



MARCH 2025

Attainment through Archaeology Ochiltree Old Cemetery



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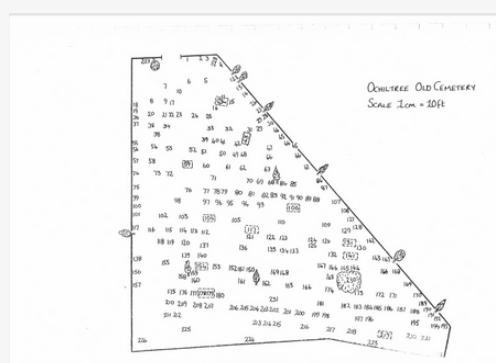
**HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT
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OCHILTREE OLD CEMETERY

The old cemetery at Ochiltree contains over 200 graves, dating from the 18th to early 20th century. The church associated with the site no longer exists and its location is unknown.

The historic environment record of the site is limited, but a pre-existing survey record details the locations and inscriptions of many of the gravestones.

Members of the local Ochiltree Historical Society have recently taken an active role in the protection of the cemetery, undertaking vegetation clearance and monitoring the condition of the stones. They are also beginning to conduct research into some of the individuals buried within the graveyard.



From Ayrshire, Sheet XXXV, 1860
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OCHILTREE ATA WORKSHOPS

9 pupils from Robert Burns Academy Supported Learning Centre participated in a 5 workshop Attainment through Archaeology project at Ochiltree Old Cemetery in March 2025.

The workshops were designed to raise pupils' awareness of Ochiltree's heritage and the skills used by archaeologists to investigate and record historic sites.

Workshops included the following activities:



Graveyard Survey



Photographic Recording and 3D Scanning



Gravestone Recording



Heritage Interpretation



The pupils' work supported research and conservation work already undertaken by local historical society.



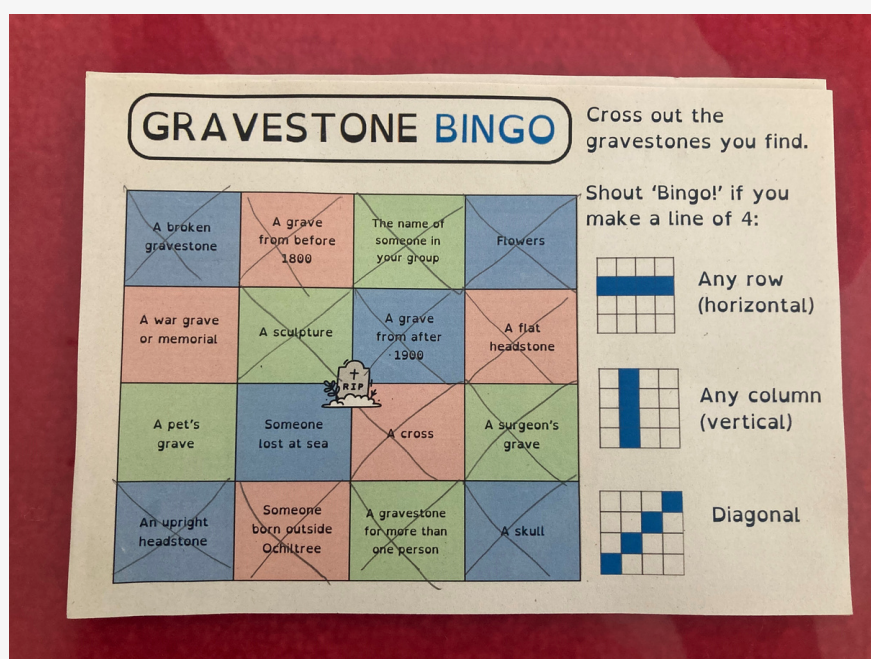
INTRODUCTION TO OCHILTREE OLD CEMETERY

Upon their arrival at the site, the class were given an introduction to Archaeology.

The class were also introduced to Ochiltree and it's significance within the wider area. The group were given a chance to look at historic maps of the area and identify changes to the landscape in the last two centuries.

The class then took part in 'Graveyard Bingo'. They were given the chance to explore the cemetery, and to identify as many things as possible from their Bingo cards. This encourages all the students to look closely at the headstone types, decorations and inscriptions.

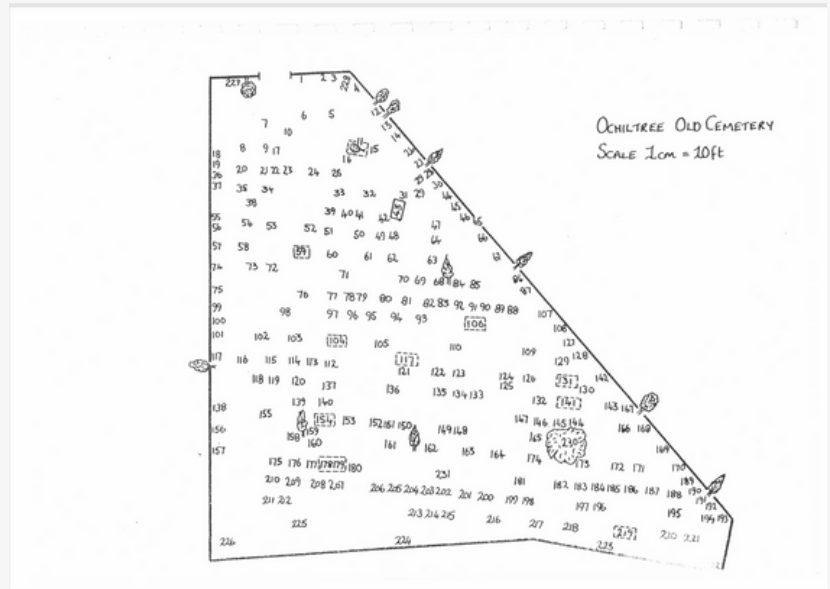
The group came together at the end to discuss what they had and hadn't found, and students supported each other to find what each other were missing.





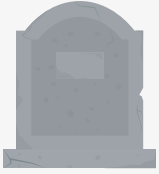
GRAVEYARD SURVEY

Working in small groups, pupils carried out a graveyard survey over two sessions. The pupils used the existed survey as a starting point, and worked out how it related to what was on the ground. They identified stones that were still present, those that were newly uncovered or overturned since the survey, and those that had been moved or damaged.



Once they had completed this, they added measurements to their plans, using both long tapes and trundle wheels to measure the distances. The students also selected stones to be recorded in more detail, and added missing stones to their plans.



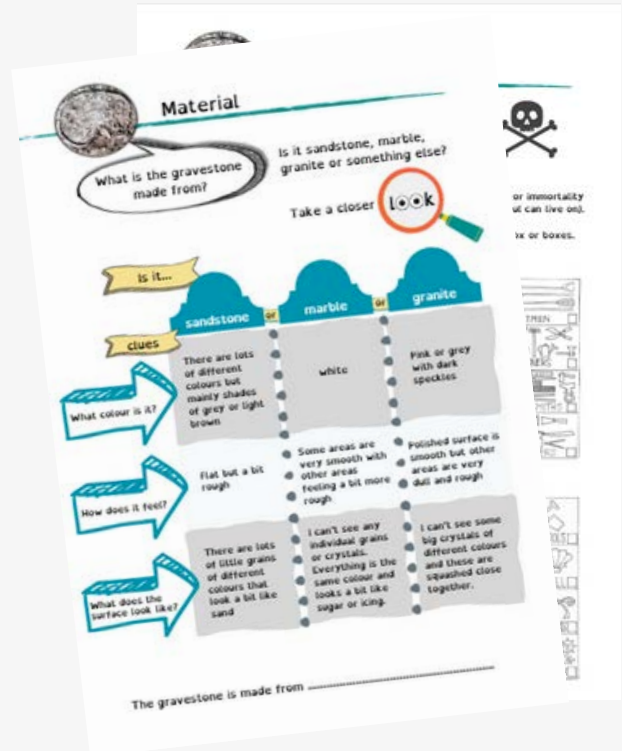


GRAVESTONE RECORDING

After identifying priority stones and inscriptions to record during the graveyard survey, students conducted gravestone recording.

They began by using Archaeology Scotland's gravestone recording forms to record information about the memorial type, material used, type of lettering, information on inscription and measurements.

Some students worked together to record larger stones, or using torches and different lighting to read unclear inscriptions. Others chose to work independently, and to record stones which had captured their interests.





GRAVESTONE RECORDING

Photographic Survey

After completing recording forms and sketches of gravestones, the class also learned how to correctly photograph gravestones.

Each pupil was given the chance to use the camera to photograph a headstone, as well as details of inscriptions or decoration they wanted to capture. They learned about the importance of adding a scale, number, and about the use of a photo register. Some of the class then worked as a group to record a series of headstones.



3D Scanning

In addition to photographic recording, the students also had the chance to try photogrammetry using a 3D scanner app.

Each of the group was able to try creating a 3D record of a headstone, and were able to experiment with reading inscriptions from the scans compared to what it was possible to see with the naked eye.





PHOTOS





The pupils then designed their own interpretation materials, based on things they had learned during the week or elements of the history of the site they found most interesting.

ATTAINMENT THROUGH ARCHAEOLOGY

ARCHAEOLOGY AT OCHILTREE

Thank you to all the staff and students from Robert Burns Academy, Supported Learning Centre. Thank you also to the Ochiltree Historical Society, particularly Billy Cooper, for their support.



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