

STATEMENT OF POLICY REGARDING UNEXPLODED ORDNANCE (UXO) RISK MANAGEMENT

Unexploded ordnance (UXO) poses a significant hazard to archaeological projects, presenting both a serious risk to human safety and a potential impediment to archaeological research and the preservation of cultural heritage.

For the purposes of this policy, *unexploded ordnance (UXO)* refers to any military or improvised item that may still contain explosive material. This includes, but is not limited to: aerial bombs, artillery shells, grenades, mortar rounds, landmines, improvised explosive devices, and small arms ammunition.

In Leicestershire and Rutland, UXO risk predominantly results from the long-term legacy of the Second World War and is generally associated with three primary sources:

1. Air-delivered munitions
2. Anti-aircraft artillery activity
3. Historic military land use

Although UXO may be encountered anywhere within Leicestershire and Rutland, certain locations present a higher likelihood of high, moderate, or unknown levels of risk. These include:

- Former military and home defence sites, such as training areas, firing ranges, manufacturing facilities, storage depots, airfields, military camps, bombing decoy sites, fortifications, and defensive structures
- Second World War bombing targets of the Luftwaffe
- Routes used by aircraft travelling to and from bombing targets
- Aircraft crash sites
- Water features including rivers, streams, canals, marshes, lakes, ponds, and reservoirs

For most activities undertaken by members of the **Leicestershire Fieldworkers**, the likelihood of encountering UXO is assessed as **extremely low**. However, archaeological methods that disturb or penetrate the ground, or that involve scanning or detecting metal objects, carry an elevated risk in areas with known military activity or conflict history. Such methods include:

- Excavation and test-pitting
- Metal detecting and magnet fishing

The Leicestershire Fieldworkers' insurance policy **does not** provide cover for wilful exposure to needless peril (except in an attempt to save human life), nor any pursuit or activity involving personal danger or hazard.

RISK MITIGATION REQUIREMENTS

Prior to commencing any fieldwork, members must conduct appropriate desk-based research to determine whether the proposed project area may include locations with high, moderate, or unknown UXO risk as outlined above.

Where prior research identifies a credible potential for UXO presence, **the Leicestershire Fieldworkers Committee will not grant approval for the project to proceed** under the organisation's auspices.

PROCEDURE FOR SUSPECTED UXO DISCOVERIES

If a member encounters, or suspects they have encountered, a UXO item during fieldwork, the following protocol **must** be followed:

1. **Do not touch, move, or disturb the object in any way.**
2. **Cease all work immediately**, including shutting down machinery or equipment that may cause vibration or radio interference.
3. **Mark the location** of the object if it is safe to do so, and take a photograph from a safe distance for identification purposes where possible.
4. **Evacuate the area**, ensuring that all personnel move to a safe distance, ideally at least 100-200 metres away and out of direct line of sight.
5. **Establish a cordon** to prevent access to the area.
6. **Contact the police**, providing a clear description of the object's size, shape, and appearance.