



Health & Safety Policy

Appendix 6: Coronavirus (COVID-19)

1 March 2023 revision replacing that of 1 April 2022

This revised appendix to the Health & Safety Policy of Ingleborough Archaeology Group (IAG) outlines the additional COVID-19 health and safety arrangements from 1 April 2022.

Legal requirements. On 21 February 2022, the Government published its plan for 'Living with COVID', and on 24 February ended the legal requirement in England to self-isolate if one tests positive for COVID-19 or have been in contact with someone who had tested positive. The legal requirement to wear a face covering in public places ended on 27 January 2022. The Government, however, still advises that those who catch COVID or who have been in contact with someone who has, should stay at home if possible, limit close contact with others, especially in crowded or confined spaces and wear a mask in those situations.

COVID is not over. It appears very likely that COVID-19 will remain in the population for the foreseeable future and that there will be periods when it will subside only to increase as new variants emerge.

Over the previous years, well understood counter-measures have been developed including vaccination, self-isolation, distancing, mask-wearing, hand-sanitisation, and ventilation. IAG has also held meetings by 'ZOOM'. Such measures can be introduced or relaxed by the IAG Committee or its Officers as circumstances change without the need for a further revision to this Health & Safety Policy Appendix.

The health, safety, and welfare of IAG Members continues to be of paramount importance and IAG will continue to act with good sense and caution. IAG will always act in accordance with COVID-19 legal requirements and Government advice as a minimum.

From 1 April 2022, it will return to as near normal working as possible but will be ready to act quickly if circumstances change using the well understood counter-measures mentioned above.

Our responsibilities. We all have a responsibility to, and for, each other. In the event of a member catching COVID-19 or displaying symptoms that might be those of COVID-19 or any other disease that could easily be transmitted to another member, IAG asks that they stay away from all IAG activities until they are clear of infection. Furthermore, if a member has been in close contact with someone they know to have COVID-19, they are asked to stay away until they know they are not infected.

Face covering at meetings. At times of very high infection, or should a new dangerous variant emerge, it is possible that members will be asked to wear a face covering and it is hoped that those who can wear one, will do so. However, it should be remembered that not everyone can wear a mask and the individual decision of a member should be respected.

Fieldwork and Excavation. The risk of contracting COVID-19 from a contaminated surface or object in a non-hospital indoor setting is very low. In the open-air, it is a remote possibility. IAG will not routinely sanitise equipment such as spades, barrows, and buckets after each use. Those involved in excavation or fieldwork where equipment is shared are encouraged to wear gloves and to bring their own hand sanitiser and wipes. Special precautions for those using equipment requiring close facial contact, for instance the total station, may be in force from time to time. These might include wearing face masks and a sanitising wipe-down between users.

Fieldworkers may be offered a car-share lift to site but are under no obligation to accept. Those accepting a lift may be asked to wear a mask and should come prepared.

Risk assessments. All IAG activities are risk-assessed. Those assessing risk will be required to consider COVID-19 as one of the potential hazards and any control measures to be introduced.