



Tarbert Castle Excavation HES Report 1



Week One Update

Trench 1

Beneath the grass/topsoil was a dark grey, with a mixture of post mediaeval finds throughout, although some medieval pottery sherds were also recovered. This soil has been interpreted as an agricultural/horticultural soil. A band of rubble also lay along the outer wall of the inner bailey (see photo below). This appears to have formed at the same time as the agricultural soil was being worked.



Working in Trench 1

Below both of these deposits we have now come down onto an extensive layer of collapse/demolition material.

The wall of the inner bailey which was sealed by this agricultural soil is well preserved and the outer face is coated by lime mortar render.



Photo showing 'agricultural soil' over rubble collapse

Trench 2

The walls within the trench that were suggestive of a corridor and internal divisions or rooms, is actually a building (probably of 18th century date) that has been inserted over the castle remains. This building is actually depicted on the First Edition Ordnance Survey, although it was never clear whether these were walls of the castle or a later building.



1st Edition Ordnance Survey Map



Working in Trench 2

The building was filled with rubble from it and the castle walls and near the floor of the building an upper stone of a rotary quern was recovered.

We have now reached the floors of this building, which have evidence of a hearth position. Some glass and a clay tobacco pipe stem from the floor, suggest an 18th century date.

The walls of this structure are poorly constructed when compared to the castle walls and do not show any sign of mortar use in their construction. The building is built over an extensive deposit of rubble collapse.

We have also confirmed the presence two entrances into this wing of the castle, one into the entrance pend and a second into the courtyard.

The castle walls, where exposed, are well preserved with solid mortar bonding. There is also evidence of repair or rebuilding in the northern wall of the inner bailey, while below this rebuild the walls have signs of having been coated in a white lime wash.