

**Kilwinning Old Parish Church,  
North Ayrshire:  
Archaeological Evaluation**

Data Structure Report



by Liam McKinstry

issued 29<sup>th</sup> April 2016

on behalf of Kilwinning Old Parish Church

**RATHMELL**   
ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

## Quality Assurance

This report covers works which have been undertaken in keeping with the issued brief as modified by the agreed programme of works. The report has been prepared in keeping with the guidance of Rathmell Archaeology Limited on the preparation of reports. All works reported on within this document have been undertaken in keeping with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standards and Policy Statements and Code of Conduct.

Signed



Date

...29<sup>th</sup> April 2016.....

In keeping with the procedure of Rathmell Archaeology Limited this document and its findings have been reviewed and agreed by an appropriate colleague:

Checked

.....

Date

...29<sup>th</sup> April 2016.....

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## Quality Assurance Data

Author(s)	Liam McKinstry		
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NGR	NS 30342 43305 (centred)	Parish	Kilwinning
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Canmore IDs	204519 Church		

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## Introduction

1. This Data Structure Report has been prepared in respect to the demolition of a set of external stairs and the installation of new drainage at Kilwinning Old Parish Church, North Ayrshire (Figure 2, 3a and 3b). The archaeological works are designed to inform the mitigation of the impact on the archaeological remains within their development area to the agreement of Historic Environment Scotland.
2. Kilwinning Old Parish Church stands within the Scheduled Monument protecting the remains of Kilwinning Abbey, though the fabric of the church itself is listed rather than scheduled. Historic Scotland granted Scheduled Monument Consent for the drainage works, conditional on a small archaeological evaluation which would help inform the nature of the archaeology present within the area of the proposed drainage works. This report presents the findings of the evaluation as required under Condition 1 of the granted Scheduled Monument Consent (AMH/90187/1/1).
3. Rathmell Archaeology Limited has been appointed to undertake the development and implementation of archaeological mitigation works for the drainage works at Kilwinning Old Parish Church, North Ayrshire.

## Historical and Archaeological Background

4. The burgh of Kilwinning is dominated by the twelfth century Tironensian Abbey, most likely founded by Richard De Moreville, Lord of Cunninghame. Portions of the nave and the cloistral range of the abbey are in the guardianship of the state, having been excavated and consolidated in the 1960s. A larger land holding including the Abbey Church (constructed 1775) and its churchyard are protected as a Scheduled Monument under the terms of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.
5. However, Kilwinning is believed to have been an established community prior to the twelfth century. The kil- element of the place name suggests long standing Christian presence in this area and MacGibbon and Ross propose the abbey was built on the site of the cell of St. Winning. *Segdounne* may have been the original name of the settlement by the Garnock; whether this indicates another founder for the town is uncertain though Camerarius in 16th century attributes a well established church at Kilwinning by AD 640.
6. The first detailed post-reformation plan of Kilwinning is from 1747-55 (General Roy's Military Survey of Scotland; Figure 1a); it forms a cluster settlement forming from three locales along what is now Main Street. The central hub is located around the Abbey buildings, another is located immediately on the east side of the river Garnock near the Corsehill and the third to the west at Byres.
7. By the 1st edition Ordnance Survey (1856) Kilwinning had expanded to include a full street frontage on either side of Main Street (Figure 1b). This rigid streetscape has been progressively altered through the 19th and 20th century with the opening out of the 'square' area at the west end of the Main Street and clearance to form the entrance to the Old Parish Church (removing the original property given to the Freemasons for their Mother Lodge).

### *Previous Archaeological Works*

8. Previous archaeological monitoring works were carried out in respect to the insertion of drainage at Kilwinning Old Parish Church (Williamson 2010). These works were carried out on the south eastern side of the church building and identified what appeared to be 20th century stone foundations though several fragments of disarticulated human bone were recovered from the disturbed deposit which sat above the 20th century foundation.



Figure 1a: Roy's Military Survey of Scotland, 1752-1755, Lowlands



Figure 1b: 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey, 1856, Ayrshire, Sheet XVI.4

## Project Works

9. The archaeological evaluation, which was undertaken on the 26<sup>th</sup> April 2016, was carried out in keeping with the methods detailed in the Risk Assessment & Method Statement (RAMS) (Rees 2013). The character and scope of the archaeological resource within the working area was uncertain. The works had to be adaptive to the strata, material and features exposed regardless of their temporal origin. So in overarching terms the project was an attempt to determine the nature, form and extent of the archaeological resource within the area to be investigated?
10. The programme of archaeological works comprised, in sequence, the following components.
  - a) Excavation of an archaeological test pit, 1m by 1m in plan, through the current gravel surface to a maximum 500mm depth;
  - b) undertaking the hand excavation to the agreed excavation protocols including the sieving of spoil for artefact recovery and recording of the strata exposed;
  - c) reinstating the test pit; and
  - d) delivery of the report to detail the works as implemented, character of archaeology evaluated and recorded.
11. All of the works complied with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standards and Policy Statements and Code of Conduct and Historic Environment Scotland's Policy Statements.

## Findings

12. The test pit was located in a central area to the immediate north of the church and east of the external stair (Figure 2). It was positioned in this manner so as to avoid a number tumbled gravestones and the probable position of the buried remains of a 19<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> century coal cellar. At the test pit location the current ground surface was 0.14 to 0.22m higher than the adjacent paver path (the range reflects a slight fall in the path from NW to SE). The highest point of the area was 0.24 to 0.32m above the paver path.
13. The upper layers, (001) and (003), into which the test pit was excavated consisted of modern gravel surfaces deposited between the outside of the church walls and a pedestrian pavement. The layers consisted of moderately compacted, light to dark grey gravel and sand with occasional to moderate CBM and modern refuse (glass, tin cans and plastic) inclusions. Layer (001) had a thickness of 0.05-0.07m and layer (003) had a thickness of 0.05-0.11m.
14. Beneath these upper modern layers was a disturbed layer (002), possibly an old ground surface around the church building. This layer consisted of grey-brown sandy silt with moderate CBM and occasional disarticulated and fragmentary human bone inclusions. The layer had a thickness of 0.31-0.42m. The basal layer identified within the test pit was possibly redeposited or disturbed subsoil which consisted of orange-brown/grey-brown sandy silt with occasional CBM and disarticulated and fragmentary human bone inclusions. The layer had a thickness of 0.06-0.12m.
15. Layers (002) and (004) both abutted a brick wall (006) which was identified in the east facing section of the test pit (Figure 4a and 4b). The walls structure was made up bricks which were 0.2m long and 0.08m thick. The width of the individual bricks was unclear as only the front of the wall was exposed during the excavation. Two types of bricks were identified in the construction of the wall with the majority being light orange or buff in colour with the rest being orange-red in colour, suggesting an opening in the wall which had been sealed up. The wall was orientated in an N-S direction.
16. A modern 19<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> century ceramic pipe was located within layer (002). It was orientated in a SE to NW direction and had a diameter of 0.15m and was located at depth of 0.39m from the surface. The Pipe also passed through a hole cut into the brick wall (006).

17. A number of artefacts were recovered from the bottom two layers, (002) and (004), within the test pit. All of these finds were of 19<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> century date (see appendixes). Fragments of disarticulated human bone were also recovered from these layers and these remains will properly reinterred after the completion of the site works.

## Discussion

18. All of the layers identified within the test pit contained material which would date them to the 19<sup>th</sup> century or later. It was unclear if the basal fill, (004), was redeposited or just disturbed subsoil but the amount of CBM inclusions and 19<sup>th</sup> century to modern artefacts recovered would suggest it was the former.
19. It does seem probable that the north to south orientated brick wall, (006), was part of a cellar possibly for coal storage for the church. The use of different brick in part of the wall suggests that there had been an opening into the structure, possibly an entrance or more likely a chute for the unloading of the coal, that was later sealed up. It is also unclear if the hole in the wall used to accommodate the ceramic drainage pipe was part of the original wall or a later addition.
20. The only significant archaeological remains to be identified within the test pit were the fragments of disarticulated human bone found within bottom layers (002) and (004). Due to the fragmentary nature of the bone and the fact that it was recovered alongside 19<sup>th</sup> century to modern artefacts it is impossible to say what period it was from. All that can be said is that 19<sup>th</sup> century to modern disturbance and structural remains are present to a depth of 0.5m below the modern ground surface and may possibly continue to a greater depth.

## Recommendations

21. The test pit has shown there are disturbed layers of sediment from the modern ground surface to a depth of at least 0.5m. These layers include detritus from the 19<sup>th</sup> century to modern period, but also include human skeletal material. Rathmell Archaeology Limited consider that the works proposed within the angle of the church (i.e. those considered under Condition 1 of the granted SMC) are unlikely to interact with pre-19<sup>th</sup> century *in situ* features (including graves). However, they are likely to disturb disarticulated human skeletal material and may reveal similarly disturbed medieval artefacts.
22. Rathmell Archaeology recommends that the ground breaking works within the angle of the church should be monitored by a professional archaeologist. This will primarily be to recover disarticulated human skeletal material and any pre-19<sup>th</sup> century artefacts. The acceptability of these recommendations must be confirmed with Historic Environment Scotland prior to any ground breaking works on-site.

## Conclusion

23. This Data Structure Report has been prepared in respect to the demolition of a set of external stairs and the installation of new drainage at Kilwinning Old Parish Church, North Ayrshire. The archaeological works were designed to mitigate the impact on the archaeological remains within their development area to the agreement of Historic Environment Scotland.
24. Kilwinning Old Parish Church stands within the Scheduled Monument protecting the remains of Kilwinning Abbey, though the fabric of the church itself is listed rather than scheduled. Historic Scotland granted Scheduled Monument Consent for the drainage works was conditional on a small archaeological evaluation which would help inform the nature of the archaeology present within the area of the proposed drainage works.
25. The evaluation took the form of a small test pit which identified a number of 19<sup>th</sup> century to modern layers and a brick wall which may have been part of a coal cellar associated with the church. A number of 19<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> century artefacts were recovered from the two lowest layers within the test pit as well as disarticulated fragments of human bone.
26. No other significant archaeological features or artefacts were recovered from the test pit.

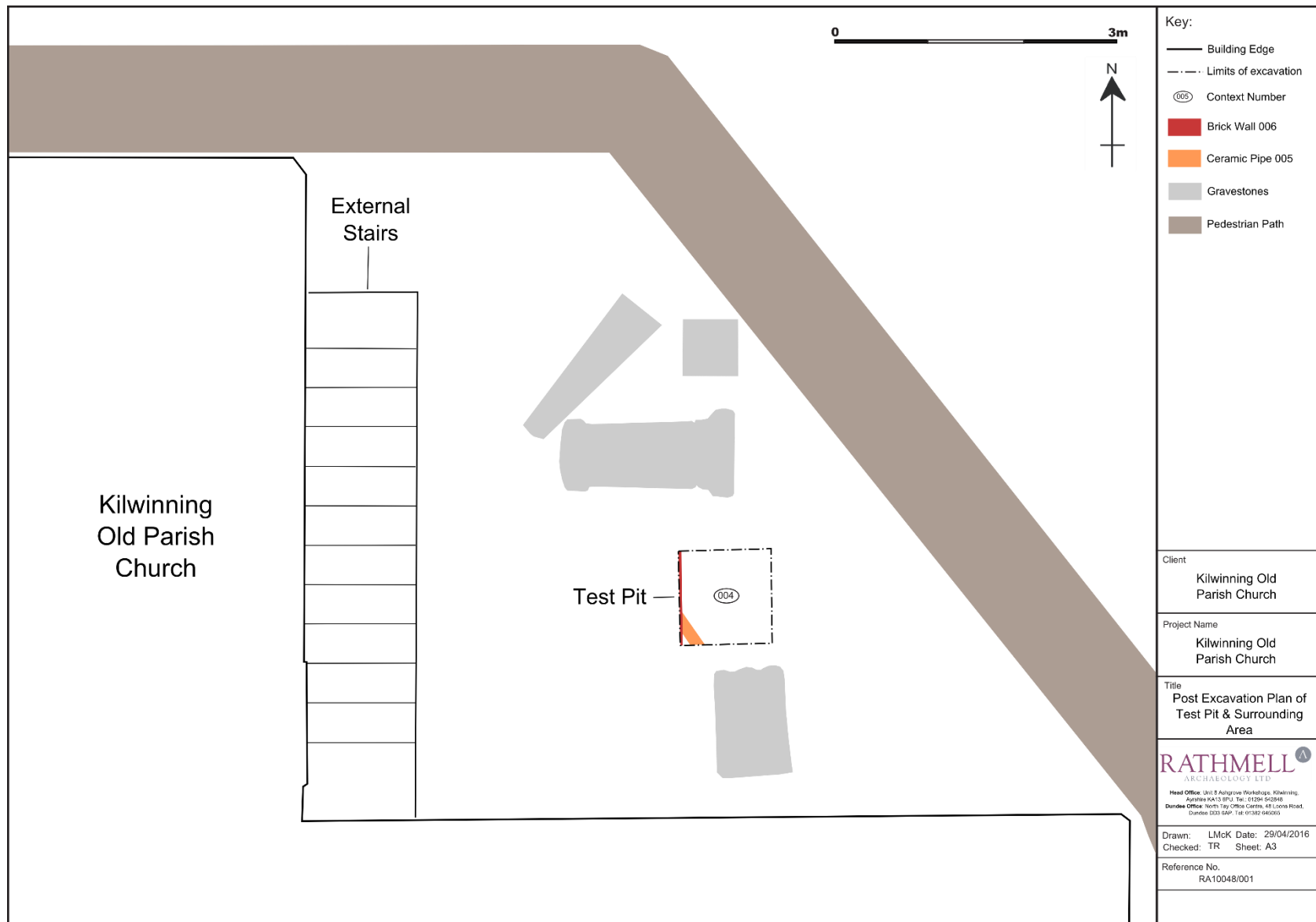


Figure 2: Plan of Test Pit and surrounding area.



Figure 3a: Pre excavation view of the site.



Figure 3b: Close up pre excavation view of test pit area.



Figure 4a: Post excavation view of the test pit from the east.



Figure 4b: Post excavation view of the test pit from the north.

## Acknowledgements

27. The author would like to thank Kilwinning Old Parish Church, for the opportunity to carry out these works and also to Jim Friels, Drew Wilson and James Watterson for their assistance on site. I would also like to thank Historic Environment who gave their support and guidance throughout and Thomas Rees for his editing of this report.

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### *Cartographic*

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1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey, 1856, Ayrshire, sheet XVI.4

2<sup>nd</sup> edition Ordnance Survey, 1895, Ayrshire, sheet XVI.NE

## Appendix 1: Registers

Within this appendix are all registers pertaining to works on-site during the evaluation.

### Context Register

Context No.	Area/Trench	Type	Description	Interpretation
001	Test Pit	Deposit	Moderately compacted. Light to mid grey gravel and sand with occasional to moderate CBM and modern refuse (glass, tin cans and plastic) inclusions. Thickness of 0.05-0.07m. Extent 1m by 1m.	Modern gravel surface associated with the church.
002	Test Pit	Deposit	Moderately compacted, grey-brown sandy silt with moderate CBM and occasional disarticulated and fragmentary human bone inclusions. Thickness of 0.31-0.42m. Extent 1m by 0.8m. Underlies modern gravel surface (003) and abuts wall (006).	Disturbed layer, possibly an old ground surface around the church building.
003	Test Pit	Deposit	Moderately compacted. Mid to dark grey-brown gravel and sand with occasional to moderate CBM and modern refuse (glass, tin cans and plastic) inclusions. Thickness of 0.05-0.11m. Extent 1m by 1m.	Modern gravel surface associated with the church.
004	Test Pit	Deposit	Moderately compacted, orange-brown/grey-brown sandy silt with occasional CBM and disarticulated and fragmentary human bone inclusions. Thickness of 0.06-0.12m. Extent 1m by 0.8m. Underlies disturbed layer (002), abuts wall (006) and surrounds pipe (005).	Redeposited and heavily disturbed subsoil around the church building.
005	Test Pit	Deposit	Ceramic pipe with orange-brown/buff coloured glaze. The pipe had a diameter of 0.15m and was located at a depth of 0.39m from the surface. It was orientated in a SE to NW direction. The Pipe was surrounded by layer (002) and it entered into the brick wall of the coal cellar (006) through a hole.	19 <sup>th</sup> or 20 <sup>th</sup> century drainage pipe associated with the church building. May have led up to a vertical gutter pipe running down the N facing wall of the church.
006	Test Pit	Structure	Brick built structure. Component bricks were 0.2m long and 0.05m thick. The width of the individual bricks was unclear as only the front of the wall was exposed during the excavation. Two types of bricks were identified in the construction of the wall with the majority being light orange or buff in colour with the rest being orange-red in colour, suggesting an opening in the wall which had been sealed up. The wall was orientated in an N-S direction. The modern gravel layers (001) and (003) overlay the wall, the disturbed and redeposited layers (002) and (004) abutted it and the ceramic pipe (005) entered it through a hole.	19 <sup>th</sup> or 20 <sup>th</sup> century brick wall. Most probably part of a coal cellar associated with the church.

*Find Register*

Find No.	Area Trench	Context no.	Material Type	Description	Excavator	Date
001	Test Pit	002	Ceramics	6 x modern or 19 <sup>th</sup> century pottery sherds.	LMcK	26/04/16
002	Test Pit	002	Ceramics	1 x brick fragment.	LMcK	26/04/16
003	Test Pit	002	CBM	4 x slag/furnace residue.	LMcK	26/04/16
004	Test Pit	002	Glass	Numerous modern or 19 <sup>th</sup> century pottery sherds.	LMcK	26/04/16
005	Test Pit	002	Glass	Fragment of mirrored surface.	LMcK	26/04/16
006	Test Pit	002	Metal	1 x nail	LMcK	26/04/16
007	Test Pit	004	Ceramics	2 x modern or 19 <sup>th</sup> century pottery sherds.	LMcK	26/04/16
008	Test Pit	004	Metal	2 x nails	LMcK	26/04/16
009	Test Pit	004	Plaster	1 x plaster fragment (from wall?)	LMcK	26/04/16
010	Test Pit	004	CBM	1 x slag/furnace residue.	LMcK	26/04/16

*Drawing Register*

Drawing No.	Sheet No.	Area/ Trench	Drawing Type	Scale	Description
1	1	Test Pit	Plan	1:20	Post excavation plan of the test pit and the area surrounding it.
2	1	Test Pit	Section	1:20	North facing section of the test pit.

*Photographic Register*

Image No.	Digital	Description	From	Date
001	1979	Pre excavation view of the site.	N	26/0416
002	1980	Pre excavation view of the site.	N	26/0416
003	1981	Pre excavation view of the site.	E	26/0416
004	1982	Close up view of gravestone.	N	26/0416
005	1983	Close up view of gravestone.	N	26/0416
006	1984	Close up view of gravestone.	E	26/0416
007	1985	Close up view of gravestone.	NE	26/0416
008	1986	Close up view of gravestone.	NE	26/0416
009	1987	Close up view of gravestone.	E	26/0416
010	1988	Setting out of the test pit.	N	26/0416
011	1989	Fencing up and excavation underway.	NE	26/0416
012	1990	Working shot.	S	26/0416
013	1991	Working shot.	S	26/0416
014	1992	Working shot.	SE	26/0416
015	1993	Working shot.	E	26/0416
016	1994	View of test pit at 0.25m depth.	N	26/0416
017	1995	View of test pit at 0.25m depth.	E	26/0416
018	1996	View of test pit at 0.4m depth.	N	26/0416
019	1997	View of test pit at 0.4m depth.	E	26/0416
020	1998	Close up view of human bone fragment within layer (004).	NE	26/0416
021	1999	Close up view of human bone fragment within layer (004).	NE	26/0416
022	2001	Sieving underway.	N	26/0416

Image No.	Digital	Description	From	Date
023	2002	Working shot.	W	26/0416
024	2003	-	-	26/0416
025	2004	Post excavation view of test pit at 0.5m depth.	E	26/0416
026	2005	Post excavation view of test pit at 0.5m depth.	N	26/0416
027	2006	Post excavation view of test pit at 0.5m depth. Oblique view.	NE	26/0416
028	2007	View of the site after backfilling.	NE	26/0416
029	2008	View of the site after backfilling.	N	26/0416
030	2009	View of the site after backfilling.	N	26/0416
031	2010	View of Abbey Clock Tower.	ENE	26/0416
032	2011	View of graveyard to the east.	NW	26/0416

## Appendix 3: Discovery & Excavation in Scotland

<b>LOCAL AUTHORITY:</b>	North Ayrshire
<b>PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:</b>	Kilwinning Old Parish Church
<b>PROJECT CODE:</b>	RA10048
<b>PARISH:</b>	Kilwinning
<b>NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:</b>	Liam McKinstry
<b>NAME OF ORGANISATION:</b>	Rathmell Archaeology Limited
<b>TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:</b>	Evaluation
<b>NMRS NO(S):</b>	NS34SW 84.00
<b>SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):</b>	Church
<b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS:</b>	Modern Pottery, metal, glass
<b>NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)</b>	NS 30342 43305 (centred)
<b>START DATE (this season)</b>	26 <sup>th</sup> April 2016
<b>END DATE (this season)</b>	26 <sup>th</sup> April 2016
<b>PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)</b>	No
<b>MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION:</b> (may include information from other fields)	<p>A programme of works was carried out in respect to the demolition of a set of external stairs and the installation of new drainage at Kilwinning Old Parish Church, North Ayrshire. The archaeological works were designed to mitigate the impact on the archaeological remains within their development area to the agreement of Historic Environment Scotland.</p> <p>Kilwinning Old Parish Church stands within the Scheduled Monument protecting the remains of Kilwinning Abbey, though the fabric of the church itself is listed rather than scheduled. Historic Scotland granted Scheduled Monument Consent for the drainage works was conditional on a small archaeological evaluation which would help inform the nature of the archaeology present within the area of the proposed drainage works.</p> <p>The evaluation took the form of a small test pit which identified a number of 19th century to modern layers and a brick wall which may have been part of a coal cellar associated with the church. A number of 19th or 20th century artefacts were recovered from the two lowest layers within the test pit as well as disarticulated fragments of human bone.</p> <p>No other significant archaeological features or artefacts were recovered from the test pit.</p>
<b>PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:</b>	Yes
<b>CAPTION(S) FOR</b>	None

<b>ILLUSTRS:</b>	
<b>SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:</b>	Kilwinning Old Parish Church
<b>ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:</b>	Unit 8 Ashgrove Workshops, Kilwinning, Ayrshire KA13 6PU
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<b>ARCHIVE LOCATION</b> (intended/deposited)	Report to West of Scotland Archaeology Service and archive to HES Collections.

## Contact Details

31. Rathmell Archaeology can be contacted at our Registered Office or through the web:
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