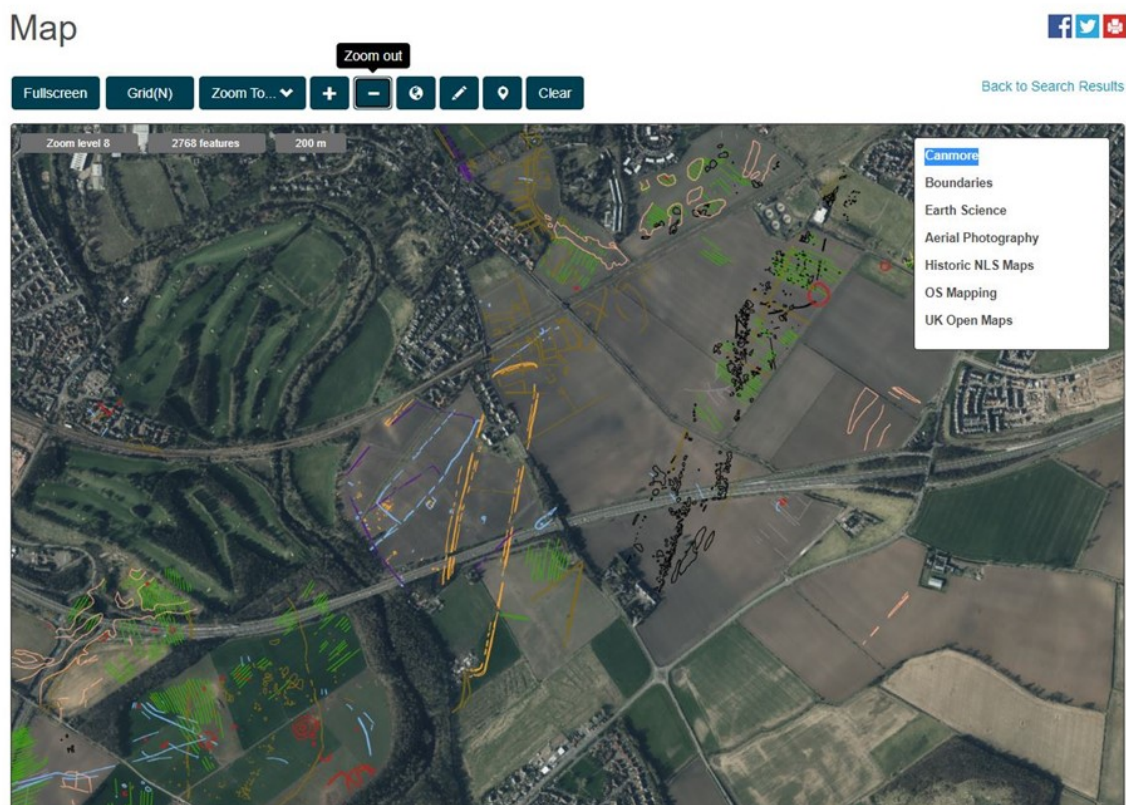
Peter McKeague, Historic Environment Scotland and Ceri Binding, University of South Wales

According to [Colour Blind Awareness](#), about 4.5% of the UK population (about 1 in 12 men and 1 in 200 women) have difficulty distinguishing shades of colour – known as Colour Visual Deficiency (CVD). Many others with challenges to vision may find it difficult to clearly interpret map keys and heritage sites marked on maps.

Historic Environment Scotland hosts a range of survey material from its own field survey and airborne mapping programmes (Fig 1) whilst many archaeological projects also undertake survey work across Scotland. To date, there is no agreed standard for documenting interpretation of the archaeological landscape observed from a range of survey techniques including aerial photographic transcription, Airborne Laser Scanning (LiDAR) interpretation, field survey geophysical survey and excavation. Individual organisations and projects have their own approaches limiting the potential for reusing expensively gathered data later on.

CHROMA seeks to address the twin challenges of presenting information from a range of survey techniques and providers consistently and improving the effective reuse (interoperability) of primary data collected in the field. To do so, CHROMA aims to define a consistent set of rules to create a CVD friendly map legend informed by the terms used in the Scottish Monument thesaurus (as used in [Canmore](#) and [Heritagedata.org](#)). The challenge is complicated by the colour rich background layers of orthoimagery or the Ordnance Survey map base which already takes account of CVD users.

Later this summer we will be launching an online consultation to evaluate potential solutions for presenting field survey and airborne data online. Look out for link to the HES Citizen Space survey on social media.



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Figure 1: Extract of Historic Environment Scotland airborne mapping for the complex archaeological landscape at Inveresk, East Lothian as currently displayed on [Canmore](#).
Orthoimagery © Bluesky International Ltd and Getmapping Plc 2023.



Figure 2: online simulators help visualise how our map data appears to different viewer

Screenshot of detail from the airborne mapping layer at Inveresk displayed in Canmore viewed in a Colour Vision Simulator: <https://asada.website/webCVS/>.

Top left pane: as viewed with normal vision

Top right pane: as viewed with Protanopia red/green colour blindness with red weakness

Bottom left pane: as viewed with Deuteranopia – red/green colour blindness with green weakness

Bottom right pane: as viewed with Tritanopia or blue/ yellow colour blindness

Orthoimagery © Bluesky International Ltd and Getmapping Plc 2023.

Carleith Farm Fortlet

Nick Hannon & Hazel Blake, Historic Environment Scotland

Historic Environment Scotland’s “Seeing Beneath the Ground: a Partnership for Geophysics” project started in July 2020 with five years funding from the Historic Scotland Foundation. The team use a range of geophysical survey techniques including gradiometer, ground penetrating radar, and electro-magnetic survey to address a range of research and management questions, contributing to the development in the use of geophysical survey in Scotland. The team have carried out survey work at various locations throughout Scotland, including on The Antonine Wall in Scotland’s central belt.

Recent work by the team has discovered the buried remains of a Roman Fortlet dating back nearly 1900 years to the reign of Emperor Antoninus Pius.

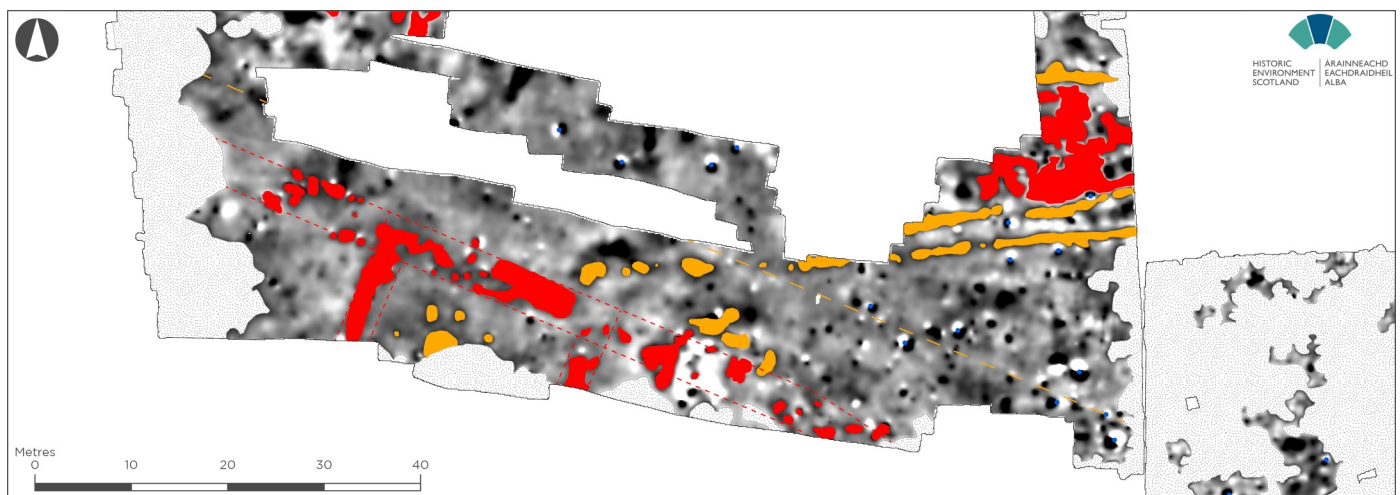


Figure 1: Results of the Gradiometer survey with added interpretation showing the fortlet © HES

The Fortlet once stood next to the Antonine Wall, the frontier that the Romans built across central Scotland, and was thought lost in the mists of time. But geophysical survey in an unassuming field near Carleith Primary School in West Dunbartonshire revealed details lost for hundreds of years.

The discovery was made as the team followed up a reference from 1707 by antiquarian Robert Sibbald who mentioned that he had seen a Fortlet in the area around Carleith Farm. Archaeological excavations in the 1970’s and 1980’s did not find any trace of the fortlet, and its exact location remained unknown. Undaunted, the team conducted a gradiometer survey to investigate the area. Gradiometry measures small changes in earth’s magnetic field to detect archaeological features that are otherwise invisible from the ground surface. This allows the team to search for buried archaeology without digging holes. At Carleith Farm, the survey identified the footprint of the buried Roman Fortlet, not far from where the excavations were carried out in the past. This discovery has led to Historic Environment Scotland reviewing the

site's designation to ensure the Fortlet is recognised and protected.

People have been exploring the Antonine Wall for centuries, and it is exciting that the geophysical survey has been able to confirm an observation made over 300 years ago! Knowing the location of the fortlet adds important new information about Scotland's Roman frontier. The Antonine Wall is one of Scotland's six [UNESCO World Heritage Sites](#), which recognises its importance internationally. The geophysical survey helps to better understand and protect this important monument and shows that there is still more to be discovered about this important Roman monument even after centuries of enquiry.



Figure 2: Geophysics team member Hazel Blake operating the Gradiometer at Carleith Farm © HES

An Update from the Scottish Crannog Centre

Greetings, esteemed readers,

We are thrilled to be able to share our organisation updates on the awe-inspiring process of building our new museum. The undertaking has proven to be a formidable endeavor. Cliff edges loom before us daily, while colossal boulders seem to obstruct our path from all directions. These constant obstacles have necessitated adaptations in our plans and approaches, with materials perpetually in demand and the next task seemingly forever "a week away." Nevertheless, we steadfastly march forward, for progress, no matter how incremental, remains progress nonetheless.

It is essential, amidst the daily toil, to occasionally cast our gaze backward, rather than perpetually forward. Less than two years ago, we found ourselves bereft of a plan, grappling with the devastating loss of the Crannog to a devastating fire. The future appeared uncertain, with no clear direction or destination in sight. However, upon reflection, we are immensely proud to stand amidst the foundations of an iron-age village taking shape on our site, gradually converging towards completion. This transformation is a testament to the remarkable resilience and adaptability of the Crannog team.

In our pursuit of excellence, our team of dedicated volunteers has played a pivotal role. Over the past few weeks alone, their unwavering commitment has resulted in over 500 volunteer hours contributed by over 30 exceptional individuals. Their involvement and expertise have been instrumental in shaping our vision and advancing our cause. This remarkable achievement has been further augmented by the commencement of the weaving process for the roundhouse roof this week. Additionally, we eagerly anticipate the installation of timber for our other demonstration shelters in the upcoming week.

While recent weeks have presented us with unforeseen delays, it is important to recognize the extraordinary accomplishments we have attained within the context of the challenges we face. The unwavering determination and sheer force of will exhibited by the Crannog team serve as an awe-inspiring testimony to our collective direction and purpose. Indeed, the progress we have made in these uncertain times is nothing short of remarkable.

We are pleased to announce that we are nearing the final stages of completion for the roundhouse, as we diligently engage in the intricate process of weaving the basket to finalize the roof assembly. In parallel, we have meticulously attended to all necessary preparations for the immersive Iron Age village, ensuring that every foundational aspect is poised for immediate implementation. The remarkable progress achieved in the construction of the wood shelter is a testament to the exceptional skills and unwavering dedication of our esteemed team of carpenters. Furthermore, we are delighted to report that our trusted contractors are nearing the completion of the car park, marking a significant milestone in the initial phases of our new build undertaking. As we eagerly approach these pivotal junctures, we anticipate traversing the

first stages of our ambitious project with great enthusiasm.

We extend our deepest gratitude to all who have contributed to our cause thus far, from our dedicated volunteers to the resilient members of the Crannog team. It is your unwavering support and unwavering dedication that propels us ever forward. Together, we continue to defy the odds and surpass expectations, as we strive to complete our ambitious venture.

As we embark on the next chapter of our journey, we remain steadfast in our commitment to excellence and the preservation of history. Stay tuned for more enthralling updates, as we continue to push the boundaries of what is possible at the Crannog Centre.

Wishing you all the best,

The Crannog Centre Team



Image 1: A view of the progress of the roundhouse © Scottish Crannog Centre

ScARF Update July 2023

New Thematic Frameworks

Antonine Wall Framework

[Frontiers of the Roman Empire World Heritage Site: The Antonine Wall](#) is the latest thematic framework to be added to the ScARF website. The Antonine Wall was the most densely defined of the Roman frontier systems, as well as the largest turf-built structure in the Roman Empire.



*Oblique aerial view looking west from the fort at Rough Castle showing the Wall and ditches
© Rediscovering the Antonine Wall*

This framework explores the importance and value of this World Heritage site, and creating the research agenda is part of the process of helping us to understand, sustain, interpret and promote this significant monument in its global, national and local context.

Boyne to Brodgar

[Boyne to Brodgar: Making Monuments, Creating Communities](#) has a new home on the ScARF website. This is an innovative project, focusing on the Neolithic monuments across Scotland, Ireland and Northern Ireland. These range from the iconic World Heritage Sites of Brú na Bóinne and the Heart of Neolithic Orkney to less well-known henges and timber circles. This international, interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral initiative is co-operative, socially inclusive and environmentally sustainable, featuring archaeologists, heritage professionals, educators and community groups, in the UK, Ireland and beyond.

As part of this framework, a brand-new case study has also been added to the ScARF website. [Awakening Sleeping Giants](#) explores the value of community engagement on the Isle of Arran and aims both encourage and enable local action that is supported by international and national research frameworks and thematic strategies.

Regional Frameworks

SIRFA

The final symposium for Scotland's Islands Research Framework for Archaeology ([SIRFA](#)) took place in March in Kirkwall, Orkney. The event involved over 130 delegates coming together for eight period and thematic sessions, three fieldtrips, two evening receptions and a public talk delivered by Alice Lyall. We aimed to discuss and contribute useful research questions relating to the SIRFA framework, as well as analyse gaps in our understanding of archaeology across the islands.

As part of ScARF's ongoing support for students and Early Career Researchers in Scottish Archaeology, 10 students were offered bursaries for the SIRFA Symposium in Orkney. The recipients undertook the crucial role of documenting the discussion sessions and providing feedback to the delegates each day. Their notes and recordings are now being utilised in the final stages of the SIRFA project. Keep an eye on the [ScARF website](#) for brand new case studies from each of the bursary recipients about their fascinating research.



Panoramic view of Rackwick Bay during a fieldtrip to Hoy at the SIRFA Symposium © ScARF

SESARF Symposium

In May, ScARF hosted a one-day symposium in Edinburgh to gain valuable feedback and discuss research questions for the final stages of the South East Scotland Archaeological Research Framework ([SESARF](#)). Research questions, submitted by the chapter authors and a recent survey, from the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic to the early medieval periods were explored throughout the day. This resulted in extremely useful feedback and insights into the diverse archaeology of the South East region. Keep an eye on ScARF's social media and future newsletters for updates as the project nears its launch.

Clyde Valley

The Clyde Valley project ([CVARE](#)) has now officially begun, with the first steering group meeting held at the University of Glasgow in May. The Clyde Valley region offers a unique opportunity to work with community groups, schools and local projects from Scotland's most densely populated area.

If you'd like to be added to the CVARE mailing list to stay up to date with the latest project news, please get in touch with the ScARF team.

Finally, a brand-new case study has been added to the ScARF website to showcase the important work by the National Trust for Scotland (NTS) in West Central Scotland. This region is home to many significant buildings and estates, spanning from later prehistory to the 19th century. This is a great addition to the Clyde Valley webpage, reminding us of the importance of this region as the framework project officially begins. The full case study is available to read [here](#).

Grants from the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland Fund Investigations into Scotland's past

The Society of Antiquaries of Scotland announced in April that it has awarded a total of £26,251.00 to 15 archaeological and historical projects exploring more than 10,000 years of Scotland's past, many of which will make direct contributions to Scotland's Archaeology Strategy.

For example, the 'Colouring the Neolithic: searching for pigments in Scotland's prehistoric rock art' project will seek to "revolutionise our understanding" of the Neolithic by searching for evidence that rock art was not always plain stone. The researchers were inspired by the evidence of colour on structures and artefacts in Orkney and examples of paintings over carvings in sites on the continent. Dr Joana Valdez-Tullett FSAScot, Prehistorian, Rock Art Specialist and Technical Specialist at Wessex Archaeology, and Dr Louisa Campbell FSAScot, Lord Kelvin Adam Smith Leadership Fellow in Archaeology at the University of Glasgow, will use rock art examples housed in Scottish museums to develop a pioneering approach to search for these 5,000-year-old pigment traces. The pair began their research in the Isle of Bute in the Firth of Clyde this summer.

Additional Society grants have been awarded to projects which will investigate traces of the earliest human populations on the Isle of Skye, and to students in the Scottish Archaeological Forum who are coordinating **a new conference** on 28-29 October 2023 in Aberdeen, which will highlight efforts to address the under-representation of marginalised groups within archaeology.

The Society supports high-quality research and publication relating to Scotland's past by making several grants and awards each year. The **grants** are open to everyone and the deadlines are 30 April and 30 November each year. Find out more on their website: <https://www.socantscot.org/grants-awards/>.



Dr Campbell and Dr Valdez-Tullett at Lubas, Isle of Bute (Photo by Anne Speirs)

Interpreting sculptures

After a decade of research, the Historic Environment Scotland Cultural Resources team have finally been able to publish two exciting reports interpreting sculptures at Stirling Castle Palace, written by Dr Sally Rush from the University of Glasgow.

Research on the stone sculpture and wood carvings, the Stirling Heads, from the Renaissance palace at Stirling Castle began in 2003 and was intended to support the re-presentation and interpretation of the palace. With so many sculptures and carvings to identify and interpret, the research is a significant and ongoing project, with these reports just part of the work.

The reports can be downloaded from the Historic Environment Scotland website [here](#)



Definitions and other animals: when is a hillfort not a hillfort?

Murray Cook, Rampart Scotland

Due to a monumental effort from the team behind Atlas of Hillforts of Britain and Ireland Project (Lock & Ralston 2022) it is now possible to say how many hillforts there are in Scotland. Except of course it isn't.... I on my own have found another two (Cook & MacIver 2023; Cook et al 2023) and there quite a few of us digging in Scotland....let alone the rest of Britain and Ireland. Of course in order to know how many there are you must, Mrs Beaton style, first define what a hillfort is. This is a subjective process but in essence it must have a minimum of 0.15ha be in a prominent position and have a suitably imposing scale of enclosing works (Lock & Ralston 2022: 30-31). And this is really t I really wanted to talk about a wee site near Kippen that I've been digging with the local community over the last three years: Keir Hill of Dasher which is apparently not a hillfort.



Image 1: Keir Hill of Dasher

Keir Hill of Dasher (Canmore ID 45348) is a small enclosed site, sitting on the eastern edge of Kippen (NS 6534 9511). It sits on a rocky promontory on the left bank of the Cuthbertson Burn at a height of 33.5m od and located near to a series of fording points over the Forth (Cook forthcoming a). It measures internally 41m from ENE to WSW by 30m transversely and is defined partly by a stony bank measuring up to 10m in width and 1.2m in height, and partly by the crest of the steep rocky bank of the burn. The northern section of this bank appears to have

collapsed down the slope. The eastern end of the bank has an external ditch which cuts off the tip of the promontory; the height from the bottom of the ditch to the crest of the bank is 4.45m, while that to the outer lip is 0.79m. At the western end, a gap in the bank is considered to be the original entrance and there is evidence for another ditch though it is not clear if this surrounds the entire site.

The site was originally surveyed by the RCAHMS (1963, 418) who spotted the eastern ditch but not the western one. The bulk of the site is also a Scheduled Monument (2573) but this excludes the ditches. While the 'keir' placename may have older origins in 'caer', an old Celtic or Gaelic word meaning fort (Watson 1926, 365-369), the formulation 'keir hill of...' is argued by Peter McNiven (2011, 122-3) to be a 17th/18th century construct.

And so to definitions the RCAHMS (1963:3418) defined the site as an 'Earthwork' which was clearly the amorphous category for monuments no one could work out what they were. This classification still stands today (CANMORE ID 45348) and the RCAHMS thesaurus defines an earthwork as '*a bank or mound of earth used as a rampart or fortification*'. Perhaps we might paraphrase this as something that looks a bit like a hillfort but isn't really. Now into this mix we have to add chronology. You really can't have a hillfort built after the coronation of David I as this is the advent of the medieval period. People certainly built fortifications in this period but these are mottes (definition) but when were the first mottes built. The Peel of Lumphanan (CANMORE ID 17497) is tentatively linked to MacBeth (R 1032-1057). Richard Oram (2008) has written extensively about such early fortifications but they are very rare as obviously successful ones kept being built on thus destroying whatever was there before. But it is clear many mottes are a very mixed bag of site, in Stirling there appear to be quite a few natural mounds with small scale ramparts and ditches round them (RCAHMS 1963: 173-178).

Looking from the other end ...when was Scotland's last hillfort built? In Stirling the Abbey Craig, a vitrified fort has a very late radiocarbon date associated with internal activity perhaps even the refortification of the site (Cook forthcoming b). The abandonment of hillforts for unenclosed high status sites is the broad consensus (Alcock 2003; Fraser 2009, 366; Driscoll 2011). So in summary between 800 and 1000 hillforts stop being built but fortifications are still required and so we have a series of hybrid earthworks....not quite hillforts and not quite mottes.

So what then is Keir Hill of Dasher...must it forever remain an amorphous earthwork? The answer of course lies with the testimony of the spade! After three seasons into Keir Hill of Dasher I can now confirm that the ditch to the east has charcoal dating to cal AD 996-1153 (SUERC 88604) while the ditch to the west has charcoal to cal BC 24-cal AD 123 (UBA-49640). Both are discrete entities and do not join. The ditch to the west measured 6m wide and up 1.8m and would create the impression of a 3-4m high rampart. The ditch to the east measured 7m wide and up to 1.5m deep. The most recent season identified a paved causeway 1m below the current ground surface and 0.8m above the Roman Iron Age charcoal. This appears to suggest a Roman Iron Age small hillfort which was refortified as 10th/12th century earthwork/motte type thing that is never subsequently redeveloped. Elsewhere I have argued that this latter phase may be connected with the Forth as a frontier between Northumbria and Alba (Cook forthcoming b).

The coronation of David I moves Alba's border to the Tweed and thus perhaps making Keir Hill of Dasher a stranded military asset... a Viking Age Maginot Line? This of course may make the site incredibly important regardless of precisely what we call it. We have charcoal from the paved causeway into the Keir and there may be 12th century East Coast White Gritty to the immediate east (pers comm Derek Hall).....so watch this space!



Image 2: The Western Ditch Under Excavation

But if I can end on a slightly polemical note I am slightly exasperated about the weight and value that was put on a 70 year old survey that was never ground truthed and which led to an inaccurate Scheduled Area. The irony of course is that it was only this inaccurate Scheduled Area that allowed the site's true significance to be discovered. My hackles are further raised by how hard it is to actually dig on a Scheduled Monument. We knew nothing about the site and yet any SMC application would require a detailed research strategy....into what precisely? Why is it not enough to simply to ask when does this site date to and to propose a series of key-holes of less than 1% of a site to find this evidence? Especially on a site like Keir Hill of Dasher's case which is slowly but being naturally afforested? Once this evaluation phase is done we can refine our questions. Such a position is proposed by SCARF but it is far from easy to enact and in my personal opinion gets harder and harder each year. I have even been told that I shouldn't really as an individual be applying for Scheduled Monument Consent and that it is better done by Universities...even worse I was also told that I was incapable of distinguishing topsoil from significant archaeological layers. I understand that nationally important monuments have to be protected from development and accidental damage but can we not agree a streamlined process for research evaluations? The time, effort and money would surely be better spent on digging than responding to ever more demands for fatuous paperwork? In addition, as this paperwork increases so does the time lag for pre-applications discussions, which take several months and in one case up to a year waiting for a response with several reminders being sent. It appears that there is a danger of process triumphing over outcome.

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Scottish Archaeological Forum

Scottish Archaeological Forum was established in 1969 with a goal to further and promote archaeological research in Scotland. It is currently run by a group of postgraduate and early career archaeologists based around Scotland. After a ten-year hiatus, SAF hosted a successful hybrid conference in 2021 and are excited to build upon this with their 2023 conference.

Whose Past Is It Anyway?

Rethinking 'insiders' and 'outsiders' in Scottish Archaeology

The Scottish Archaeological Forum Committee is pleased to invite the submission of papers for our 2023 conference to be held on the **28th and 29th October** at the University of Aberdeen, Scotland.

Organised by volunteers from academic and commercial backgrounds both within and outwith Scotland, SAF aims to bring together all of those engaged with researching, curating or presenting the archaeological record on a professional or voluntary level.

We would like to invite contributions for oral presentations (20 mins) and posters (A1 portrait) to the Committee by midday on **Monday 31st July**. Subject to any restrictions, we hope to have a hybrid conference with attendees and participants having the option to take part either online or in person.

This year's theme is: **Whose past it is anyway? Rethinking 'insiders' and 'outsiders' in Scottish Archaeology** and we are welcoming presentations on projects which challenge pre-conceptions, spotlight marginalised voices and aim to make archaeology more accessible to the wider community.

Through the theme of 'insiders' and 'outsiders' we are looking to highlight efforts to address the under-representation of certain groups within archaeology, both in representations of Scotland's heritage and in current archaeological practice. While archaeological evidence shows Scotland's past to have always been one of multiple communities, there is an increasing awareness of inequality remaining within modern archaeological discourse. This year's conference welcomes spoken and poster presentations on initiatives which challenge pre-conceptions, spotlight marginalised voices and aim to make Scottish archaeology more accessible to the wider community.

The [Call for Papers](#) contains the session suggestions, which have been kept quite broad to invite as much participation as possible. Please feel free to share this with colleagues and students who might be interested and be sure to follow us on social media to get up-to-date information about the conference.

If you have questions, please get in touch at cpdservices@abdn.ac.uk.

For more information about SAF and the committee please visit our [website](#).

We look forward to your contributions,
SAF Committee

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