

RECORDING ONE OF HENRY VIII'S CASTLES

Archaeological Survey at Sandsfoot Castle

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Archaeologists nowadays have a broad range of geomatics tools and techniques available to help them in their work. Whilst measuring tapes and dumpy levels are still essential instruments found on archaeological sites across the world, many projects now include Terrestrial Laser Scanning (TLS), Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS), robotic Total Station Theodolites (TST) and a variety of photographic and photogrammetric methods. Spatial data is then handled in 2D and 3D using CAD and GIS. These modern tools allow archaeologists to record our heritage with greater precision and faster than ever before whilst producing rich spatial data for visualisation and analysis.

Sandsfoot Castle is a so-called Henrician castle. It was built in the 1530s, during the reign of King Henry VIII, on a cliff overlooking Portland Harbour, Dorset, UK. Together with Portland Castle, it provided defence of the harbour and surrounding roads, protecting shipping and preventing invasion. It is now a Grade II* Listed Building and a Scheduled Ancient Monument, which confers it legal protection. At the time of this project, the castle was considered a dangerous structure, since coastal erosion had already caused a sizeable part of the castle to fall down from its cliff-top position to the beach below. The castle's main stone structure sits amongst the remains of the earth-bank defences surrounding it, now part of a formal garden including fish ponds and flower beds.

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