

Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust | Planning Archaeology Service

Historic Environment Guidance

Historic Churches and Churchyards **in Perth and Kinross**

Site designations checks and procedures





Introduction

Churches and graveyards are an important part of the Historic Environment and need appropriately protected and preserved. Repair works, installation of new drainage, benches, tree planting, maintenance of gravestones, and emergency works are part of a suite of works that may require some consideration before being undertaken. This is to ensure no damage is caused to the Historic Environment, compliance with current legislation and to fulfil the Local Authority's duty of care.

They are likely to fall into two classes:

Designated Sites: This means they have been identified as a site of national importance and have Statutory (legal) Protection. This may be as a [Scheduled Monument](#), or an A [Listed Building](#) (Grade B and C are the authority of the planning authority). Some works, e.g. excavation within Scheduled Monuments, need prior consent from Historic Environment Scotland (HES) who manage Scheduled and A listed assets. All listed buildings should also be discussed with PKC Conservation Officers in advance of works. **Working in these areas without authority from HES could be illegal and result in fines or even prosecution.**

Undesignated Sites: These are sites that do not have statutory protection but still have archaeological and historical significance and value. They make up the majority of the Historic Environment and are managed regionally by, or on behalf of, Local Authorities. **For Perth and Kinross this service is provided by [Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust \(PKHT\)](#).**

A database of designated sites is maintained by HES through the Designations Portal; a database of undesignated sites in Perth and Kinross is maintained by PKHT through the [Historic Environment Record](#) (HER).

How to find out if your site is Designated or Undesignated

It is the developer's/ work commissioner's responsibility to find out whether your site is designated or undesignated and notify the relevant organisation if you are undertaking any alterations or works. The best way to do this is conducting a desk-based search using [PastMap](#).

PastMap is a map-based web tool, developed by Historic Environment Scotland and partners (including Local Authority archaeologists), which displays the location and extents of a number of heritage-related data sets as layers on a map. You can search for sites in a variety of ways including through post codes, co-ordinates or zooming in on the map. Ensure that the Scheduled Monument, Listed Building and Historic Environment Records are ticked in the menu on the left and that you are zoomed in far enough for these to display. Clicking on a site on the map will bring up the record and more information in the menu on the left.

Who to Contact

If your site is a Scheduled Monument or A Listed, you should contact HES via Nicki Hall (nicola.hall@hes.scot)

If your site is a Listed Building (A, B, or C), you should contact PKC's Conservation Officer Diane Barbary (dianebarbary@pkc.gov.uk) and also seek guidance from PKHT on any below ground works out with standard graveyard tasks i.e. burial (see below for contacts)

If your site is on the Historic Environment Record, or you believe it to be a historic churchyard, you should contact PKHT via Sophie Nicol (Sophie.Nicol@pkht.org.uk) or Grace Woolmer-White (gwoolmer@pkht.org.uk)

If you have any further queries, are unsure about anything, or need some advice please contact PKHT.

Site work considerations

There are a few common sensitivities when working in historic graveyards or archaeological sites. These are human remains or structural fragments relating to earlier church buildings or activity on the site – e.g. historic gravestones, medieval foundations, skeletons etc. The boundary of the churchyard may have changed over time so even though works may appear to be in an area at the very edge (i.e. footings of boundary walls) there is still potential for disturbance of unknown archaeological remains. Suggested mitigation may include archaeological monitoring, standing building survey, fencing off of heritage assets during works, photographic surveys, and post excavation analysis.

In most cases where a situation is deemed sensitive (e.g. excavation of a new service, new path, repair work or bench footings within a known SM or undesignated site) a professional archaeologist may be required to monitor and report on the findings. These archaeologists are commercial practitioners and a list of those that work in the area can be found online here <http://www.bajr.org/RACsmap/default.asp>

If a site is reported/deemed as dangerous PKHT strongly recommend that the area is fenced off for safety and the relevant party contacted in advance of any remedial works where possible. This is particularly important for designated sites.

If your proposed works involve any excavation or breaking of soil in any manner, then advice from the relevant party should be sought prior to starting on site.

Online Resources

PastMap <https://pastmap.org.uk/>

Scottish Government, Burial Ground Memorial Safety guidance, 2019 - <https://www.gov.scot/publications/burial-ground-memorial-safety-guidance-scotlands-local-authorities/pages/2/>

HES, Conservation of Historic Graveyards: Guide for Practitioners 2, 2001 - <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/publications/publication/?publicationId=7a74107f-5d49-473d-bf3e-a5ad00a281d6>

Burial Regulations Working Group - ongoing <https://www.gov.scot/groups/burial-regulations-working-group/>

