

Porths and Gigs of the Isles of Scilly, Cornwall Archaeological Unit (CAU), Cornwall Council
Offering a rare opportunity for training in archaeological survey this summer on Scilly! CAU, June 2024
CAU's Porths and Gigs project is under way, exploring and sharing the archaeology of the gig boats that took pilots out to ships around the islands, some 200 years old or more. Ruins of sheds, paved slipways, and boat passages through tidal rocks, are exposed to coastal erosion and increasing sea-level rise. —

Some sites are Scheduled Monuments, and the project is grant funded by Historic England, Farming in Protected Landscapes, and Cornwall Archaeological Society. Other partners and supporters including Scilly's Community Archaeology Group (CAG) and gig rowers are getting involved with the project.

More information on the project is here [CAU Porths and Gigs of Scilly Link](#). We'll be linking sites with gig heritage (led by myself, landscape archaeologist and gig rower Cathy Parkes), surveying sheds and their settings (Mark Bowden, also a specialist on Scilly's fortifications), and scanning to create virtual 3D models for sharing online (specialist Tom Goskar).

There are opportunities to join in with the survey, help record the heritage of the gigs, and gain experience in archaeological recording. This training has also been offered on Scilly via the islands' Community Archaeology Group; at present there is availability for taking part in the July survey phase;

- **St Mary's**, New Quay; **July 24th to 27th** (thanks to the Duchy of Cornwall). Looking at a cluster of gig sheds, how the structures and spaces were used and changed over time.

From Penzance, the *Scillonian* early sailing, Sat July 27th only, offers day return at £35. For this and other sailings, and Skybus flights (the earlier flights book up quickly), see Isles of Scilly Travel website.

If you'd like to know more, please get in touch with me Cathy Parkes cathy.parkes@cau.org.uk. There will be capacity for around two people at any one time; you can join us for one day or more if you wish.

This is an opportunity to appreciate essential aspects of survey work (no prior knowledge needed);

- Recognising remains, defining their edges, interpreting their character and change over time.
- Considering approaches to fieldwork and how it helps respond to gradual loss of coastal sites.
- Understanding 'plane table' survey, involving scale drawing and making notes on remains.



Clockwise from top left: New Quay from the air at low tide; Plane table survey of ruins of a lost harbour at Tintagel; Surveying medieval chapel earthworks, Chapel Porth, near St Agnes, Cornwall; Thatched sheds, Tresco, from 'A Sailor's Wedding Party' 1862 by James Clarke Hook; St Agnes boat way, low tide.