

1066 Battle of Hastings, Abbey and Battlefield, East Sussex

Hazard Information for Education Visits

It is the responsibility of teachers and group leaders to complete a risk assessment prior to the site visit. The following information is intended as an aid and does not replace the group leader's own risk assessment. We recommend coming to the site on a free planning visit, to help you with your risk assessment. Please note: where possible, English Heritage staff at the site will be happy to assist you with your queries, but cannot check or sign any section of your risk assessment.

Environmental conditions at historic sites may change rapidly and you will need to remain alert at all times during your visit. Most accidents are the result of slips and trips so please make sure you wear appropriate footwear and dress sensibly for the site and weather. Please be aware that the site may close at short notice due to adverse weather. Where applicable, stonework and trees at our sites are inspected regularly; however, extreme weather conditions can sometimes affect stonework and trees so as well as following any staff instructions and being mindful of temporary barriers and signage, please remain vigilant at all times. On-going conservation work may pose a temporary hazard; a member of staff will advise you of any works when you visit. Dogs on leashes may be present on site.

All learners who are 16 years or younger must be supervised by a responsible adult at all times whilst on site.

Moving vehicles may pose a hazard upon arrival and while on the site.

- There is no parking on-site; the drop-off point is located in the public coach park 700m away.
- The site entrance is reached by walking on a pavement alongside a road and crossing a busy access road.
- There may be moving vehicles around the site.

Surfaces may be uneven and change in level; please use paved pathways and designated walkways wherever possible.

- All surfaces may be slippery when wet.
- There may be animal holes in grassed areas.
- Floor tiles and staircase treads may be worn and uneven; always use the handrail where provided.

The ruinous nature of the site presents many potential hazards, including uneven and slippery surfaces and numerous climbing hazards.

- Walls are rough and contain uneven and sharp stones.
- Floor surfaces are uneven throughout and, where exposed to the elements, can be wet and slippery.
- Sensible footwear and outdoor clothing are necessary.
- Visitors should keep to the identified paths and steps. Climbing on walls or over/under barriers poses a significant hazard and is not permitted.
- Climbing on tombs and tombstones is not permitted.

There are high walls and sheer drops on site, some of which are unguarded.

- There are steep grass banks and high walls in the abbey ruins.
- There is a sheer drop from the curtain walls; some parts of the walls are very low.

Historic features of the site and its buildings can pose hazards.

- There are areas of low headroom on staircases and areas of low lighting within the buildings on site.
- Access to the Gatehouse exhibition and roof is via a spiral staircase and follows a one-way system.

- The high situation of the Gatehouse roof means this space can be windy. In very poor weather conditions, the roof will be closed for safety reasons.

Animal activity onsite may present a hazard.

- Rabbit holes around the site may pose a trip hazard.
- Mole hills around the site may pose a trip hazard.

Grazing livestock may be present on site.

- All animals may bite and/or kick; only approach them if advised it is safe to do so.
- There may be a risk of zoonotic infection; visitors should wash their hands prior to eating.

There are active beehives in the Walled Garden.

- Hazard to those with allergies. Anyone with a known allergy to stings should carry an EpiPen with them at all times.
- Only trained English Heritage staff should be in contact with the hives.
- Anyone who comes across any swarm are advised to stand still, change direction or walk away. Swarms are most likely to occur in humid/stormy conditions.

The playground by the Visitor Centre may pose a hazard.

- The playground outside the Visitor Centre contains apparatus for children. Visitors are advised that the play equipment has an age limit of 12 years old.
- It is the responsibility of teachers and group leaders to supervise their groups when using the playground.
- Surfaces may become slippery in wet weather.
- The structures are made of wood which may crack or splinter creating sharp surfaces.

The site can be very busy and some areas may become congested.

- Groups should assemble outside the ticket office and the group leader should make themselves known to staff on arrival.
- Space is limited in the toilets, Visitor Centre exhibition, Gatehouse and shop. Groups of ten students at a time should use these facilities to limit congestion.
- Event traffic may impact access to the Battlefield at certain times of the year.

There are learning resources that can be used by groups on-site, including handling collections.

- The objects in the handling collection may have rough edges, points or protrusions.
- Learners must be supervised at all times by Leaders while using the resources.
- The objects may have been handled by multiple groups; always wash hands after use.