St Mary the Virgin, Church Street, Twickenham, London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames An Archaeological Watching Brief Report

> Planning Application Number: N/A National Grid Reference Number: TQ 1635 7331 Site Code: SRV10 AOC Project No: 30622 \_\_\_\_\_ Date: December 2011



# St Mary the Virgin, Church Street, Twickenham London Borough of Richmond upon Thames An Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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National Grid Reference (NGR):	TQ 1635 7331
AOC Project No:	30622
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This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

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## **Non-Technical Summary**

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2010 at the site of the St Mary the Virgin Church, Twickenham, London Borough of Richmond. The work was undertaken on behalf of Caroe & Partners Architects. The aim of the watching brief was to monitor the excavation of new soakaways and associated gullies and to mitigate against any burials that might be encountered.

Two soakaway pits and associated linear gullies were monitored. No pre-cemetery remains were encountered. In both soakaway pits, in situ human remains were encountered. One burial was located within a section of the soakaway in Trench 1 and would not be impacted on. The second burial was in a stone chamber which was located further within the excavated pit of Trench 2 and as such the pit was altered to avoid damage to the burial. A coffin plate recovered from the burial in Trench 1 which was dated to 1785. In the overlying cemetery and made ground deposits, a large quantity of disarticulated bone was recovered suggesting continuous disturbance of earlier burials. The disarticulated bone was reburied on site.

No further intrusive work is due to take place on site. As such no further work is envisaged.

Publication of the watching brief findings will be carried out through a short summary of the fieldwork submitted to the local fieldwork roundup. An OASIS form has also been completed and an electronic copy of the watching brief report will be deposited with the Archaeological Data Service (ADS). The site archive will be prepared in accordance with local and national guidance and will be deposited with the London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre.

## 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Site Location

- 1.1.1 The site of St Mary the Virgin is located within Twickenham, approximately 60m northwest of the Thames and centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) TQ 1635 7331 (Figure 1). The site is located on the corner of Church Street and Church Lane to the north and east and is bounded on the south by the Riverside and to the east by offices.
- 1.1.2 This report details the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken during the excavation of two new soakaways and connecting gullies (Figure 2).

### 1.2 Planning Background

- 1.2.1 The local planning authority is Richmond Borough Council. The client for the project was Caroe & Partners Architects on behalf of Parochial Church Council, St Mary the Virgin. The works were carried out under a Faculty. Archaeological advice to the church is provided by Robert Whytehead, Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) Archaeological Advisor.
- 1.2.2 A Desk Based Assessment was not required as part of the archaeological investigation. As such the first stage involved the creation of a Written Scheme of Investigation, detailing the methodology for the evaluation (AOC 2010). The works were carried out on site in line with the methodology stated in the WSI and the current guidelines stated therein.
- 1.2.3 This reports details the results of the archaeological watching brief. The archaeological watching brief conformed with current best archaeological practice and local and national standards and guidelines.
  - English Heritage Management of Archaeological Projects (EH 1991).
  - Institute for Archaeologists Code of Conduct (IfA 2008c).
  - English Heritage Archaeological Guidance Papers 2-4 London Region (EH 1998a-c)
  - Department for Communities and Local Government Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (DCLG 2010).
  - Museum of London/English Heritage A Research Framework for London Archaeology (MoL/EH 2002).
  - English Heritage and The Church of England Guidance for Best Practice for Treatment of Human Remains Excavated from Christian Burial Grounds In England (2005).

### 1.3 Geology and Topography

1.3.1 The British Geological survey, Sheet 270, indicates that the site, which is located on the banks of the River Thames, is situated upon Brickearth over River Terrace Gravel (BGS 1981). The local topography slopes down from the northwest to the southeast, towards the bank of the Thames.

## 2. Historical and Archaeological Background

2.1 The following information has been drawn from records held in the London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre (LAARC).

## Prehistoric Period (c 450,000 BC – AD 43) and Roman (c.400,000 BP to AD 410)

2.2 There are eight entries in the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) for prehistoric sites dating from the Mesolithic period through to the Iron Age within the vicinity of the site. Three entries account for Mesolithic evidence in the area; another three sites produced evidence of Neolithic occupation, and there is one entry for Bronze Age material and one for Iron Age material. Although there is no clear

evidence of prehistoric settlement, the finds are indicative of human activity close to the watercourse of the River Thames throughout the prehistoric period.

2.3 The site is situated at a significant distance from the bounds of the Roman settlement of *Londinium*. Little is known of Roman activity in the area; there are only three entries in the SMR for Roman finds. The nearest Roman crossing of the Thames was at Kingston.

## The Earl Medieval (AD 410-1066) and Medieval Periods (AD 1066-1540)

- 2.4 There was a settlement at Twickenham by AD 704, although this was probably located on the slightly higher ground by Twickenham Ait (a small island) where the village stood in later times. It is suggested that the medieval village was clustered around the early church of St Mary the Virgin, in Church Street and King Street, and in the alleys leading from them down to the river and at the bottom of London Road, (VCH 1962).
- 2.5 The origins of the name Twickenham are thought to be from Old English meaning 'land in a river bend, dry ground in marsh, river meadow'. The Thames would have been an important means of transport. At Ham, on the opposite bank of the river, a probable Saxon burial has been excavated, and this is the nearest evidence of Saxon occupation(Simpson 1998)
- 2.6 Although Twickenham is not mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086, it was included in the Manor of Isleworth. Excavations in the area have identified medieval remains at several locations. In 1988, an excavation at Church Street to the east of the site identified a ten-metre long drainage ditch dating from the 14<sup>th</sup> century to the mid 16<sup>th</sup> century (Simpson 1998).
- 2.7 The Church of St Mary is thought to date to this period although its establishment may be earlier. The first record of a vicar dates to the 13<sup>th</sup> century. All that remains of the medieval church is the tower constructed of Kentish Rag. The remaining church building collapsed on 9<sup>th</sup> April 1713 due to neglect and the undermining of the building of vaults. Records indicate that Sir Godfrey Kneller, the churchwarden and court painter, initiated a red brick nave and interior (St Mary the Virgin 2009).

### Post-Medieval Period (AD 1536 to Present)

- 2.8 The post-medieval landscape around Twickenham is dominated by large properties such as York House, Marble Hill House, and upriver, by Strawberry Hill. The presence of these large properties brought increased wealth to the town, and by the early 18<sup>th</sup> century it was considered a desirable place to live. The earlier part of the town was clustered around King Street Riverside and Church Street. Well-built and expensive terraces were raised in the 1720s at Montpelier Row and Sion Row, and the increased wealth of the town may account for the rebuilding and expansion of St. Mary's Church, also in the early years of the 18<sup>th</sup> century (AOC 2009).
- 2.9 Twickenham significantly expanded with the introduction of the railway in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, the line to Kingston opening in 1863 and to Hounslow in 1883. Despite these new forms of transport, the Thames remained important, and in 1857, the Thames Conservancy was set up to administer navigation and port facilities. When the Conservancy was established, the foreshore at Twickenham was a natural gravel riverbank at the end of lanes leading to steps and landing places from the streets on the higher ground above. These landing points were at Wharf Lane, Bell Lane and Church Lane. The area that is now the Embankment had, at its northeast end, a building with a yard beyond. This is shown on the 1871 Ordnance Survey Map, and is separated from the Queens Head Public House (now the Barmy Arms) by a narrow lane. The date of this building is unproven, but a painting of 1860 by William Howard (*The Thames at Twickenham*) and a painting of the Riverside form 1817 both show a two-storey building at this location. This building had been demolished by 1877, when a new embankment was started. The work progressed slowly, and was finished in 1882. The new

embankment was declared a public highway, and it was decreed that the new frontage be no longer used as a wharf (AOC 2009.

2.10 The south western end of the site was damaged by floodwater in 1957, and a series of tie rods attached to steel piling were added to provide reinforcement. The site is sealed by a tarmac road surface, and until recently held semi-mature trees (AOC 2009.

## 3. Strategy

### 3.1 Aims of the Investigation

- 3.1.1 The aims of the watching brief were defined as being:
  - To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the site.
  - To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered.
  - To record and sample excavate any archaeological remains encountered.
  - To assess the ecofactual and environmental potential of any archaeological features and deposits.
  - To determine the extent of previous truncations of the archaeological deposits.
  - To make available to interested parties (DAC) the results of the investigation.
- 3.1.2 The specific objectives of the investigation were:
  - Carry out basic osteological recording of each individual onsite prior to re-burial, where appropriate.
  - To further assess any remains that contain unusual osteoarchaeological interest or are from an unusual burial.
  - To identify any evidence of pre-cemetery activity.
- 3.1.3 The final aim was to make public the results of the investigation, subject to any confidentiality restrictions.

### 3.2 Methodology

- 3.2.1 The watching brief was carried out between 15<sup>th</sup> and the 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2010 and was focussed on the monitoring of two new soakaways and connecting gullies (Figure 2).
- 3.2.2 Fieldwork procedures followed the Museum of London Archaeological Site Manual (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition) (MoL 1994).
- 3.2.3 The excavation, recording and reporting conformed to current best archaeological practice and local and national standards and guidelines:
  - English Heritage Management of Archaeological Projects (EH 1991).
  - English Heritage Archaeological Guidance Paper 3: Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork (EH 2009).
  - English Heritage Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation (EH 2002).
  - English Heritage and The Church of England Guidance for Best Practice for Treatment of Human Remains Excavated from Christian Burial Grounds In England (2005).

- Institute for Archaeologists Standards and Guidance and Guidelines for Finds Work (IfA 2008a).
- Institute for Archaeologists Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (IfA 2008b).
- Institute for Archaeologists Code of Conduct (IfA 2010).
- Rescue/United Kingdom Institute for Conservation First Aid for Finds (Second Edition) (CBA 1998).
- United Kingdom Institute for Conservation Conservation Guidelines No.2 (UKIC 1983).
- United Kingdom Institute for Conservation Guidance for Archaeological Conservation Practice (UKIC 1990).
- 3.2.4 Archaeological recording consisted of:
  - Limited hand cleaning of archaeological sections and surfaces sufficient to establish the stratigraphic sequence exposed.
  - A scaled photographic recording of representative exposed sections and surfaces, along with sufficient photographs to establish the setting and scale of the groundworks.
  - A record of the datum levels of archaeological deposits, where obtainable.
- 3.2.5 A unique site code, **SRV10**, was obtained for the project prior to the commencement of fieldwork from the London Archaeological Research Archive Centre . This was used as the site identifier on all records.
- 3.2.6 The watching brief was undertaken by Les Capon, under the overall direction of Melissa Melikian; Operations Manager. The site was monitored by Robert Whytehead, Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) Archaeological Advisor.

## 4 Results

## 4.1 Table 1 (Figures 2, 3 & 4)

#### Table of the stratigraphic sequence

Context No	Depth	Height of Deposit (mOD)	Description/Interpretation
101	0.30m	8.53m – 8.23m	Dark brown silty sand. Topsoil.
102	1.10m	8.23m – 7.13m	Mid grey brown sandy clay silt. Grave yard deposit.
103	0.20m	7.13m – 6.93m	Dark yellow brown sandy silt. Grave yard deposit.
104	0.30m	6.93m – 6.63m	Dark yellow brown sandy silt. Construction horizon.
105	NFE	6.63m+	Yellow brown sand and gravel. Natural.

- 4.1.1 Trench 1 ran northeast from the church and was formed by a linear gully and a sub-square pit. The gully measured 9.5m x 0.50m whilst the sub-square pit measured 1.50m x 1.20m x 1.90m deep.
- 4.1.2 The earliest deposit recorded in Trench 1 was layer (105), a yellow brown sand with gravel interpreted as a terrace gravel horizon. Overlying (105), was (104), a 0.30m thick dark yellow brown sandy silt with inclusions of ceramic brick material and mortar fragments. This deposit may represent an original construction horizon for the church.
- 4.1.3 Overlying (104), was (103), a 0.20m thick layer of dark yellow brown sandy silt with occasional ceramic building material and disarticulated human bone. The disarticulated human remains are likely the result of later disturbance and the intercutting of burials. Also present was a coffin handle. The number of remains present suggests multiple persons present.
- 4.1.4 Above (103), but only observed in section was grave cut [108]. Only a small proportion of the cut was visible in section measuring 1.00m x 0.10m x 0.20m deep. Within the cut was skeleton (107), of which only the femur and radius was visible. A coffin plate from the grave was also recovered during excavation. Only the date could be observed which was noted as 1785. The coffin plate was replaced and reburied in the pit.



- 4.1.5 Grave fill (106) was recorded as a firm dark grey brown silty sand.
- 4.1.6 Overlying (106), was layer (102), a 1.10m thick compacted mid grey brown sandy clay silt with inclusions of ceramic brick material, post-medieval pottery and disarticulated human bone. This layer has been interpreted as a second graveyard deposit.
- 4.1.7 The final deposit recorded in Trench 1 was (101), a 0.30m thick layer of dark brown silty sand interpreted as modern topsoil.

#### 4.2 Trench 2 (Figures 2, 3 & 4)

#### Table of the stratigraphic sequence

Context No	Depth	Height of Deposit (mOD)	Description/Interpretation
201	0.10m	8.10m – 8.00m	Dark grey brown sandy silt. Topsoil.
202	0.50m	8.00m – 7.50m	Mixed brown sandy silt. Made ground.
203	0.60m	7.50m – 6.90m	Lenses of yellow sand, gravel and brown sandy silt. Disturbed ground.
205	0.60m	6.90m – 6.30m	Brown sandy silt. Disturbed ground.
206	0.30m	6.30m+	Yellow brown sand and gravel. Natural.

- 4.2.1 Trench 2 ran northwest from the church and was formed by a linear gully and a sub-square pit. The gully measured 5.0m x 0.50m whilst the sub-square pit measured 2.75m x 1.60m x 2.10m deep. Due to the presence of a stone burial with the original location of the pit, the pit was widen so as to preserve the remains *in situ*.
- 4.2.2 The earliest deposit recorded in Trench 2 was (206), a 0.30m+ layer of natural yellow sand and gravel interpreted as terrace gravel deposits. Overlying (206), was (205), a 0.60m thick layer of brown sandy silt with inclusions of ceramic building material and disarticulated human bone. This layer is interpreted as a cemetery horizon.
- 4.2.3 Cutting into (205), was [204], a limestone constructed grave formed out of three stone side panels and two stone lid panels. The exposed extent of the grave measured 0.90m x 0.40m x 0.30m deep. The grave was left undisturbed.
- 4.2.4 Overlying [204], was (203), a 0.60m thick deposit of yellow sand, gravel and brown sandy silt with inclusions of disarticulated human bone. This layer has been interpreted as a disturbed soil horizon which contained lenses of redeposited natural.
- 4.2.5 Overlying (203), was (202), a 0.50m thick layer of mixed brown sandy silt which in turn was overlaid by (201), a 0.10m thick layer of grey brown sandy silt interpreted as topsoil.

#### 5. Finds

5.1 No finds were retained during the watching brief and all human remains were reburied on site.

## 6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The natural horizon was recorded in both of the excavated soakaways as terrace gravels. No precemetery activity was recorded on site.
- 6.2 The excavations on site exposed the full stratigraphic sequence of the graveyard. A possible construction horizon associated with the church was recorded in Trench1. Two *in situ* burials were

encountered within each of the excavated soakaways. The remains were planned and recorded but no osteological work was carried out as the remains were to be left untouched *in situ*. The disarticulated remains on site were noted and immediately reburied.

## 7. Publication and Archive Deposition

- 7.1 An OASIS form has been completed (Appendix B) and an electronic copy of the watching brief report will be deposited with the Archaeological Data Service (ADS).
- 7.2 On completion of the project the developer/landowner will discuss arrangements for the archive to be deposited with the Museum of London. The site archive will be prepared in the format agreed with the LAARC. The excavation archive will be security copied and a copy deposited with the National Monument Record (NMR).
- 7.3 The archive, consisting of paper records, drawings, photographs, finds and digital records will be deposited with the LAARC within six months.

## 8. Bibliography

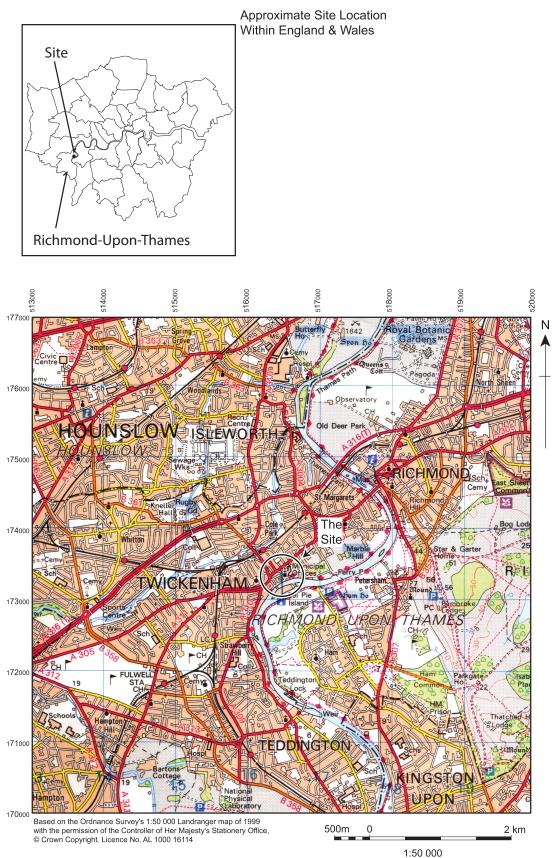
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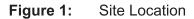
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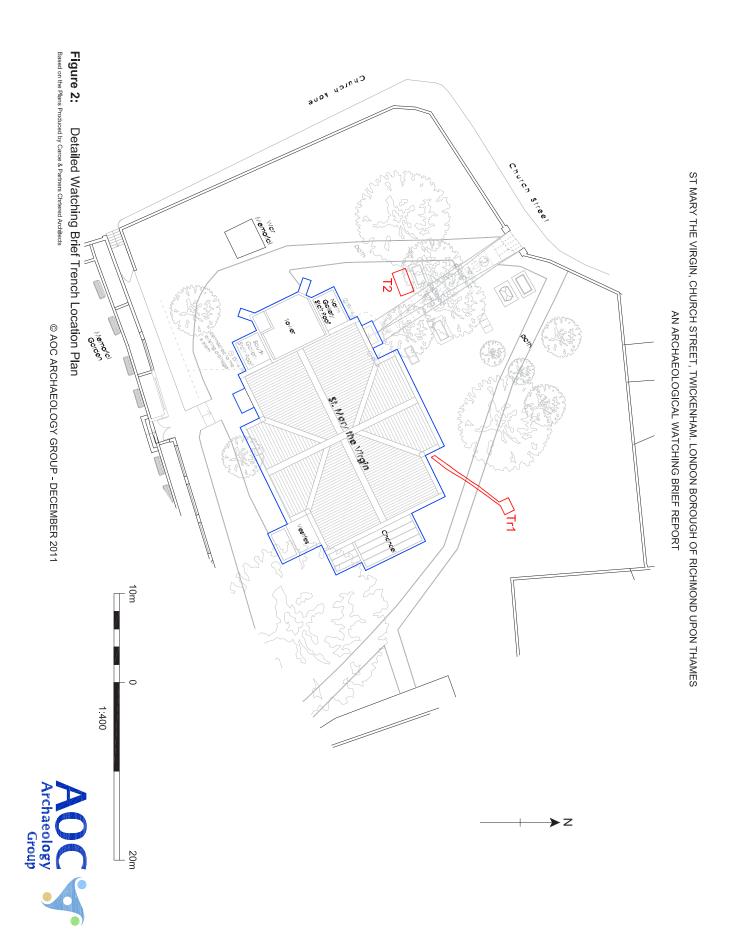
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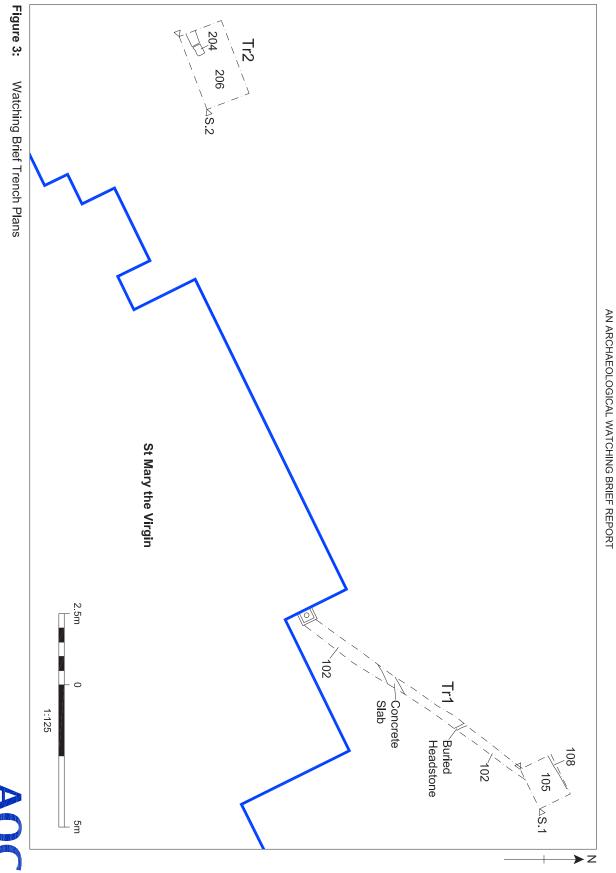








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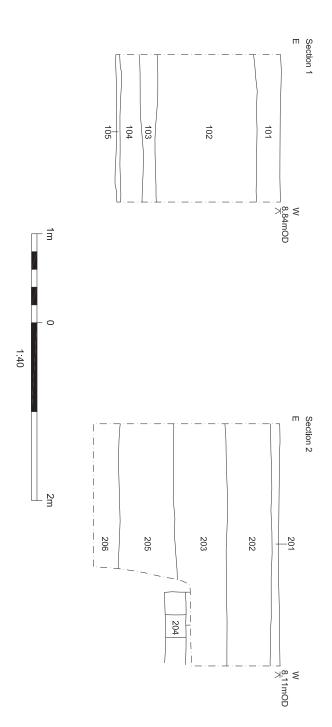


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# Appendices



Context No.	Context Description	Length	Width	Depth
101	Topsoil	1.50m	1.20m	0.30m
102	Made ground	1.50m	1.20m	1.10m
103	Cemetery soil	1.50m	1.20m	0.20m
104	Construction Horizon	1.50m	1.20m	0.30m
105	Terrace Gravel	1.50m	1.20m	NFE
106	Grave Fill	1.00m	0.10m	0.20m
107	Skeleton	1.00m	0.10m	0.20m
108	Grave Cut	1.00m	0.10m	0.20m
201	Topsoil	2.75m	1.60m	0.10m
202	Made ground	2.75m	1.60m	0.50m
203	Cemetery Horizon	2.75m	1.60m	0.60m
204	Grave	0.90m	0.40m	0.30m
205	Cemetery Horizon	2.75m	1.60m	0.60m
206	Terrace Gravels	2.75m	1.60m	0.30m

# Appendix A – Context Register

## Appendix B – OASIS Form

## OASIS ID: aocarcha1-70045

Project details	
Project name	St Mary the Virgin
Short description of the project	A watching brief on the excavation of two new soakaways and associated gullies. During the excavation of the soakaways, two burials were recorded in situ. The encountered remains were recorded but retained in situ. Further disarticulated remains were recorded throughout the site stratigraphy indicating significant later disturbance.
Project dates	Start: 15-06-2010 End: 22-06-2010
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	30622 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	SRV10 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 4 - Churchyard
Monument type	GRAVE Post Medieval
Significant Finds	COFFIN PLATE Post Medieval
Investigation type	'Watching Brief'

Ducient le entier	
Project location	
Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON RICHMOND UPON THAMES TWICKENHAM St Mary the Virgin
Postcode	TW1 3NJ
Study area	0.10 Hectares
Site coordinates	TQ 1637 7329 51.4461280773 -0.325265618805 51 26 46 N 000 19 30 W Point

Project creators	
Name of Organisation	AOC Archaeology
Project brief originator	Diocesan Archaeologist
Project design originator	AOC Archaeology
Project director/manager	Andy Leonard
Project supervisor	Les Capon
Type of sponsor/funding body	Parochial Church Council
Name of sponsor/funding body	Caroe & Partners Architects

#### **Project archives**

Physical	Archive	LAARC
recipient		

Digital Archive LAARC recipient

Digital	Media	'Images raster / digital photography','Text'
available		

Paper Archive LAARC recipient

Paper Media 'Microfilm','Photograph','Plan','Report','Section','Unpublished Text' available

Project bibliography 1	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	ST MARY THE VIRGIN, CHURCH STREET, TWICKENHAM. LONDON BOROUGH OF RICHMOND UPON THAMES
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