

## PRUDHOE CASTLE, NORTHUMBERLAND

### 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.

- There is a small public car park 70 metres from the entrance to the castle.
- Coaches should drop off on Station Road, with a short walk to the castle on a narrow footpath.
- The narrow approach road to the castle entrance is also used by delivery or works traffic.

#### The ruinous nature of the castle and its location present many potential hazards.

- Access into the castle grounds is via a track which is separated by a low hedge from a deep pond. There is a sudden drop on the other side of the track.
- The barbican is accessed via a steep flagged slope which can be slippery during and after wet weather.
- The ground surfaces are often uneven comprising of grass, paving, flagstones and cobbles. Some areas are covered in moss and all can be slippery in wet conditions.
- The flagstones at the main gate and in the keep can be slippery when wet.
- Walls are rough and contain uneven and often sharp stones.
- There is low masonry around the site.
- Climbing on the walls is not permitted and poses a significant hazard.
- A narrow and steep flight of stone stairs leads to the first-floor chapel.
- A short flight of steps leads to the shop and exhibition space. An accessible entrance to this area is available via the rear of the building, over cobbles and through the keep.
- There is a circular path along the dry moat and hillside, with steep rising banks that have unguarded drops on the hillside slope.
- Access to the mill is down a steep, grassy bank which can be slippery in wet conditions.

#### Prudhoe Castle is home to a wide variety of wildlife.

- There are animals and birds on site and their droppings can present a zoonotic hazard; visitors should wash their hands prior to eating.

Asbestos has been identified on the site. This is common with older buildings and some historic artefacts and is being managed and monitored by English Heritage.

- These areas and objects are clearly marked with red 'a' stickers.
- No activities that may disturb the asbestos are permitted; please raise any concerns or accidental damage with the Site Manager immediately.

Covid-19 and flu.

- We follow government and [NHS guidelines](#) to reduce the risk of transmission. Please also follow their guidance and do not visit if you have flu or Covid-19 symptoms or have recently tested positive.