



**ORKNEY**  
ISLANDS COUNCIL

**Item: 8**

**Enterprise and Infrastructure Committee: 3 February 2026.**

**Archaeological Investigations.**

**Report by Director of Enterprise and Resources.**

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## **1. Overview**

- 1.1. This report presents recommendations regarding the allocation of funding for Archaeological Investigations for the 2026 season. Six applications for financial assistance have been received, comprising two mainland-based projects and four island-based projects, with a total project cost of £149,107. The total assistance requested across the six applications is £72,688. This exceeds the available budget of £40,000.
- 1.2. An assessment panel which included the Council's Archaeology Officer and Curator have assessed the applications, with the proposed offers of grant for the 2026 season to correspond to the maximum £40,000 available recommended as detailed in Annex A to this report.
- 1.3. In advance of the Council's budget setting process for 2026/27 being concluded, any decision on the award of grant funding towards archaeological investigations for the 2026 season is 'in principle' only and subject to an adequate service revenue budget being established.

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1. It is recommended that members of the Committee:
  - i. Agree that a sum of up to £40,000 be allocated within the Economic Development Grants budget in respect of archaeological investigations, subject to an adequate service revenue budget for 2026/27 being established.
  - ii. Agree that subject to the annual budget for Economic Development Grants for 2026/27 being confirmed, an in-principle offer of grant be made in respect of archaeological investigations for the 2026 season, as detailed in Annex A to this report.

### **3. Background**

- 3.1. The scheme of assistance for Archaeological Investigations, with a present allocation of £40,000, was originally set up to assist the creation of sustainable communities by supporting and promoting survival through archaeological excavations which, in turn, raise the profile of Orkney and stimulate tourism. The marketing benefit arising annually from the archaeological investigations has continued to produce widespread publicity through a range of media for the archaeological project and for Orkney in general.
- 3.2. It is therefore considered that the benefits achieved through this funding support intervention demonstrate excellent value for money and should be continued.

### **4. Applications for the 2026 Season**

- 4.1. Six applications, comprising two mainland projects and four island projects, have been received for the 2026 season, with full details provided in Annex A to this report.
- 4.2. Overall, it is becoming increasingly difficult for universities and individuals to submit an application as the sources of match funding are few, budgets are being cut and greater costs are involved for academics (for example, use of own time in some institutions is not encouraged). It is regarded by the Archaeological Investigations allocation panel as significant how many academics from outwith Orkney participate in excavations considering the increased pressure on external funds. Despite the academic funding cuts in general there is still a good spread of projects through time and between the islands.
- 4.3. The Archaeological Investigations allocation panel met on 12 December 2025 and agreed that all six applications are worthy of assistance at the levels detailed in Annex A. The leverage of external funding which will be achieved through the proposed assistance allocation for the 2026 season is approximately 7:1. The distribution of approved projects is indicated on the map attached as Annex B to this report.
- 4.4. It is envisaged that the proposed projects for the 2026 season will provide interpretation and knowledge which will enhance that gleaned from the sites previously excavated. It is also envisaged that these digs will again result in significant media coverage which will not only continually raise the awareness of the rich archaeology of Orkney but promote Orkney as a whole to a global audience.

- 4.5. The most recent Orkney Visitor Survey found that 48% of visitors were motivated to visit Orkney by history and culture including archaeology and that this was particularly important to overseas visitors. It would therefore appear that the historic aspect of Orkney's attraction is important to the decision-making process of visitors. It was also found that TV programmes such as BBC's Britain's Ancient Capital and Digging for Britain were a strong influence on visitors. Substantial marketing and media coverage resulted from the excavations undertaken in the 2025 season, demonstrating the significant value for money which is achieved through the support provided, with details attached as Annex C to this report.

**For further information please contact:**

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**Implications of Report**

1. **Financial:** The Economic Development Grant budget for financial year 2025/26 was originally approved as £321,700 and includes an allocation of £40,000 towards Archaeology. At time of writing this report, it is anticipated that allocation of funds to Archaeology will be maintained at the existing level for the financial year 2026/27. On the basis that the recommendations outlined in Annex A to this report refers to the allocation of resources in future years, it should be noted that this would still be subject to an appropriate annual Economic Development Grant budget being made available as part of the Council's annual budget setting process.
2. **Legal:** Pursuant to section 20(1) of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003, the Council has the power to do anything that it considers is likely to promote or improve the well-being of its area and persons within that area, or either of those. This power is subject to the limits set out in section 22 of the same Act. If grant assistance is to be provided by the Council, a legally binding agreement will require to be entered into between the Council and the recipient setting out the terms on which the funding is being provided.
3. **Corporate Governance:** None.
4. **Human Resources:** None.
5. **Equalities:** None.
6. **Island Communities Impact:** The island communities receive focused support through £20,000, being ring-fenced to assist island projects. It is envisaged that the cumulative effect of island archaeological work will assist to disperse tourism and therefore generate an economic return to the isles.
7. **Links to Council Plan:** The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Council Plan strategic priorities:

- ☒ Growing our economy.
- ☒ Strengthening our Communities.
- ☐ Developing our Infrastructure.
- ☒ Transforming our Council.

**8. Links to Local Outcomes Improvement Plan:** The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Local Outcomes Improvement Plan priorities:

- ☐ Cost of Living.
- ☒ Sustainable Development.
- ☐ Local Equality.
- ☐ Improving Population Health.

**9. Environmental and climate risk:** None.

**10. Risk:** None.

**11. Procurement:** None.

**12. Health and safety:** None.

**13. Property and assets:** None.

**14. Information technology:** None.

**15. Cost of living:** None.

### List of Background Papers

None.

### Annexes

Annex A: List of applications for 2026 season.

Annex B: Map of proposed excavations for 2026 season.

Annex C: 2025 media activity and reach of Orkney archaeological activity.

**Archaeology Fund – 2026 Season.**  
**Summary of applications and recommendations.**

**Annex A.**

**Mainland applications.**

No.	Applicant/ Project Director.	Project name.	Total cost.	Amount requested.	Req'd	Amount awarded.	Aw'd.	Rationale.
1.	Nick Card MA (Hons); MCIfA; FSAScot.  Orkney Research Centre for UHI Archaeology Institute.	Ness of Brodgar Geophysics Analysis.	£14,000.	£7,000.	50%.	£6,000.	42.86%.	This project is a continuation of the Ness Project. The application is for specialist analysis of the geophysical survey conducted by the Time Team, that has identified an unexpected anomaly. The specialist analysis will enable further interpretation and inform the excavation planned for summer 2026. This has already achieved national news coverage and will attract much more as well as visitors to Orkney.
2.	Martin Carruthers.  UHI Archaeology Institute.	The Cairns/Windwick Bay Archaeological Field Project.	£50,995.70.	£27,864.80.	54.64%.	£14,000.	27.45%.	This is a valuable project in terms of the added information it can give to all Orkney sites of this period, enriching both local and visitor experience, and in media profile, attracting tourists (and academics) to visit Orkney and contribute to the economy. It acts as a visitor draw in season, combining with the re-opened Tomb of the Eagles, promoting South Ronaldsay. This results in indirect visitor spend on the linked S Isles, e.g. facilities and venues in the Hope, and at the Fossil Centre. It contributes to local education and volunteer training.
<b>Mainland total.</b>			<b>£64,995.70.</b>	<b>£34,864.80.</b>		<b>£20,000.</b>		

Islands applications.								
No.	Applicant/ Project Director.	Project name.	Total cost.	Amount requested.	Req'd.	Amount awarded.	Aw'd.	Rationale.
3.	Prof Ingrid Mainland (Senior Lecturer) and Daniel Lee (Lifelong Learning and Outreach Archaeologist).  UHI Archaeology Institute.	Landscapes of Change: Archaeologies of the Rousay Clearances and the Westness Estate.	£31,092.25.	£15,832.25.	50.92%.	£7,916.	25.46%.	This is a highly worthwhile project and has so far had excellent results and outputs. The project is especially strong on community inclusion, education, on outputs that are useful to tourists and residents alike, such as the archaeology leaflet and text in the visitor centre/ferry waiting room. The project attracts visitor spend of value to the local economy. Media outputs have attracted national and international interest, and as part of the LIFTE project has been presented at international conferences in Sweden and Norway, and resulted in academic publications that keep Orkney's profile high.
4.	Colin Richards Professor of Prehistoric Archaeology. (Professor Jane Downes BAHons PhD MCIfA).  UHI Archaeology Institute.	Northern Exposure Project: Spurness (Site 73), Loth Road, Sanday.	£27,770.	£9,700.	34.93%.	£4,850.	17.46%.	This is an excellent project, and continues the investigations begun in 2018 and continued in 2025, which received an OIC grant. It has the potential to add to reasons to visit Sanday and contribute to the economy in both the short and long term. It is a potentially important site, and could become an attraction. It is visible on the surface, and could lead to information boards about prehistoric sites on Spurness. It would also further enhance community engagement with heritage and a sense of place, which was a great success in 2025. The public access

Islands applications.								
No.	Applicant/ Project Director.	Project name.	Total cost.	Amount requested.	Req'd.	Amount awarded.	Aw'd.	Rationale.
								and media outreach elements of the project are also strong.
5.	Hazel Moore.  Go Westray Community Interest Company.	Discover Pierowall (Year 2).	£17,850.	£8,000.	44.82%.	£5,089.	28.51%.	This is a valuable project in terms of its aims in using archaeological investigations to promote Pierowall as a visitor destination, and to enhance the local community's engagement with their heritage. Public access is embedded in the project. The project has aspirations to make a long-term contribution to the Westray community and economy.
6.	Dr Ben Elliott  UHI Orkney Archaeology Institute UHI Orkney, East Road, Kirkwall, KW15 1LX.	Stronsay Fieldwalking Survey.	£7,399.65.	£4,290.65.	57.98%.	£2,145.	28.99%.	This is the inception of a new project, with the potential for long-term contributions to Stronsay, in terms of heritage attractions, the heritage centre, as a visitor destination, and to enhance the local community's engagement with their heritage. This project includes training of island residents in various survey techniques.
<b>Islands total.</b>			<b>£84,111.90.</b>	<b>£37,822.90.</b>		<b>£20,000.</b>		
<b>MAINLAND and ISLANDS TOTAL</b>			<b>£149,107.60</b>	<b>£72,687.70</b>		<b>£40,000</b>		



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## Orkney Archaeology Media Activity and Reach

Orkney in general benefits from archaeological work in Orkney, which continues to fascinate and draw the attention of interested parties all over the world. The sites and projects that received funding from the OIC Archaeology Fund contributed to an increase in traditional media and online activity focussing on Orkney's archaeology.

### Swandro Archaeological Trust

The excavations at Swandro, Rousay, received funding from the OIC Archaeology Fund. The Dig Diary on the website [HOME | Swandro-Orkney Coastal Archaeology Trust](#) posted daily updates during the excavation, then periodically out-of-season with post-excavation results, general interest items etc., the most popular posts getting 2-3,000 views.

#### Social media

- Facebook: 3,200 followers.
- X (formerly Twitter): 1,875 followers.
- YouTube channel: 191 subscribers, 46 videos posted, 9,338 views.

#### Media coverage

The award-winning excavations received national news coverage in The Glasgow Herald 3/8/25 and The National 1/8/25, and was subject to a press release by the University of Bradford: <https://www.bradford.ac.uk/news/archive/2025/archaeologists-battle-the-tide-to-save-orkneys-ancient-secrets.php>.

Swandro participated in the Scotland Digs 2025 campaign, publicising the excavation via the DigIT Scotland social media channels ([digit.scotland.com](https://digit.scotland.nhs.uk)). People were able to follow along online with posts on the Dig It! website and social media under the dedicated hashtag: #ScotlandDigs2025. This was also covered by The Herald (also in print), The National and The Scotsman.

Orkney coverage of Swandro in The Orcadian 31/7/25, The Islander 2025, hard copy & online edition, and on the Orkney.com website: <https://www.orkney.com/news/archaeology-excavations-2025>.

The Swandro excavation is the subject of an episode on the Time Team programme on Youtube, which has 291,000 subscribers. [New Episode | Saving Swandro | Time Team Plus Swandro - Orkney Coastal Archaeology Trust](#). It premiered 14 December 2024 and has had repeat viewings throughout 2025.

### Blomar, Holm

The excavations on the rediscovered neolithic chambered tomb at Blomar (aka Blomuir), Holm received funding from the OIC Archaeology Fund. The project received exceptionally broad international coverage in 2025 that has reflected on very well on Orkney and its archaeology.

The excavation was filmed for BBC TV's Digging for Britain with Dr Alice Roberts. The programme was broadcast on BBC2 9 January 2025.

The excavations were included in a six page spread on Neolithic Orkney in The New Yorker, 1 December 2025. The magazine has approximately 1.23 million subscribers.

"A lost passage tomb found", a summary of the discoveries so far, was published by the site directors, Dr Hugo Anderson-Whymark of National Museums Scotland and Prof Vicki Cummings from the University of Cardiff, in The Orkney Archaeology Review 2025.

Other outputs comprised various Orkney and national presentations:

- Further Discoveries at Blomuir Passage Grave. Orkney Archaeological Society, Online. 20 March 2025.
- (Re-)Discovering Blomuir Passage Gave. Archaeological Research in Progress, Edinburgh. 3 April 2025.
- The Bones of Blomuir. Orkney Science Festival, Kirkwall. 10 September 2025.
- A Day in the Life of an Archaeologist (aka Excavations at Blomuir Passage Grave). National Museums Scotland, Members Event, Edinburgh. 10 December 2025.

## **University of the Highlands and Islands Archaeology Institute**

### **UHI Archaeology Institute online**

Visitor numbers to the UHIAI blog, archaeologyorkney.com, reached a new high in 2025, surpassing 2023's record-breaking activity. The geographical reach of the websites have an effect of raising Orkney's profile worldwide.

The sites and projects receiving OIC funding that are included in the UHI Archaeology Institute website are The Cairns in South Ronaldsay, Spurness in Sanday, Landscapes of Change (Westness and Skaill, Rousay), and news about other sites such as the Ness of Brodgar and Blomar were re-posted.

### **Archaeologyorkney.com**

	<b>Page Views</b>	<b>Visitors</b>
2016	52,667	30,032
2017	55,354	34,335
2018	49,137	29,011
2019	65,477	44,646
2020	52,231	35,563
2021	101,836	63,199
2022	86,614	49,686
2023	111,460	58,880
2024	96,151	51,004
2025	117,892	62,714

### Social media

- Twitter: 5,682 followers (this account was deactivated late 2024).
- Facebook: 10,257 followers.
- Instagram: 3,354 followers.

As an aside, though not receiving a grant from OIC Archaeology Fund, a new book re-appraising burial in Bronze Age Orkney was launched in November 2025, at the UHIAI's tenth-anniversary celebration in Kirkwall. *Animating the Dead: An Archaeology of Bronze Age Burial Practices in Orkney* by Professors Jane Downes and Colin Richards followed decades of research and incorporates new excavation results and radiocarbon dates from sites across the county. It has been nominated for the Highland Book Award.

Again, as an aside, the UHIAI's tenth-anniversary celebration was a hugely successful event (['Here's to the next decade of discovery' - marking ten years of the UHI Archaeology Institute - Archaeology Orkney](#)), attended by 150 people from across Orkney and beyond. It highlighted projects, events and activities, many of which had received OIC support. The event was launched by Councillor Graham Bevan, who said "The institute has brought together research, consultancy, teaching and community archaeology. The success has been extraordinary. The institute has secured major research funding, and its work has earned national and international recognition."

### The Cairns

Excavation resumed at the Iron Age broch site at The Cairns, South Ronaldsay, in June, directed by Martin Carruthers of the UHI Archaeology Institute. Over the dig season, along with community engagement and volunteer activities, the site saw a steady number of tourists and other site visitors eager to see archaeology in action. The Cairns Daily Dig Diary was hosted on the UHIAI blog. The Cairns dig was filmed for BBC TV's Digging for Britain, and the programme aired on BBC2 9 January 2025. The Cairns also featured in The Orcadian, on BBC Radio Orkney, The Islander 2025, hard copy & online edition, and on the Orkney.com website: <https://www.orkney.com/news/archaeology-excavations-2025>.

### Skaill Farm, Rousay (Landscapes of Change)

Excavation resumed at the multi-period Skaill Farm, Rousay, in July. Over the dig season, along with community engagement and volunteer activities, the site saw a steady number of tourists and other site visitors eager to see archaeology in action. A digital leaflet was posted for free download on the UHIAI website (the [Skaill-Rousay-Leaflet-2025-V2-update.pdf](#)). The Dig Diary was hosted on the UHIAI blog. The BBC Radio 4 programme Open Country broadcast an episode on 17 April 2025, [Open Country - Time travel on Orkney - BBC Sounds](#), that featured the excavations and interviewed the directors Professor Ingrid Mainland, Dr Jen Harland and Dan Lee from the UHIAI. The Cairns also featured in The Orcadian, on BBC Radio Orkney and on the Orkney.com website: <https://www.orkney.com/news/archaeology-excavations-2025>.

## Spurness, Sanday

Professors Jane Downes and Colin Richards from the UHIAI ran a student field school in August further investigating a prehistoric structure at the south end of the island. See [archaeologyorkney.com/2025/08/15/spurness-2025-d12/](https://archaeologyorkney.com/2025/08/15/spurness-2025-d12/). The excavations were well attended by islanders and the presentation on the work at the Community Centre was full to capacity.

## Ness of Brodgar

Although full-scale excavation ended in 2024, post-excavation continues and this kept the project in the public eye, particularly with the announcement of a Time Team-funded exploratory dig for July 2026.

Geophysical survey by Time Team in July was filmed for a forthcoming programme, as will the 2026 exploratory excavation. See <https://www.nessofbrodgar.co.uk/dig-2026/>.

The second volume in a series looking at the site – *Ness of Brodgar: Elements of Architecture* - was launched in December 2025.

The site was included in a six page spread on Neolithic Orkney in *The New Yorker*, 1 December 2025. The magazine has approximately 1.23 million subscribers.

Online.

No excavation meant no daily dig diary and this is reflected in a drop in online activity. That said, the 2025 totals remain well above pre-2021 levels.

	Total Page Views
2017	174,443
2018	242,777
2019	246,237
2020	200,091
2021	274,167
2022	278,608
2023	330,089
2024	397,281
2025	234,346

Social media

- Twitter deactivated late 2024.
- Facebook: 9,593 followers.
- Instagram: 10,600 followers.

## UHI Archaeology Institute media coverage and outputs in 2025 on projects receiving OIC Archaeology Fund grants, including Ness of Brodgar

This list is not exhaustive and does not include news aggregation services and blogs that repeat/distribute news stories from main sources.

- 08-Jan-25 *Discover the Astounding Secrets of Scotland's Stone Age Settlements*. Smithsonian Magazine article - published in print and online. (<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/discover-astounding-secrets-scotlands-stone-age-settlements-180985627/>).
- 11-Jan-25 The Cairns excavation featured in an episode of the BBC TV *Digging For Britain* programme.
- 17-Jan-25 *Orkney, the Surprising Center of Neolithic Britain - A landmark 20-year archaeological dig has come to an end, yet discoveries continue to show its significance*. New Lines Magazine. <https://newlinesmag.com/essays/orkney-the-surprising-center-of-neolithic-britain/>.
- 07-Feb-25 Archaeology Scotland Magazine - three articles in Winter 2024/25 issue from Drs Jen Harland and Julia Cussans and PhD students Holly Young and Kath Page.
- 17-Apr-25 Ongoing excavations at Skaill, Rousay, and LIFTE research project+B439 on BBC Radio 4's *Open Country* programme, *Time Travel on Orkney*. Features Ingrid Mainland, Jen Harland and Dan Lee.
- 25-Apr-25 Article in *West Highland Free Press* of UHIAI PhD student Kath Page's research into deer relations in prehistory.
- 01-May-25 Dr Sarah Jane Gibbon has a chapter, *Small Churches in Orkney*, in new publication, *Small Churches and Religious Landscapes in the North Atlantic c.900–1300*, published by Brepols (Jette Arneborg, Orri Vésteinsson, eds).
- 19-May-25 The Ness of Brodgar and The Cairns excavation projects included in the 2025 *Orkney Archaeology Review*, published by the Orkney Archaeology Society.
- 29-May-25 New report on the 1985 excavations at Viquoy Hill chambered cairn, Eday, published. Funded by North Isles Landscape Partnership and compiled by ORCA from excavation records. Marwick, J., Bøe, M., Brend, A. and Lee, D. (2025). *Viquoy Hill Chambered Cairn, Eday, Orkney, Excavations of a Neolithic Tomb, 1985*. UHI Archaeology Institute. Available to download from [archaeologyorkney.com](http://archaeologyorkney.com).
- 20-Jun-25 Nick Card co-author in new paper. Suttie, N., Harris, S., Batt, C.M., Nilsson, A., Snowball, I., Card, N. and Outram, Z. (2025) *Exceptional secular variation recorded in Neolithic hearths, Orkney and Swedish lake sediments*. In *Physics of the Earth and Planetary Interiors* 366. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pepi.2025.107412>.
- 21-Jun-25 A blog post by PhD student Kath Page published on the DigIt! Scotland website. <https://www.digitScotland.com/the-archaeology-of-scotlands-natural-larder-red-deer/>.
- 30-Jun-25 Time Team carrying out ground-penetrating radar survey of the Ness of Brodgar excavation site as part of a forthcoming programme. The Ness of Brodgar Trust project ran until 4 July 2025.
- 01-Jul-25 Time Team geophysics at the Ness of Brodgar. Feature and interviews on Around Orkney. BBC Radio Orkney.
- 03-Jul-25 Time Team geophysics at the Ness of Brodgar. Article in The Orcadian newspaper.
- 07-Jul-25 Blog post by PhD student Holly Young published on the DigIt! Scotland website. <https://www.digitScotland.com/the-archaeology-of-scotlands-natural-larder-shellfish/>.
- 10-Jul-25 The Cairns excavation article in The Orcadian newspaper.
- 11-Jul-25 Martin Carruthers on BBC Radio Orkney's Around Orkney talking about The Cairns excavation.
- 23-Jul-25 Around Orkney. BBC Radio Orkney. Skaill Farm carved stone head piece featuring interviews with Dr Sarah Jane Gibbon and undergraduate student Katie Joss.

- 25-Jul-25 BBC News: *Carved stone head could be more than 900 years old*. **Note: This story was picked up by news media across the world and featured in numerous publications, of which the following is only a small selection.**
- 25-Jul-25 The Scotsman: *Mysterious stone head found on tiny Scottish island of Rousay*.
- 25-Jul-25 Yahoo!News: *Carved sandstone head unearthed at Orkney archaeological dig*.
- 25-Jul-25 Press and Journal: *Mystery stone head is a huge find on island*.
- 26-Jul-25 The Herald: *Carved sandstone head unearthed at Orkney archaeological dig*.
- 26-Jul-25 The Scotsman: Opinion: *'Fascinating enigma' boosts rival claimant to Edinburgh's title of 'Athens of the North'*.
- 27-Jul-25 Daily Record: *900 year old carved stone head found on Scottish island in 'find of a lifetime'*.
- 27-Jul-25 GB News: *Archaeology breakthrough as 900-year-old carved head found on Scottish island 'rolled out' of wall*.
- 27-Jul-25 Ness of Brodgar post-excavation open day.
- 31-Jul-25 The Orcadian: *Head unearthed at Rousay dig branded 'fascinating enigma'*
- 10-Aug-25 Spurness open day, Sanday.
- 11-Sep-25 Ness of Brodgar "show and tell" with project directors in Maeshowe visitor centre as part of the 2025 Orkney Archaeology Festival.
- 28-Sep-25 *Trade and markets in early modern Orkney* by Sarah Jane Gibbon, Jocelyn Rendall, Anne Mitchell and Jennifer Harland and *Produce from the isles: the production and export of later medieval and early modern foodstuffs in Orkney and Shetland*, by Jennifer Harland, Bart Holterman, Ingrid Mainland and Julia Cussans, published in the book *Farmers' Trade and Markets*, edited by Marie Ødegaard, Kjetil Loftsgarden and Claudia Theune, and published by Sidestone Press. The chapters were the result of LIFTE project research.
- 09-Oct-25 *Investigating a 5,000-year-old pottery puzzle*. Article on ongoing ceramics post-excavation work at the Ness of Brodgar in The Orcadian newspaper.
- 24-Nov-25 In Northern Scotland, the Neolithic Age Never Ended. New Yorker Magazine. Article on ongoing Ness of Brodgar project.  
<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2025/12/01/in-northern-scotland-the-neolithic-age-never-ended>.
- 25-Nov-25 Time Team-funded exploratory excavation in 2026 announced by Time Team. Picked up by numerous news outlets across the world.
- 26-Nov-25 Ness of Brodgar 2026 excavation on BBC Radio Orkney's Around Orkney programme.
- 26-Nov-25 'Extraordinary discovery' at Orkney Neolithic site - BBC News on announcement of plans to carry out Time Team-funded exploratory excavation in 2026.  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c7836wvx4q4o>.
- 27-Nov-25 Digging to resume after 'big surprise' at Ness of Brodgar. The Orcadian.
- 27-Nov-25 'Extraordinary' Orkney archaeology find at Ness of Brodgar. The National.  
<https://www.thenational.scot/news/25654438.extraordinary-orkney-archaeology-find-ness-brodgar/>.
- 27-Nov-25 Archaeologists make 'extraordinary discovery' on scenic Scots island. The Scottish Sun. <https://www.thescottishsun.co.uk/news/15620864/archaeologists-extraordinary-discover-scots-island/>.
- 27-Nov-25 'Extraordinary discovery' made at immense prehistoric site in Orkney as Time Team moves in. The Scotsman. <https://www.scotsman.com/heritage-and-retro/heritage/extraordinary-discovery-made-at-immense-prehistoric-site-in-orkney-5420186>.

- 27-Nov-25 Ness of Brodgar find deepens Orkney's ancient mystery. The Herald. <https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/25649525.ness-brodgar-find-deepens-orkneys-ancient-mystery/>.
- 27-Nov-25 'Quite extraordinary' Orkney ruins discovery electrifies archaeologists. The Telegraph. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2025/11/27/weve-never-seen-anything-like-this-mysterious-orkney-ruins/>.
- 30-Nov-25 Ongoing research deepens ancient deer-bone mystery at Ness of Brodgar. The Herald article on PhD candidate Kath Page's ongoing research. <https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/25659904.ongoing-research-deepens-ancient-deer-bone-mystery-ness-brodgar/>.
- 04-Dec-25 Orkney archaeology discovery 'could be tip of huge iceberg'. The National on Ness of Brodgar plans. <https://www.thenational.scot/news/25672916.orkney-archaeology-discovery-could-tip-huge-iceberg/>.
- 06-Dec-25 New Ness of Brodgar anomaly dig confirmed for 2026. The Herald. <https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/25676489.new-ness-brodgar-anomaly-dig-confirmed-2026/>.
- 29-Dec-25 Carved head found at Skail dig, Rousay, listed in Smithsonian Magazine's top 72 discoveries of 2025. <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/seventy-two-fascinating-finds-revealed-in-2025-from-a-luxury-spa-in-pompeii-to-a-pair-of-world-war-i-messages-in-a-bottle-180987889/>.