

Trinity Burial Ground archaeology update



About Trinity Burial Ground

Trinity Burial Ground lies partially within our proposed A63 improvement scheme. The site is located on the south side of Castle Street, and close to the busy Mytongate roundabout. It is associated with Holy Trinity Church, Hull's medieval parish church, which stands in the Market Place, the heart of Hull old town.

After centuries of use, space in the church graveyard was in short supply, so a vacant plot on Castle Street was acquired. The burial ground opened in 1783 and continued in use until about 1860. The site contains hundreds of gravestones and tombs. The parish register records some 44,041 burials between 1783 and the early 1860s and many would have been in Trinity Burial Ground.

In summer 2015, we worked closely with the church and with heritage bodies, such as Historic England, to ensure that the investigations were as thorough as possible, with the least disturbance. The investigations were carried out under a Faculty from the Diocese of York and taken by Oxford Archaeology-Humber Field Archaeology on our behalf. A specialist from the British Register of Accredited Monumental Masons was able to safely remove and replace headstones where required.

We made every effort to minimise disruption to the burial ground during our investigations. We were also very sensitive to the privacy of burial sites. We used special privacy tents to cover some of the larger excavations where we expected to find burials.

South side of the Marina

We've also been investigating parts of Hull's medieval defences to help understand more about the history of Hull and the people who lived here. Around 700 years ago a brick wall with a ditch beyond was built to protect the town from invaders, but these have since been removed to make room for the developing town. Our work aimed to discover exactly where the wall was built. A trench near the Marina was completed in mid-March 2016.

Obtaining a faculty

The proposal (including plans, methodologies / specifications) and draft Faculty application are initially submitted to the Parochial Church Council (PCC) for resolution. The Faculty application is then submitted to the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) for formal consideration. If there is no DAC objection, a public notice is posted. If there are no objections following the notice period, the Diocesan Registrar forwards the faculty to the Diocesan Chancellor for endorsement.

What is a Faculty?

A faculty is a licence to carry out work under the Church of England's planning controls. Any work carried out in the absence of a faculty is illegal. The faculty jurisdiction covers works to church buildings, their contents and churchyards, including the exhumation of burial remains. It ensures that work is carried out in the most appropriate way.



A coffin handle

What happens next?

We are currently designing a scheme of works that will provide a very good understanding of the different types of archaeological remains that lie within and around the burial ground. As such, we have used the results of the investigation undertaken in 2015 to devise a model of what might lie within the development area. We are continuing to work with stakeholders, such as the Church, Historic England and Humber Archaeology Partnership, to ensure that the works meet ethical, legal and academic standards, and that they provide benefits to the wider community.

Our research to date has identified **four** main types of archaeological remains within the development area, each of which can tell us something different about the history of Hull.

What did we find?

Trenches were excavated to assess the nature and distribution of burials and there was widespread evidence for coffins, Surviving examples included several unreadable nameplates, and various types of handle, which can be dated from their styles. There were also various buttons and pins from clothing, shrouds, and from hair. A medieval floor tile was found in a deposit of rubble material which is thought to have been dumped in the burial ground, and may have been imported during the mid-nineteenth-century works on the crypt at Holy Trinity church in the Market Place.

Whilst we were working within the burial ground, we took the opportunity to tidy the whole site of rubbish and overgrown vegetation. We also re-laid footpaths and reseeded the grassed areas.



Type 1

There is much to be learned about the town defences, particularly the position and construction of the medieval town wall, and of a defensive ditch attributed to the Civil War in the early 1640s. A trench will be excavated across the projected line of the medieval defences, and it is possible that archaeological monitoring will identify the position of the Civil War ditch, albeit that its position may coincide with the Prince's and the Humber Docks.

Excerpt from a copy of Captain Phillips' Plan of Hull in 1720. The Civil War defences, comprising a ditch and ramparts with arrow-shaped bastions, are shown surrounding the medieval ditch and wall. Castle Street enters the city via the gate labelled 'V'.



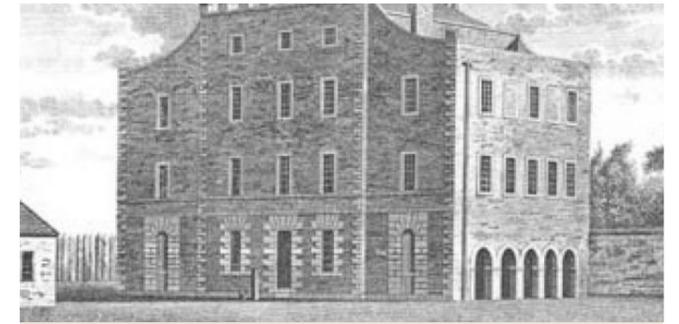
Type 2

Features relating to the historic docks themselves can tell us about the commercial and industrial expansion of Hull in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The historic dock-side features will be recorded, as will sections of the dock walls. Monitoring on groundworks around the dock walls may provide a better understanding of their construction.



Type 3

A substantial archaeological investigation, protected by a huge tent, will take place in Trinity burial ground, allowing the funerary remains to be carefully and respectfully excavated. Excavation of the burial ground will be carried out under a Faculty and agreed methodology. The study of a sample of funerary remains from the site will provide a wealth of information about the lives of the full spectrum of Hull society at a time when the town's population was rapidly expanding as commercial and industrial activity intensified. For some, it may be possible to find historical records but, for many of the poor people, their remains will be the only document that they leave behind, providing a glimpse of the impact of the harsh living and working conditions that they endured. The remains will be reburied on site wherever possible, but some may be placed in the crypt of Holy Trinity Church if necessary.



Type 4

A late eighteenth-century gaol once stood at the corner of the burial Ground, but all that remains visible are the heavily leaning walls that once separated the gaol and the burial Ground. These will be recorded in detail before they have to be dismantled. An excavation, hopefully with public involvement, during the early stages of the project should reveal the plan and internal organisation of the gaol, whilst historical research may tell us about the inmates themselves.

In addition, there may also be pockets of medieval and earlier archaeological remains, where these have survived more recent development. These may tell us a little about the location and nature of smaller settlements that lay outside the town.

We are keen to involve interested members of the public wherever we can. We also aim to engage a broad range of people in using Hull's extensive historical resources to research about the individuals and families in the burial ground and the gaol, where they lived, and where they worked, as we try and foster a greater understanding of the human story and social history of Hull.

A contemporary drawing of the gaol, which was in use between 1785 and about 1830.



Remains of a medieval floor tile

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