

Archaeology and...

...new discoveries



Routine surveys and excavations sometimes come up with surprising and unexpected discoveries. This underlines the importance of collecting good background information for all sites, and where possible to enhance that record with further survey and evaluation.

Alloa prison and well

Builders working on the restoration of 14th-century Alloa Tower were surprised when a hole suddenly appeared in the floor. The hole turned out to be a complete room below the ground floor of the tower: a pit prison, where wrong-doers would have been thrown and imprisoned in appalling conditions.

During the same building works on the Clackmannanshire tower, archaeologists were thrilled to find that a fireplace – itself blocked in the 17th century – concealed a beautifully made well chamber, part of the first phase of the tower. The location of the well at this height shows that the kitchens must also have been on first floor level, and not on the ground floor as might have been expected.



The newly discovered opening leading to the Alloa Tower well chamber



High-quality stone was used to create the chamber for the well

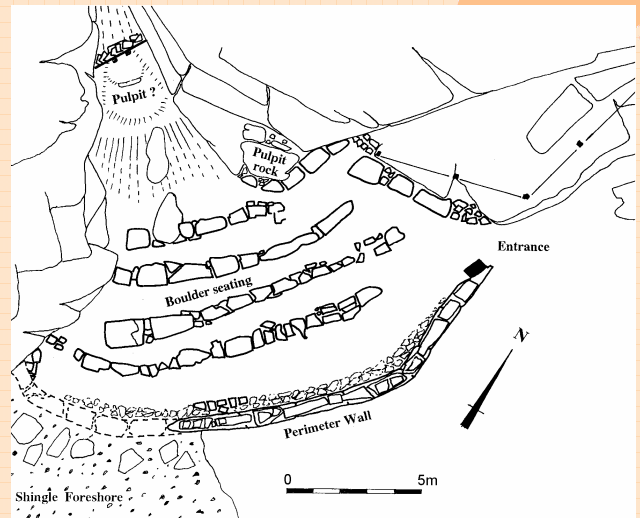
A pulpit rock overlooks the stone benches of the Torridon open-air church



Monumental preaching site at Torridon

A survey of the archaeological sites near the West Highland village of Torridon revealed the presence of an impressive open-air church.

The site, by the shore, is protected by a large drystone wall, and features a pulpit rock and semi-circles of benches made from massive stone blocks. Although well known to local people, this remarkable 19th-century site had never been officially recorded.



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