

# A PRESS RELEASE FROM HYDE900

## **Additional previously unknown building on the site of Hyde Abbey found during extension works in King Alfred Terrace**

King Alfred Terrace, already the area which yielded the important discovery during the 2017 -18 Hyde900 Community digs of stones from the Norman arches of the original abbey cloister (now on display at the recently reopened City museum), has now provided evidence of another important building adjacent to the cloisters.

Local resident and owner of the garden yielding the arch fragments, Chris Prior, spotted interesting stonework and tiles in a skip outside a house at the top end of his road. Invited to see where the debris had come from, Chris uncovered traces of a flint faced foundations of a wall close to preparatory work on an extension to the house. Further investigation yielded the foundations of a wall, over one metre wide, which was in exact alignment with the cloister buildings.

Dr John Crook, Architectural Consultant and advisor to the Hyde900 digs, commented "The random finds located in the garden soils bore witness to the Abbey's long development. There was at least one fragment of Quarr stone from the Isle of Wight, probably from one of the earliest abbey buildings in around 1110; a thirteenth-century half-shaft with fillet moulding, typical of the 1250s, and brick and glazed tiles, probably of Tudor date and from buildings destroyed by Henry VIII in 1538."

Dr Crook considered the discovery of the wall was particularly exciting. "In its materials and construction technique it is similar to a wall discovered further along King Alfred Terrace in 2018-19, which has been dated to the early fourteenth century and is thought to be part of a rebuilding of the monks' refectory (dining room). It is possible that the newly discovered wall is part of the monks' kitchen, which would have been a detached building. In several monasteries, including Winchester Cathedral and Westminster Abbey, they stood apart, south-west of the refectory. The discovery of a big deposit of food waste outside the building lends weight to this conjecture."

The food waste was a densely packed 10 to 20cm thick layer of shells, mainly oyster, but including mussels, whelks, and winkles. Samples were removed for examination by another local King Alfred Terrace resident, Dr Ruth Pelling, Senior Archaeobotanist and Science Advisor to Historic England. Dr Pelling added \*Animal bone and the shell of a range of edible molluscs have been recovered by sieving the deposit. In addition, the samples contain smaller, less visible remains of charcoal, burnt seeds, and fish. Together they will provide information about the diet of the inhabitants of the site."

House owner Amber Clark has kindly made available her garden for excavation in the forthcoming 2020 Hyde900 Community dig, scheduled, subject to any government restrictions at the time, for 22 to 25th October. The dig is open to anyone over the age of 5, with children, under the supervision of an accompanying adult, being especially welcome.