

# Community Archaeology Study Days 2008/9



## Recording Landscape Features at Cawood

28<sup>th</sup> June 2008

Feedback from the study day:

*'Interesting history of the village and useful tips on how to transfer what you see on the ground onto a map.'*

*'Interesting local history and informative archaeological information.'*

Archaeology today depends on the thorough study of a site, including its surrounding landscape features. Landscapes consist of natural features but are inevitably influenced and transformed by people over time. The way a landscape was changed and utilized by a culture can provide information on many aspects of their society. Because a landscape stretches out from the site for quite a distance, it is impossible to excavate the entire area. Archaeologists therefore depend on field surveys to record visible features. Such features include earthworks, terraces, crop marks, and field boundaries. Geophysics, GIS and aerial photography are all methods used to distinguish landscape features, as well as surveying from the ground by walking the area. The study of landscapes provides new information about well-known sites as well as helping us discover new sites.

Today our focus was on the landscape features of Cawood in Yorkshire. After a morning discussion about landscape archaeology in general, we were led on a practical session to locate landscape features around Cawood. The remains of Cawood Castle form the dominant landscape features in the town. Little survives of the castle itself, which was destroyed during the Civil War. However, its foundations can be seen, and the gatehouse and

banqueting hall still stand. The castle garth is now preserved as a green space, and other features can be made out in this area, including medieval fishing ponds and a nineteenth century skating pond. The area around Cawood Castle provided us with an ideal landscape to study.

