

The Historic Environment: A short guide for local communities



Rock Art Community Excavation at Mains of Murthly © Fraser Band

October 2025

Introduction

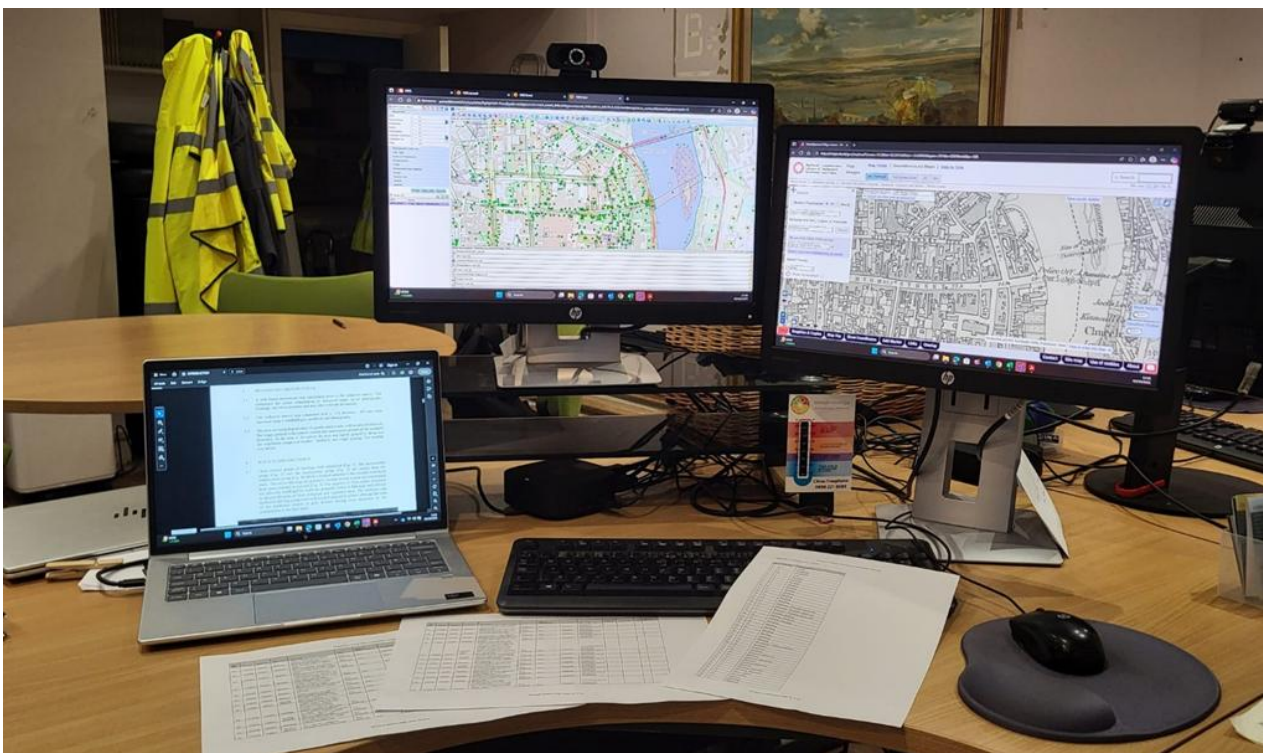
The Historic Environment is all around us, from our historic castles to buried archaeological remains, ancient hill forts to village churches and graveyards, and domestic homes. Some of these sites are protected by law, but all historic sites require additional consideration when you are thinking of projects that include them. If you are unsure, it's always best to check your site first before you start.

Historic sites 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, which should be taken into consideration before any proposed changes or work. Generally, any building more than 100 years old is taken to be "historic". This can include seemingly mundane structures, such as houses, shops, milestones, and agricultural buildings. More recent structures of cultural, architectural, or historic significance, such as memorials or Second World War defences, may also be classed as undesignated historic sites. Undesignated sites make up the majority of the Historic Environment and are managed regionally by, or on behalf of, Local Authorities. **For Perth and Kinross this is service is provided by [Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust \(PKHT\)](#).**

A database of designated historic sites is maintained by HES through the Designations Portal.



PKHT maintains the Perth and Kinross [Historic Environment Record \(HER\)](#). This searchable database contains records of all known historic sites in the council area, both designated and undesignated. Information is also held on artefact findspots, Gardens and Designed Landscapes, Conservation Areas, Battlefields, and on archaeological events (e.g. excavations, field walking surveys) carried out within Perth and Kinross.

Please note it is your or your group's responsibility to find out whether your site is designated or undesignated and where necessary notify the relevant organisation/ authority prior to undertaking work or repairs.

How to find out if your site is Designated or Undesignated

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 (HES) 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.

More information on designated sites can be found directly on the [HES website](#).

Another source of information on historic sites available to the public is [Trove](#), also managed by HES. Trove includes a wide variety of information, including designation information, photographs, and details of previous archaeological investigations.

Looking at historical mapping, known as map regression, can also be useful. The National Library of Scotland has a wide selection of historical maps available for public viewing via their [website](#).

PKHT is also happy to assist members of the public with any queries involving the historic environment. See our contact details below.

Who to Contact

If your site is on the Historic Environment Record, you think it should be, please contact PKHT via Findlay Young (Findlay.Young@pkht.org.uk) or info@pkht.org.uk.

If your site is a Scheduled Monument or an A Listed building, you should contact HES designations team via designations@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 (see below for contact)

If you find a small find or artefact you should contact Treasure Trove Scotland. Under Scottish law all portable antiquities of archaeological, historical or cultural significance are subject to claim by the Crown and must be reported. Failure to do so can lead to prosecution, fines, and even jail time. Please contact treasuretrove@nms.ac.uk directly.

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

Online Resources

NLS <https://maps.nls.uk/>

HES <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/advice-and-support/listing-scheduling-and-designations/>

Trove <https://www.trove.scot/>

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

Treasure Trove Scotland <https://www.treasuretrovescotland.co.uk/information/information-for-finders/>

[Perth and Kinross Historic Environment Record - Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust](#)

CiFA Standards & Guidelines <https://www.archaeologists.net/codes/cifa>