

## FACT SHEET 04: The Links of Noltland Dig

- In recent years Historic Scotland has been carrying out a programme of rescue archaeology at the Links of Noltland on the island of Westray.
- The focus this year was a structure that was once a fine farmhouse, carefully built to look impressive, and standing within a network of fields.
- After the main period of occupation was over it appears to have had secondary, less formal uses, perhaps as a store or holding pen for animals. As the building decayed it began to fill with rubble and midden. The figure was among this midden, suggesting it came from a time after the structure's use as a farmhouse was ended.
- The Links of Noltland site is a constant source of surprises and the excavations unexpectedly revealed three other buildings.
- One of the other buildings, which may have been attached to the farmhouse, contained what appears to be the ritually deposited skulls of at least 10 cattle built into the wall. Some of the skulls have been placed with their horns interlocking and all are positioned upside down, with horns sticking into the ground.
- The many discoveries made this year included large quantities of Neolithic pottery, plus bone and stone tools.