



Health & Safety Policy

Appendix 2: Fieldwork & Excavation Guidance

This guidance applies to all those involved with the fieldwork and excavation activities of Ingleborough Archaeology Group (IAG). This guidance should be read in conjunction with the overall IAG Health and Safety Policy and, for each activity, the risk assessment, joining instructions, and any instruction or advice given by the Activity Leader/Site Director. Anyone acting recklessly or ignoring the guidance and/or instructions may be asked to leave the site.

Clothing, Footwear and other Personal Protective Equipment. Most fieldwork and excavations take place in exposed and upland environments where weather is changeable. Participants should be suitably clothed and carry clothing to cover all eventualities. Effective waterproofs are essential. A sun-hat and sunblock are advisable in sunny or hot weather.

Those working on an excavation must wear suitable footwear such as stout outdoor activity boots or shoes. Boots provide better protection than shoes against ankle sprains, the effect of which can last for several months. Trainers, street-shoes and standard wellington boots are not acceptable.

Gloves should always be worn when excavating and handling soil or anything that has been in it. Soil contains a variety of contaminants including animal waste, herbicides, pesticides, other chemicals, bacteria, and fungal spores that can cause ringworm-type fungal infections.

Strong, but flexible, builder's or gardening gloves (not woollen gloves) should be adequate. Bring spare gloves – wet gloves are miserable to work in. It is a good idea to wear disposable nitrile gloves under outer gloves especially for those with sensitive skin. Remove outer gloves before touching the face or tucking-in clothes to avoid fungal infections and always before eating. Wear heavy duty nitrile or 'rubber' gloves to wash finds and tools.

Safety goggles should be worn when using a mattock in stony soil. A kneeling mat for those excavating will be provided by IAG.

Hard-hats should be worn where there are structures at head height, where there is danger of falling rocks or masonry, when working under low tree branches, in deep trenches, or close to machinery when acting as banksman or lookout. Any work needing the use of a hard hat will always be clearly identified in the risk assessment. Anyone working close to machinery must wear a high-visibility vest.

Bring a folding stool or chair if you need to (but check the distance you will be walking to the site with it as you will be expected to carry equipment to site in addition to your personal belongings).

Food and Drink. Bring enough food and water at least for the expected duration of the activity and bring extra in hot weather. Water is usually not available on site. Food and drink must be consumed away from any trench.

Personal Hygiene. Rarely will there be formal lavatory arrangements on site. Bring a good personal supply of wet-wipes and sanitising gel. Always remove soiled gloves before toileting. Before eating or drinking, remove gloves, thoroughly clean hands with wet-wipes, allow to dry and use sanitising gel.

Never taste or sniff anything found in the ground. Tins and bottles could contain harmful residues.

Bag up your own rubbish, keep it in your kitbag and take it home. Leave no rubbish on site.

Smoking, Vaping, Drugs and Alcohol. The site is a workplace! Smoking or vaping is not allowed anywhere on site nor is the taking of 'recreational' drugs or alcohol. No-one must come to the site intoxicated.

Accidents and First Aid. All accidents, incidents and near misses shall be reported as soon as possible to the IAG Health & Safety Officer or IAG Chair using a IAG 'Health and Safety Incident Report Form' which will be held by the Activity Leader.

It is not possible for IAG to arrange first-aid cover on most of its activities. Even when there is a first-aid kit on site, the first-aid kit cannot contain analgesics, antiseptics, or any other medication.

It makes good sense for everyone who is participating in outdoor activities to bring their own 'ouch-pouch' containing a personal supply of things that might be needed to treat their own cuts, grazes, and blisters. It might contain things such as plasters, antiseptics, antihistamine cream, wound-wipes, a wound dressing and tape, compeed, and anything else that might be needed, packed in a waterproof box or bag, and kept easily accessible. Participants should remember to pack their own regular medication.

Tetanus. Tetanus is a very serious, but very rare, disease caused by a bacterial toxin, present particularly in soil and manure, entering the body through a wound, graze or cut. You should ensure that you have had a booster vaccine within the last ten years. If not, you should arrange with your GP to have one before working on site. On site, deal with cuts, grazes and scratches immediately. Wipe clean with an alcohol-free wipe and suitably dress the wound.

Site Register. You must sign in and out of the site. If leaving the site other than at the end of the day, you must advise the Activity Leader/Site Director.

Safety Briefings. You must attend, and listen to, site safety briefings. Make yourself familiar with the worksite and mentally note potential hazards. Be aware of tripping hazards such as open trenches, string-lines, tapes, ropes, stakes, markers, stone outcrops, tree roots and animal holes.

Breaks. For each day of work, there will be a lunch break of forty-five minutes. For each half day of work there will be a mid-session break of twenty minutes. Everyone is free to take a short break whenever they need to.

Working Safely. Do not stand, pass or reach behind someone using a spade, shovel or mattock. If you are using a mattock, especially in stony ground, warn those around you to keep well clear. Never swing a mattock above knee height. Let the weight of the mattock do the work. Keep your legs wide apart to keep it away from your feet. You must not use a mattock unless you have been given instruction in how to use it. Carry a mattock or pick with head down, not over the shoulder with the head up. Picks are not used on IAG excavation sites.

Do not overload a sieve, bucket or wheelbarrow. Only move or carry what you are comfortable with. Do not be pressurised into moving more than you can manage and do not pressurise anyone else. Make sure a wheelbarrow you are loading is downslope of you and pointing downhill - not cross-slope. Chock a barrow on a steep slope. Do not load a barrow upslope of you - it could topple and cause you injury.

Keep a clear area of two metres around each trench free from tools, buckets and other trip hazards - including spoil material.

Walk around a trench or test-pit – never cross it. Do not stand, or sit, on the edge of a trench. It could collapse and cause you injury as well as destroying someone else’s hard work.

Take great care as you walk with surveying equipment especially where there are string lines and marker pegs. Be very careful surveying on wet grassy slopes and on wet slippery rocks.

If a potential underground cable or pipe is uncovered, stop work immediately, alert others excavating around you, and notify the Activity Leader/Site Director.

Animals. Dogs are not allowed on site. Keep a watching eye on farm animals. Do not approach, pet or feed animals.

Site Etiquette & Tidiness. Never cross an area in a trench that has been cleaned by you or someone else - leave the trench via an uncleared area.

Prior to each break, remove all your loose material, empty your bucket on the appropriate pile, remove all tools from the trench, and place small tools in buckets, stack long-handled tools face down in a pile, stack buckets. Put all tools and barrows from the trench in one place nearby. If you are using your own tools, put them together close to the main stack or keep them with you.

At the end of the day, you should help clear the site, clean the equipment and store it, or take it to the parked vehicles.

Safeguarding Children and Young People. From time to time, children and young people will be on site either as visitors or to get hands-on experience.

All children and young people must always be supervised closely by a Responsible Adult such as a parent, guardian, youth leader, teacher or other appropriate person.

When children and young people are on site, the requirements of IAG H&S Policy Appendix 3:

‘Safeguarding Children and Young People’ will apply in addition to this guidance. The attention of all participants will be drawn to Appendix 3 and its requirements, either in advance of the activity, or in an on-site briefing given by the Activity Leader/Site Director.

Photography and Videography. IAG uses photography as an essential recording tool and also for publicity purposes. It is important that anyone taking photographs or videos that include other people ask their prior permission. This is essential in the case of photographs that include children and young people where the Responsible Adults must be asked individually for their express prior consent.

Your Welfare and the Welfare of Others. When on site, you should treat everyone with the respect you would wish for yourself and regardless of race, colour, ethnicity, nationality, faith, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, or ability.

You must not use foul, discriminatory or suggestive language, make offensive or inappropriate remarks for instance about appearance, dress etc, or make sexually motivated advances to another worker. Do not touch others unnecessarily, especially children & young people.

Avoid initiating or contributing to discussions on topics where it is likely others will have deeply held convictions or beliefs.

Advise the Activity Leader/Site Director of any breach of this guidance particularly if you were made to feel uncomfortable or witnessed unacceptable behaviour.

Finally. A well organised activity where everyone knows what is expected of them, where experienced volunteers pass on their skill and knowledge and all try to get on with everyone else is a joy to be part of. Good weather and interesting finds help! Have a great time.