



Case Study
Exploring Old Auchinleck
Archaeology Scotland's Attainment through Archaeology Programme

Overview

Exploring Old Auchinleck was a five-week project of Archaeology Scotland's Attainment through Archaeology Programme. Working with pupils from Auchinleck Academy, the project provided a flexible work placement for pupils currently not attending mainstream classes. Exploring Old Auchinleck was designed for participants to develop new skills and become accustomed to being productive in a workplace. By taking part in heritage activities, it was hoped that participants would be able to develop new skills, new life experiences, expand their horizons and hopefully take pride in their community's past. Focusing on recording heritage features surviving within Auchinleck, participants took part in a range of activities throughout 9 workshops, spread over 5 weeks. 11 participants were signed up for the project, which ran during 2018.

The project looked at two main themes throughout the workshops – the industrial past of Auchinleck and Old Auchinleck Cemetery. Workshops took place both indoors (where participants learnt about the role of an archaeologist, the study of artefacts and how to complete archival research utilising web-based resources) and outdoors (where participants completed field survey, site survey, building survey and gravestone baseline condition survey). Much of the outdoor work was completed at Old Auchinleck Cemetery. However, two former pitheads were also visited over the course of the project. It was hoped by learning new skills through completing heritage activities, participants could then go on to a more formal work placement relevant to their career aspirations.

Exploring Old Auchinleck took a flexible approach for each workshop, enabling participants to attend at any stage of the project. Although attendance for some was sporadic, 54% of the participants attended more than half of the workshops, with three participants each contributing over 26 hours to the project (out of a total 36 hours offered by the project). Feedback from the participants indicated that they enjoyed the flexible nature of the workshops (they appreciated not being constrained to the classroom) and all the participants enjoyed different activities. This last point highlights that the range of activities developed for the project resulted in there being something for everyone, regardless of existing skill level or knowledge. Participants did request that future projects incorporate more sites to visit as some got bored of returning to the same site (Old Auchinleck Cemetery).

Archaeology Scotland surveyed the participants at the start and end of the project to see how much they knew about archaeology. In week one, 77% of participants felt that they knew nothing about archaeology, with 23% reporting they knew a little. However, by week five, 80% of participants felt that they now knew a little about archaeology, with 20% reporting that they felt like they knew a lot.

Throughout the project, Archaeology Scotland kept in touch with Auchinleck Academy receiving updates and feedbacks from the co-ordinating teacher.

"The activities sound great and it sounds like they are engaging a bit more. I spoke to [Participant K] who has been very negative about it to start with and he said of Wednesday, "It was actually alright!" and I think that's about as close as you are likely to get to a positive statement from [Participant K] :) so well done!!"



Activities Completed

- Site Survey (Plane table survey)
- Technical drawing (Scaled drawings of elevations)
- Archival Research (Desk-based Assessment)
- Gravestone condition survey
- Monument condition survey
- Building condition survey (level one)
- Health and Safety briefing
- Photography
- Creating 3D Digital Models of heritage assets

Benefits for the Heritage

A baseline condition survey of targeted gravestones was completed, as was a basic (level one) building survey of the Old Church (a Category B Listed structure) within Old Auchinleck Cemetery. By creating these records, the participants have contributed to the existing records of the site and produced an important baseline condition record for future practitioners to refer to when monitoring baseline change of this regionally important feature.

This work has also contributed to enhancing the understanding and appreciation participants have of their local heritage and challenged perceptions of what heritage or archaeology could be. For example, Auchinleck is situated close to Dumfries House, which participants recognised as an important heritage feature. However by the end of the project, participants had developed new knowledge and understanding of their local industrial built heritage, together with the need to monitor baseline change.

Photographs from the survey are archived with the National Record of the Historic Environment by Archaeology Scotland and the project was reported and published within the 'Discovery and Excavation in Scotland' journal.

Benefits for the people

All the participants who attended at least one workshop gained a Heritage Hero Award, with five participants achieving a Bronze award. By taking part in the workshop activities, participants demonstrated they had skills in

- Analytical thinking
- Asking the right questions
- Timekeeping
- Independent thought
- Working with a team
- Completing a task when asked
- Applying new knowledge to tasks onsite
- Problem Solving
- ICT Skills

Each participant received an Achievement Sheet, listing key tasks they had taken part in and skills they had demonstrated throughout the project.



Example Achievement Sheet

Name	Participant X
Project	Auld Auchinleck
Hours contributed to project	26/36 hours
Tasks Completed	Health and safety briefing Field survey (graffiti) Field survey – former pitheads Condition/Field survey (Auchinleck old church) Photographic Survey Monument condition survey End of project presentation 3-D modelling of gravestone
Skills Demonstrated	Analytical thinking Asking the right questions Timekeeping Independent thought Working with a team Completing a task when asked Applying new knowledge to tasks onsite Problem Solving ICT Skills
Tasks and Skills Verified by	Cara Jones, Project Manager AtA Archaeology Scotland