

**SCAPE**

Scottish Coastal Archaeology  
and the Problem of Erosion



# The SCAPE Trust Annual Report 2005

The SCAPE Trust, St Katherine's Lodge, South Street, St Andrews, KY16 9AL Tel. 01334 467172

## AIM

The SCAPE Trust is a registered charity that aims to enhance awareness of Scotland's coast, and the way that people have lived, worked and had an influence upon it. SCAPE is interested in all of the archaeological sites and ancient landscapes found around the coast, whether they be the remains of the first settlers or concrete bunkers erected during the Second World War.

Much of Scotland's coastal heritage is at risk from erosion, and SCAPE works with others to record or conserve these remains before they are lost forever. SCAPE co-operates with national organisations, regional bodies, archaeological units, academics and members of the local community. It aims to promote and protect Scotland's heritage so that it can be enjoyed by future generations.



photo © Tom Dawson

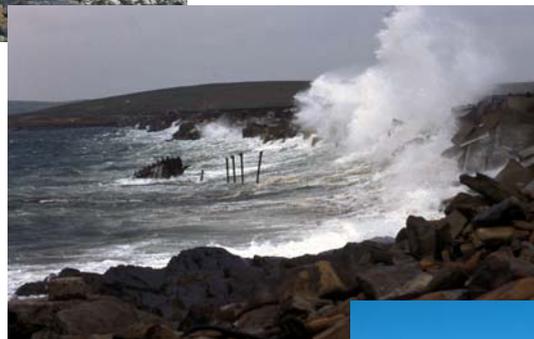


photo © Historic Scotland



photo © Tom Dawson

## Photos

*Cover: A large fish trap on the Firth of Forth - Culross, Fife (© Tom Dawson)*

*This page: Top - Wall buried in dunes, Sanday, Orkney*

*Centre - Storm waves batter the Churchill Barriers, Orkney*

*Bottom - Eroding prehistoric structure, Unst, Shetland*

The SCAPE Trust is grateful for financial assistance from the **Heritage Lottery Fund**, **Historic Scotland**, **The Russell Trust** and **Fife Council**. SCAPE also thanks the **University of St Andrews** for providing help in kind.

## FOREWORD

### Professor TC Smout, SCAPE Chair

Scotland's coast has played a vital role in the development of the nation, with people living and working on its shores since the country was first settled. Their mark has been left everywhere and SCAPE is working to help celebrate and preserve this wonderful heritage.

The previous year saw SCAPE's activity escalate, partly in response to the terrible winter storms that hit the west coast, and in particular, the Western Isles. With funding from Historic Scotland, we were able to set up and complete two coastal surveys, one of North Uist, the other of Grimsay, Benbecula and South Uist. These surveys showed that on top of the devastation wrought on the present-day inhabitants and buildings of the islands, the remains of their ancestors were also affected. Over one thousand archaeological sites were recorded in the surveys, half of which had never been noted before. It was the power of the storm that uncovered many of the sites, but in so doing, inevitably caused harm, making them vulnerable to further damage.



photo © Katinka Stentoft

*A site on North Uist damaged in the January storm*



photo © Historic Scotland

*Professor Gerry McCormac presents Tom Dawson (right) with the Silver Trowel*

Now that sites have been identified, SCAPE is working with members of the local community to record some of them before they disappear. This work is being done as part of the Shorewatch Project, a national scheme that helps interested people to record the coastal archaeology in their area. Shorewatch goes from strength to strength, and recognition of this was given when SCAPE was presented with the Silver Trowel in October 2004, the top prize in the biennial British Archaeological Awards.

SCAPE has helped some local groups to progress beyond simply locating and monitoring sites. Active investigation of the old salt pans eroding on the beach at Brora have helped uncover a huge industrial building which would have burned local coal to evaporate sea water. Another local group, in Shetland,

have worked with professional archaeologists to complete a thorough survey of a prehistoric site falling into the sea in Unst. They used a range of techniques and will return to dig part of the site this year.

SCAPE continues to inform people about our coastal heritage, and has contributed to numerous newspaper, magazine and television articles. We also organised a major conference in October that saw a range of thought-provoking papers presented at this well-attended event. The final session stimulated some very lively debate, especially on the role that amateurs could play in helping to record our threatened archaeological remains. The papers from the conference are being collected at present, and will be published in due course.

They will also be made available on the SCAPE website ([www.scapetrust.org](http://www.scapetrust.org)), which is becoming home to a series of reports. Grateful thanks for the design of our website go to Katinka Stentoft, who has now joined Tom Dawson to work on SCAPE projects. I am sure that with our new, enhanced team, SCAPE will continue to thrive in the coming year.

## PROJECTS

The following section lists some of the projects that The SCAPE Trust has managed or participated in during the financial year 2004 - 2005.

### COASTAL ZONE ASSESSMENT SURVEYS

SCAPE managed three Coastal Zone Assessment Surveys in the previous year, all funded by **Historic Scotland**. These surveys recorded information on the geology and geomorphology of the coast; gave an assessment of the erosion class (whether the coast is eroding, stable, accreting or some combination of the above); and listed all of the archaeological sites located within 50 metres of the coast edge.

The third and final survey of a three year project to investigate parts of the Clyde Estuary was completed by CFA Archaeology. They investigated the east coast of the Kintyre Peninsula and the south coast of Arran. CFA Archaeology also surveyed the west coast of North Uist, locating a staggering 880 sites in the 200 km walked. The west coasts of Grimsay, Benbecula and South Uist were investigated by EASE Archaeology. Copies of the reports (in pdf format) can be obtained from the SCAPE Trust (see [www.scapetrust.org](http://www.scapetrust.org)).

### SHOREWATCH

The Shorewatch Project continued to expand and there are now groups all around the coast, many of them on remote and far-flung islands. The groups have been locating and reporting a number of sites, and were able to highlight how the winter storms affected different locations. The project continues to be funded by the **Heritage Lottery Fund** and **Historic Scotland** and a summary of some group activities is presented below.

#### *Firth of Forth*

Shorewatch groups are helping to fill in gaps left in the Coastal Zone Assessment Surveys (CZAS). These



photo © Tom Dawson

*EAFS member measuring timbers in the Firth of Forth*

are intended to provide a snapshot of the coast on the day of the survey, and by their very nature, were meant to be completed rapidly. It is not expected that these rapid surveys will locate every site, but rather, give a broad indication of what is there. The *Edinburgh Archaeological Field Society* has been doing a thorough search of the intertidal zone of the south shore of the Firth of Forth. So far, they have located 50 new sites along a 10 km stretch of coast. Many of these are the remains of fish traps, and their work is providing valuable information, not just on the archaeology of the Forth, but on the way that future CZAS should be organised.

#### *Brora, Sutherland*

The *Clyne Heritage Society* has been concerned about some massive walls eroding out of the dunes on the Back Beach for a number of years. Their research has shown that these are probably the remains of some salt pans built by Lady Jane Gordon in 1598. They have collected photographs which show the extent that the walls survived in former years, and have even found a sketch plan drawn in the 1970s which indicates that many of the structures depicted have now disappeared.



photo © Tom Dawson

*Uncovering the walls of the Brora salt pans*

In order to see how much remained buried under the beach, they organised a small evaluation dig. With supervision from the SCAPE Trust, they removed sand from the top of a buried wall to see if they could find a corner to one building (to show whether it still survived under the dune, or had been lost to the sea). They uncovered 30 metres of walling thought to be lost, but didn't find the elusive corners, and will return this year to continue their investigation, this time using geophysical survey techniques.

### *Unst, Shetland*



photo © Tom Dawson

*An eroding structure on Unst being surveyed using a range of techniques*

The *Unst Amateur Archaeological Group*, together with SCAPE and GUARD (Glasgow University's Archaeological Research Division) investigated the eroding remains of a building on the beach at Sand Wick, Easting. The local group were given training in the use of a range of survey techniques, including geophysical investigation (what the Time Team calls geofizz). The surveys showed that much of the eroding structure remained buried in the sand, and that other buildings may lie nearby. Cleaning of the exposed section revealed a lot of prehistoric pottery and some fragments of steatite (soapstone) vessels, helping to date the remains. The sea continues to eat away at

this site and a rescue excavation is planned for August and September 2005 (funded by the **Heritage Lottery Fund** and **Historic Scotland**).

### *Loch Hourn, Highland*

The *North of Scotland Archaeological Society* continued their investigation of Loch Hourn on Scotland's west coast. They concentrated on the south shore, and a team of twelve spent nine days surveying (often in atrocious weather). As in their previous surveys, they recorded numerous sites that had never been noted before, and their report lists over 250 sites. SCAPE helped in the preparation of the report and a pdf version is available from the SCAPE Trust (see [www.scapetrust.org](http://www.scapetrust.org)).



photo © Tom Dawson

*NoSAS members preparing to survey the remote shores of Loch Hourn*

### **WEBSITE**

The Shorewatch website ([www.shorewatch.co.uk](http://www.shorewatch.co.uk)) has now been joined by a website specifically for SCAPE ([www.scapetrust.org](http://www.scapetrust.org)). This was designed by Katinka Stentoft, and includes pages on SCAPE projects, as well as hosting a series of reports in pdf format that can be downloaded. The website will be an important vehicle for SCAPE to disseminate information about Scotland's coastal archaeology and the problem that it faces from erosion.

### **CONFERENCE**

SCAPE organized a one-day conference in October 2004 in St Andrews. Almost one hundred people listened to a range of papers that focused upon the reasons for coastal erosion, the effects that it is having on Scotland's archaeology and possible responses to the problem. Views from managers of both the natural and built heritage were heard, and a lively audience debate in the final session discussed a range of alternative ways of working on eroding sites. It is planned to publish papers from the conference in 2006.

## STAFF

SCAPE does not employ any staff directly, but works in partnership with the **University of St Andrews**. Projects are managed on behalf of SCAPE by Tom Dawson and Katinka Stentoft, both from the School of History, and SCAPE is extremely grateful to the University for their generous in-kind contribution.

photo © Katinka Stentoft



*Tom Dawson being interviewed by the BBC for an edition of Newsnight*

Katinka Stentoft works part-time on SCAPE projects, spending the rest of the week working as an archaeological curator at the Kelvingrove Museum in Glasgow. Hailing from Denmark, she has a strong interest in Norse archaeology, and has worked for many years on projects in South Uist. She is an expert in web design and will be updating and revising both the SCAPE and Shorewatch websites, as well as coordinating Shorewatch groups on the west coast.

Tom helped to set SCAPE up in 2001 and has been working with us ever since. He has an excavation background, and has worked as a field archaeologist in a number of different countries, including Italy, Japan, France and Sri Lanka. He has always been interested in increasing public participation in archaeology and his wide-ranging experience of the different ways that archaeology is practised has helped him to appreciate the numerous and varying approaches advocated to the problems that coastal archaeology presents.



photo © Tom Dawson

*Katinka Stentoft on the ferry to Tiree*

## PUBLICITY and PUBLICATIONS

SCAPE has been promoting coastal archaeology by writing articles and giving interviews on the subject. TV appearances in the last year included an interview about the Wemyss Caves for *BBC News*, an appearance on a *Time Team* programme about the same place, interviews for both *BBC* and *ITN* about the conference, and a piece on *Newsnight* about erosion in the Hebrides. Radio pieces have also been aired on the BBC.

photo © Tom Dawson



*Volunteers work on the Shorewatch trench during filming of Time Team*

Newspaper articles were published in *Scotland on Sunday*, *The Shetland Times*, *The Hebridean* and *The Courier*. Articles about SCAPE and its work have also appeared in *Coast Magazine*, *Current Archaeology*, *ForthSight*, *British Archaeology*, *History Scotland* and *Scottish Archaeological News*.

SCAPE has prepared all of the previously published Coastal Zone Assessment Surveys in digital format, to allow their distribution on CD and on the web. Historic Scotland republished '*Coastal Archaeology and Erosion in Scotland*', edited by Tom Dawson, in the spring 2005. Hard copies are on sale, but it is also available as a free pdf download from the Historic Scotland website at <http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/coastal>.

**The Scape Trust**  
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

**Profit and Loss Account**  
**for the Year Ended 31 March 2005**

	<u>2005</u>	<u>2004</u>
<b>TURNOVER</b>		
Project costs and administrative expenses	<u>102,097</u>	<u>24,814</u>
	(102,097)	(24,814)
Operating income	<u>105,830</u>	<u>26,000</u>
<b>OPERATING PROFIT</b>	<b>3,733</b>	<b>1,186</b>
Interest receivable and similar income	<u>69</u>	<u>4</u>
<b>PROFIT ON ORDINARY ACTIVITIES BEFORE TAXATION</b>	<b>3,802</b>	<b>1,190</b>
Tax on profit on ordinary activities	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
<b>PROFIT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR AFTER TAXATION</b>	<b>3,802</b>	<b>1,190</b>
Retained profit brought forward	<u>2,219</u>	<u>1,029</u>
<b>RETAINED PROFIT CARRIED FORWARD</b>	<b><u>£6,021</u></b>	<b><u>£2,219</u></b>

The company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 249A(1) of the Companies Act 1985 for the year ended 31 March 2005.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2005 in accordance with Section 249B(2) of the Companies Act 1985.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for:

- a) ensuring that the company keeps accounting records which comply with Section 221 of the Companies Act 1985 and
- b) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of each financial year and of its profit or loss for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Section 226 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 1985 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the company.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part VII of the Companies Act 1985 relating to small companies and with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective June 2002).



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## The SCAPE Trust COMPANY DETAILS

### DIRECTORS (2004/05)

*The SCAPE Trust is sad to note the passing away of Captain Tony Wilks, one of the founding directors of the Trust. All involved with SCAPE would like to pass on their commiserations to his family.*

Professor Chris Smout *Chair*

Robin Turner *Vice Chair*

Dr Ben Ferrari

Dr Neil Galbraith

Dr Colin Martin

George McQuitty

Professor Chris Morris

Dr. Anna Ritchie

John Scott

Dr Barbara Crawford

*appointed 17.12.04*

Dr Richard Tipping

*appointed 24.11.04*

Professor Kevin Edwards

*resigned 24.06.04*

Diana Murray

*resigned 16.11.04*

Captain Tony Wilks

*deceased 23.01.05*

### EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Tom Dawson

### DEPUTY EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Katinka Stentoft

### REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER:

216091 (Scotland)

### REGISTERED CHARITIES NUMBER

SC 031678

### SECRETARY:

Ledingham Chalmers

### REGISTERED OFFICE:

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Edinburgh  
EH3 9BN

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Fife  
KY16 9EG