

RISK ASSESSMENT FORM: ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELDWORK

Group/Project Name		Completed by	
Activity		Date	

How to carry out a risk assessment

Use this risk assessment to help you understand the risks and any steps you need to take to stay safe before carrying out any archaeological fieldwork.

This risk assessment is a tool to help you plan and lead Leicestershire Fieldworker (inc. affiliated group) fieldwork safely. **YOU MUST** complete a risk assessment for every event you organise (eg. for every field walk, geophysical survey, excavation etc.).

Please read **Leicestershire Fieldworkers Fieldwork Guide 2 - Health and Safety and Community Archaeology** before filling out the risk assessment. The guide, and other useful information, is available at <https://leicsfieldworkers.org/resources/fieldwork-guides/>.

Use the risk assessment to assess whether your fieldwork is safe to go ahead (we have included suggestions for the ways to control the risks). It is important to identify the potential hazards and note the actions you will take to reduce the risk for your fieldwork.

Think about the different types of hazards and risks (Section 1). We have included some common examples but think carefully about your own fieldwork in case anything else needs adding.

For every hazard identified, assess the control measures you will use to minimise and control the risk (Section 2). Remember that this may sometimes mean changing your original plan. Finally, re-evaluate the residual risk using the Risk Matrix and identify if it is now at an acceptable level. This **IS NOT** an exhaustive list, so think carefully about any specific risks you may encounter at your activity/event and add them in Section 3.

REMEMBER: It is important to carry out a risk assessment before the fieldwork takes place. You should start filling it out when planning your fieldwork and update it with any extra hazards that you notice on site before you start and/or during the fieldwork.

If you are not sure what to do to reduce the risk, contact the Leicestershire Fieldworker committee at info@leicsfieldworkers.co.uk for advice.

RISK MATRIX

RISK = LIKELIHOOD X SEVERITY			
Likelihood	Severity		
	Minor injury	Major injury	Incapacity or death
Unlikely	Trivial risk	Acceptable risk	Moderate risk
Possible	Acceptable risk	Moderate risk	Substantial risk
Certain	Moderate risk	Substantial risk	Intolerable risk

LIKELIHOOD	SEVERITY	RISK
<p>UNLIKELY eg. an injury which is unlikely to occur except in a freak accident.</p> <p>POSSIBLE eg. an injury which could occur sometimes.</p> <p>CERTAIN eg. an injury which could occur repeatedly or is expected to happen.</p>	<p>MINOR INJURY eg. minor cuts and bruises, mucous membrane and eye irritation from dusts, nuisance and irritation e.g. headaches, eye strain, temporary discomfort (i.e. minimal first aid needed).</p> <p>MAJOR INJURY eg. lacerations, burns, concussion, fractures, sprains, temporary deafness, dermatitis, ill-health leading to temporary disability (i.e. injuries which will take a prolonged time to heal, need major first aid/hospital needed).</p> <p>INCAPACITY OR DEATH eg. amputations, major fractures, permanent loss of sight and/or hearing (total or partial), poisoning, ill-health leading to permanent disability, life-shortening diseases, fatal injuries (i.e. permanently debilitating, need major time in hospital needed).</p>	<p>INTOLERABLE: Urgent action required (work should not start or continue until the risk has been reduced. If it is not possible to reduce the risk with unlimited resources, work must remain prohibited).</p> <p>SUBSTANTIAL: High priority (work should not be started until the risk has been reduced. Considerable resources may have to be allocated to reduce the risk. Where the risk involves work in progress, urgent action should be taken to reduce the risk).</p> <p>MODERATE: Medium priority (efforts should be made to reduce the risk, but the cost of prevention should be carefully measured and limited. Continued monitoring and assessment may be necessary to improve control measures).</p> <p>ACCEPTABLE: Low priority (no additional controls required. Continued monitoring and assessment may be necessary to improve control measures).</p> <p>TRIVIAL: No action required.</p>

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SECTION 1: HAZARD ASSESSMENT

Answer the following questions to identify the potential hazards for your project. If you answer a question 'yes' you have identified a hazard which will need control measures (see Section 2). Only look for hazards which you could reasonably expect to result in significant harm.

Travel, site access, vehicles, personal safety

Will people be driving equipment and/or people to site?		See Hazard 1 (Section 2)
Is the access/egress to site for vehicles unsafe and/or obstructed?		See Hazard 2 (Section 2)
Is the access/egress to site for pedestrians unsafe and/or obstructed?		See Hazard 2 (Section 2)
Is there insufficient safe parking on site?		See Hazard 2 (Section 2)
Is there insufficient safe parking in the vicinity?		See Hazard 2 (Section 2)
Will you be working near traffic?		See Hazard 3 (Section 2)
Are you a lone worker?		See Hazard 4 (Section 2)
Is there secure storage for tools/materials/valuables?		See Hazard 4 (Section 2)
Will visitors and members of the public be visiting the site?		See Hazard 5 (Section 2)

Plant, machinery & existing services

Are there overhead hazards – wires, cables, etc.?		See Hazard 6 (Section 2)
Are there underground hazards – cables, pipes etc.?		See Hazard 6 (Section 2)
Is heavy machinery (e.g. a digger) involved?		See Hazards 7 & 13 (Section 2)
Is there concrete breaking involved?		See Hazard 7 & 13 (Section 2)
If electrical tools are used, are voltages correct and are leads and plugs in good order?		See Section 3

Fieldwork

Is there inadequate safe working space on site?		See Hazard 8 (Section 2)
Are deep excavations/shoring/scaffolding involved?		See Hazard 8 (Section 2)
Could falls from height (including into deep trenches) occur?		See Hazard 8 (Section 2)
Could falls of tools, materials etc. from height (including into deep trenches) occur?		See Hazard 8 (Section 2)
Are there spoil heaps?		See Hazard 9 (Section 2)
Are hand tools being used?		See Hazard 10 (Section 2)
Could slips, trips or falls occur on the level?		See Hazard 11 (Section 2)
Will there be slippery and/or uneven surfaces?		See Hazards 11 (Section 2)
Will unusually heavy weights be manually lifted?		See Hazard 12 (Section 2)
Is any dangerous equipment or tool to be used?		See Section 3

The site

Is the site secure from public access?		See Hazard 5 (Section 2)
Is the immediate area/environment free of hazards?		See Hazards 14-20 (Section 2)
Is there a danger of flooding?		See Hazard 16 (Section 2)
Are there adjacent buildings that cause concern?		See Section 3
Is there a danger of undermining adjacent structures?		See Section 3

The work

Will work require any extra-ordinary procedures?		See Section 3
Are there any other hazards not already identified?		See Section 3

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SECTION 2: RISK CONTROLS

For every possible hazard identified in Section 1, assess and implement the actions suggested to control the risk. Reassess the risk using the Risk Matrix on page 1 once the control measures are in place. If the residual risk is Moderate, Significant or Intolerable further control measures must be put in place to reduce the risk. If the residual risk is Trivial or Acceptable no further action is needed.

POSSIBLE HAZARD (Hazard = A condition or practice with the potential to cause damage, ill health, injury or other loss)	RISK (Likelihood x Severity = Risk)	CONTROL MEASURES (A short summary of the control measure and standards/guidance)	RESIDUAL RISK
1. Driving Tiredness driving to and from site, traffic accidents, vehicle sharing.	Substantial	1. Drivers to hold valid licences and vehicles to have valid MOT and insurance and be suitable for the task. 2. Have 2 drivers where possible. 3. Limit of 1 ½ hours drive to site on a regular basis before risk is reassessed.	
2. Site Access/Egress Entering/Leaving site and parking vehicles.	Substantial	1. Only use designated access onto site. 2. Only park in designated areas/onsite parking facilities. 3. Mark/be aware of obvious hazards and take care when entering/exiting gateways.	
3. Working near traffic Moving traffic, fumes.	Substantial	1. Carry out fieldwork away from traffic. 2. Fence site with robust, high-visible fencing 3. Establish safe routes to/from site. Do not allow people to access areas where there are greater traffic hazards. 4. Wear high-visibility clothing	
4. Personal Safety Participants lost or separated from group, lone working, attack on person or property.	Moderate	1. Use suitable group control measures (eg. buddy systems, rendezvous points and times, head counts at arrival/departure points) 2. Briefing to all on what to do if separated from group. 4. Mobile phones to be carried and group leaders contact details provided. 5. Lone workers to provide contact details and arrange pre-determined contact times with responsible person.	
5. Members of the Public, Visitors & Others Inexperienced people on site, unsuitable clothing, falling, tripping slipping	Moderate	1. Agreed and supervised visitors only allowed on site. 2. Area of work to be assessed for security to avoid unauthorised visitors and appropriate actions taken (eg. extra fencing etc.). 3. Public liability insurance cover.	
6. Existing Services Contact with service - electrocution, fire, explosion. Damage to service.	Substantial	1. All services to be located before excavation using plans and CAT scanner 2. Move trenches to avoid services where known. 3. Be aware of changes in the soil that may indicate services	
7. Plant & Machinery Collisions with plant, persons, contact with moving parts, overturning of machines.	Substantial	1. Use certificated personnel for machine operations. 2. A competent banksman to be used during excavations. 3. Formulate and follow guidance for working with plant	
8. Excavations Deep/unstable trenches - Sections liable to collapse, falling into trenches, spoil heap collapse, working in small spaces.	Substantial	1. All trenches regardless of depth to be risk assessed by a competent person with regard to collapse and the use of stepping/battering. 2. All sections to be checked every day by a competent person and after bad weather for potential problems. 3. Backfilling to be done as soon as possible. 4. Fencing and warning signs to be used as required. 5. Formulate and follow guidance for safe trenches and excavations	
9. Spoil Unmanaged spoil heaps - collapse or falling into trenches	Moderate	1. Spoil heaps to be kept away from trench sides 2. No walking on or digging beneath spoil heaps. 3. Guidance for safe trenches and excavations to be followed	

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10. Hand Tools Incorrect use, strains and muscle injuries	Moderate	1. All tools to be used correctly and broken tools replaced. 2. Keep work area tidy. 3. Store tools carefully when not in use.	
11. Slips, Trips & Falls Untidy site, hidden obstacles, uneven terrain	Moderate	1. Visual awareness on site. 2. Site to be kept tidy – particularly around trenches. 3. Agreed access to trenches to be used. 4. PPE available if required.	
12. Manual Handling Musculoskeletal injuries, falling/tripping, trapping toes/fingers	Substantial	1. Use correct lifting procedures 2. Apply mechanical assistance where possible or tandem lifting. 3. Be aware of heavy loads when shovelling.	
13. Noise Excessive noise from machinery, industrial deafness / tinnitus, noise pollution, inability to hear other things.	Substantial	1. Use Ear protection whenever machinery is running. 2. Ear plugs to be available at all times.	
14. Dust Breathing in, eye irritation, asthma, chronic lung disease.	Substantial	1. Damp down dust clouds. 2. Clean tools and clothing regularly. 3. Use respiratory protective equipment. 4. Mask and goggles to be available at all times.	
15. Infection & Disease From contact with soil, water etc. and minor cuts and scrapes.	Moderate	1. Adequate washing and toilet facilities available (never use still/stagnant water for any purpose). 2. First aid kit and first aider on site 3. PPE available if needed 4. People to be aware of tetanus, leptospirosis etc.	
16. Working Close to Water Potential flooding due to high water table, proximity of rivers etc., and bad weather. Falling into water, drowning, infection	Substantial	1. Keep well clear of water wherever possible and be particularly careful when working close to water sources. 2. If trenches are filling with water assess safety and act accordingly - fence, backfill if necessary 3. Good personal hygiene -washing hands, carry wet wipes	
17. Weather Heat exhaustion, sunburn, sunstroke, cold and hyperthermia, damp	Moderate	1. Suitable clothing to be worn for conditions. 2. PPE available if required. 3. Drinking water to be available	
18. Livestock Injury from uncontained animals, property damage if livestock escapes	Moderate	1. Arrange for livestock to be removed from work areas or contained behind temporary fencing. 2. Cross fields with livestock calmly and quietly. Be prepared to divert around livestock if necessary. 3. Follow the Countryside Code (England & Wales) and Access Code (Scotland). Leave gates and property as you find them.	
19. Human / Animal Remains Contamination and infection – from deer, cattle, pigeons, rats, human remains etc.	Substantial	1. Set up proper procedures for recovery/excavation 2. Wear necessary PPE 3. Stay away from any animal remains 4. Be aware of Leptospirosis 5. Use correct hand washing techniques and anti-bacterial gel	
20. Waste Management Damage to health through contact, damage to the environment.	Moderate	1. Place all waste in appropriate waste containers. Do not litter.	

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SECTION 3: SITE SPECIFIC RISK ASSESSMENT

POSSIBLE HAZARD (Hazard = A condition or practice with the potential to cause damage, ill health, injury or other loss)	RISK (Likelihood x Severity = Risk)	CONTROL MEASURES (A short summary of the control measure and standards/guidance)	RESIDUAL RISK

CHECKLIST

Has necessary training and information been given to participants?	
Are participants wearing appropriate clothing for site work?	
Do participants need to wear site specific PPE (high visibility clothing, hard hat, gloves etc,)?	
Is there adequate provision for those with health problems or disabilities?	
Are there adequate First Aiders and First Aid kits available?	

Are accommodation facilities adequate?	
Is there secure storage for tools/materials?	
Has permission been obtained to work on the site(s)?	
Is there a telephone for emergencies?	
Are there suitable travel arrangements in place (to include emergencies)?	

This form is to be checked and kept up to date during time on site.

Checked by		Date	
Amended by		Date	
Amended by		Date	
Amended by		Date	