



IfA Workplace Learning Bursaries Bursary Holder Case Studies – Development Control/HER at PKHT

- (1) Name? Oliver O'Grady
- (2) Placement? Assistant Archaeologist in Development Control/Historic Environment Record at Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust (PKHT).
- (3) Education/ previous roles? MA (joint hons) in Archaeology/Medieval History; MPhil in Scottish Medieval Studies; PhD in Archaeology (University of Glasgow).
- (4) Hobbies? Hill walking, gardening, mushroom picking, fishing, reading, going to live music sessions and socialising down the pub.
- (5) Favourite archaeological person, book, site or object? The Moothill inauguration mound and abbey of Scone, Perthshire.
- (6) Where did you see the placement advertised and what inspired you to apply? The IfA Jobs Bulletin. I have a keen interest in the archaeology of Perthshire and had been impressed by an earlier visit to the PKHT office. I was keen to branch out into another area of professional archaeology, and diversify my skills base after 10 years of education and research.
- (7) How did you feel when you were offered the post? When the offer letter arrived I was a very happy man! It was especially exciting to know I was being offered such a rare opportunity, which was specifically tailored to gaining useful professional skills and I had the feeling that by the end of the year an entirely new area of archaeology would be opened up to me as a career.
- (8) Best/worst thing about the placement? The best thing has to have been working with really friendly and professional colleagues, who make up the six-strong dedicated team at the Trust, and having my contract extended for another year! The worst was the recession hitting and seeing the affect on archaeological units.
- (9) Biggest achievement/biggest challenge? Organising and hosting a conference on the role of geophysics in Scottish development control archaeology (supported by the IfA and ALGAO: Scotland).
- (10) What have you learnt so far? I've learnt to work as a curatorial development control archaeologist. I can work with HBSMR and GIS software, enhancing the local HER; negotiate Scottish planning policies; liaise with council planners, developers and archaeologists, making decisions and recommendations for the protection of archaeology. Crucially I'm also now more aware of the many opportunities and different career paths available to archaeologists outside of Higher Education.
- (11) Future plans/future ambitions? I plan to continue developing curatorial work with the Trust as well as exploring commercial possibilities with geophysics consultancy. I'm also continuing independent research projects, working on publishing my PhD and doing some lecturing work at night school.
- (12) What advice would you give to other people wanting to apply for a training placement? To be open minded about what a career in archaeology can involve – I've certainly learnt through the IfA placement that you never know what doors can be opened by considering new career paths.
- Any other comments? I hope more archaeologists working in academic research will consider the value of taking up workplace learning bursaries with the IfA.

