Historic England

Accessing England's Protected Wreck Sites

Guidance Notes for Divers and Archaeologists



Summary

The diversity of England's Protected Wreck Sites reflects the wealth of maritime heritage preserved under the sea and around our coast. These sites provide a valuable source of evidence for a wide range of past activities, and not just of those on or in the sea.

These guidelines are intended to support individuals or groups wishing to access and/or develop projects on wreck sites designated under Section 1 of the *Protection of Wrecks Act* 1973 in the English Territorial Sea.

The role of a voluntary Licensee and his or her team is essential to the system that helps manage the most significant historic wrecks in our territorial sea. Licensees are effectively voluntary custodians for these important sites; this has been recognised by Historic England awarding Affiliated Volunteer Status to Licensees and their teams. In addition, professional archaeologists have a role to play in the management of the marine historic environment. This guidance document is intended for all projects that take place on historic wreck sites.

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Front cover: A diver exploring the wreck of HMS *Invincible*. © Michael Pitts

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1. Introduction

This document provides guidance for individuals or groups wishing to access and/or develop projects on wreck sites designated under Section 1 of the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973 in the English Territorial Sea. It also acts as the recommended approach for work on all historic wreck sites in England including sites scheduled under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. Access to such sites designated under the 1973 Act is enabled through a licensing system administered by Historic England on behalf of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). Authorisation to access a Protected Wreck Site is at the discretion of the Secretary of State for Culture, Media & Sport.

Historic England publish a range of advice and guidance documents that can inform archaeological investigation.

General Principles of Approach

The UK Government has adopted the Annex to the 2001 UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage as being best practice for archaeology. This Annex (reproduced in Section 9) comprises a series of ethical rules concerning activities directed at underwater cultural heritage, which provide objective standards by which to assess the appropriateness of actions in respect to archaeology underwater. All individuals licensed to access a Protected Wreck Site agree to uphold the general principles of the Rules annexed to the 2001 Convention.

The *UK Marine Policy Statement* recognises that heritage assets should be conserved in a manner appropriate and proportionate to their significance. This is further underpinned by highlighting the need to record and advance our understanding of heritage assets for this and future generations. The *UK Marine Policy Statement* states that the historic environment represents a unique aspect of our cultural heritage and is a finite and often irreplaceable resource that can be vulnerable to a range of human activities. As such, these guidelines are intended to assist those interested in investigating, recording and preserving our past.

> The “high level of non-vocational involvement should be regarded as an asset to the discipline, as there is demonstrably a greater requirement for survey and recording than can possibly be accomplished by professional archaeologists”
>
> (Taking to the Water, English Heritage 2006)

Case Study

Perhaps the most famous of all protected wreck sites, and a shining example of what can be achieved from initial discovery to display, is the *Mary Rose*. The *Mary Rose* has iconic status within maritime archaeology as one of only a small number of wrecks raised and the only 16th century warship on display anywhere in the world. Millions watched the television on the day in October 1982 when the ship emerged from beneath the waves for the first time since she sank in July 1545. This became a seminal moment in the history of maritime archaeology and has influenced the very nature of the discipline and inspired many of those involved today. Locating, excavating, raising, conserving and studying the *Mary Rose* has been a major undertaking and an outstanding achievement. Over 19,000 artefacts, 6,000 environmental samples, 3,000 timbers and the human remains of between 179 and 300 individuals have been recovered from the wreck. All these items have been carefully recorded and are being conserved and analysed to solve the mysteries of this great ship. The project represents a massive commitment both in time and finances; prior to the raising of the *Mary Rose,* more than 27,000 dives covering nearly twelve person-years were spent on the seabed excavating the site between 1979 and 1982 alone by volunteers and professional archaeologists. In the subsequent decades many more hours have been spent on the site and on analysis, conservation and publication.

Alexander McKee began the search for Henry VIII's ship in 1965. McKee was keen to utilise new techniques and embraced the developing technology of side-scan sonar. Archaeologist Margaret Rule had been involved in the project from the early days and she and McKee started diving on the site with their team to investigate the buried anomaly. Working on a small budget, the team began finding fragments of timber and then uncovered an iron gun. They soon realised they had located the remains of the *Mary Rose.*

The *Mary Rose* project has required considerable funds to be delivered from search to display. A Trust was created in 1979 to help fundraise with the future King as President. The Trust sought funds for the 1979 - 1982 excavation and to raise the *Mary Rose.* The Mary Rose Trust does not receive any dedicated government funding and relies solely on funding raised from visitors, and their own fund-raising initiatives.

The project set an important precedent for sports divers working alongside archaeologists and represented a step away from the commercial salvage of historic wreck sites. The anaerobic burial conditions of the site had allowed the survival of many unique artifacts that would not have survived on land. From armaments such as longbows and arrows to personal items such as combs, shoes and tools belonging to the ships carpenters, the wreck provides a wealth of information about the sea-going world of the 16th century. The ship itself also provides important evidence of early ship construction and has been meticulously studied and drawn.

The *Mary Rose* project has not only greatly enhanced our knowledge of life and warfare in the Tudor period but the conservation of the ship and artefacts led to the development of many new procedures and techniques for dealing with waterlogged finds. Early on in the excavation it was noticed that any wood left uncovered was eroding, so a series of experiments to understand the mechanisms of degradation were undertaken during the excavation. Structural elements were wrapped with membrane held in place by sandbags between diving seasons, and experiments with different types of material both buried and left above the water column were undertaken. These experiments have helped shape how wrecks are managed in situ today. In 2013 a purpose-built museum was created over the dry dock which had housed the ship since it came ashore in 1982. The hull is the centrepiece of this museum, with galleries wrapping around it on three levels containing many of the artefacts recovered.

The Museum displaying this remarkable ship, and the artefacts it contained, will continue to provide evidence for archaeologists and historians and delight the public for years to come. Work on the wreck material left on the seabed continues, with regular monitoring work taking place to ensure the remains are secured for future research.

If you just think about the first timbers that were exposed in 1971, and then you think everything else there that you see in the ship hall was actually dug up by mostly amateur divers, literally by hand. It shows you what an enormous human endeavour it actually was.

Christopher Dobbs, Head of Interpretation, Mary Rose Trust

T*o bring her ashore means that generations of people to come can rediscover that ship and reinterpret her for themselves, and that I think is the correct reason for recovering her.*

Margaret Rule, Archaeological Director, Mary Rose Trust



Figure 1: The *Mary Rose* has become a focus for public engagement with maritime archaeology as well as a focus of valuable research for the discipline. The story of the ship is now known, and loved, around the world. Here, archaeologist Alexzandra Hildred is being interviewed in front of the hull.

Protected Wreck Sites

Designation of important historic wreck sites in the Territorial Seas of England, Wales and Northern Ireland occurs under Section 1 of the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973, which enables the Government to control investigations of wreck sites and the adjacent seabed. Designated sites under Section 1 of the Act are identified as being those likely to contain the remains of a vessel, or its contents, which are of historical, artistic or archaeological importance.

Historic England has published a designation selection guide explaining the criteria used to assess the significance of a wreck site which is being considered for designation. Historic England has also produced Ships and Boats: Prehistory to 1840 and Ships and Boats: 1840 - 1950 as expert yet accessible introductions to significant vessel types. These documents are all available to download from the Historic England website.

The purpose of designation is to capture a representative sample of our nationally important historical and archaeological resource where statutory protection is deemed to be the most appropriate mechanism to secure their long-term preservation for this and future generations. The designated wreck sites in England represent a small percentage of the many hundreds of known sites around the English coastline and in our seas. Anyone may apply for a historic wreck site to be designated under the terms of the *Protection of Wrecks Act* 1973.

The Protection of Wrecks Act 1973 does not prohibit access to designated wrecks; rather, it controls activities so that designated wrecks are not put at risk from damaging or unauthorised investigation. The content of the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973 can be obtained from www.legislation.gov.uk. Further information on Protected Wreck Sites and England's Maritime Archaeology is available from Historic England.

Section 2 of the *Protection of Wrecks Act* 1973 governs restrictions in relation to dangerous wrecks. This Section of the Act is administered by the Receiver of Wreck through the Maritime and Coastguard Agency.



Figure 2: Becoming a Licensee and an affiliated volunteer can be an enjoyable experience. © Mark Beattie-Edwards.

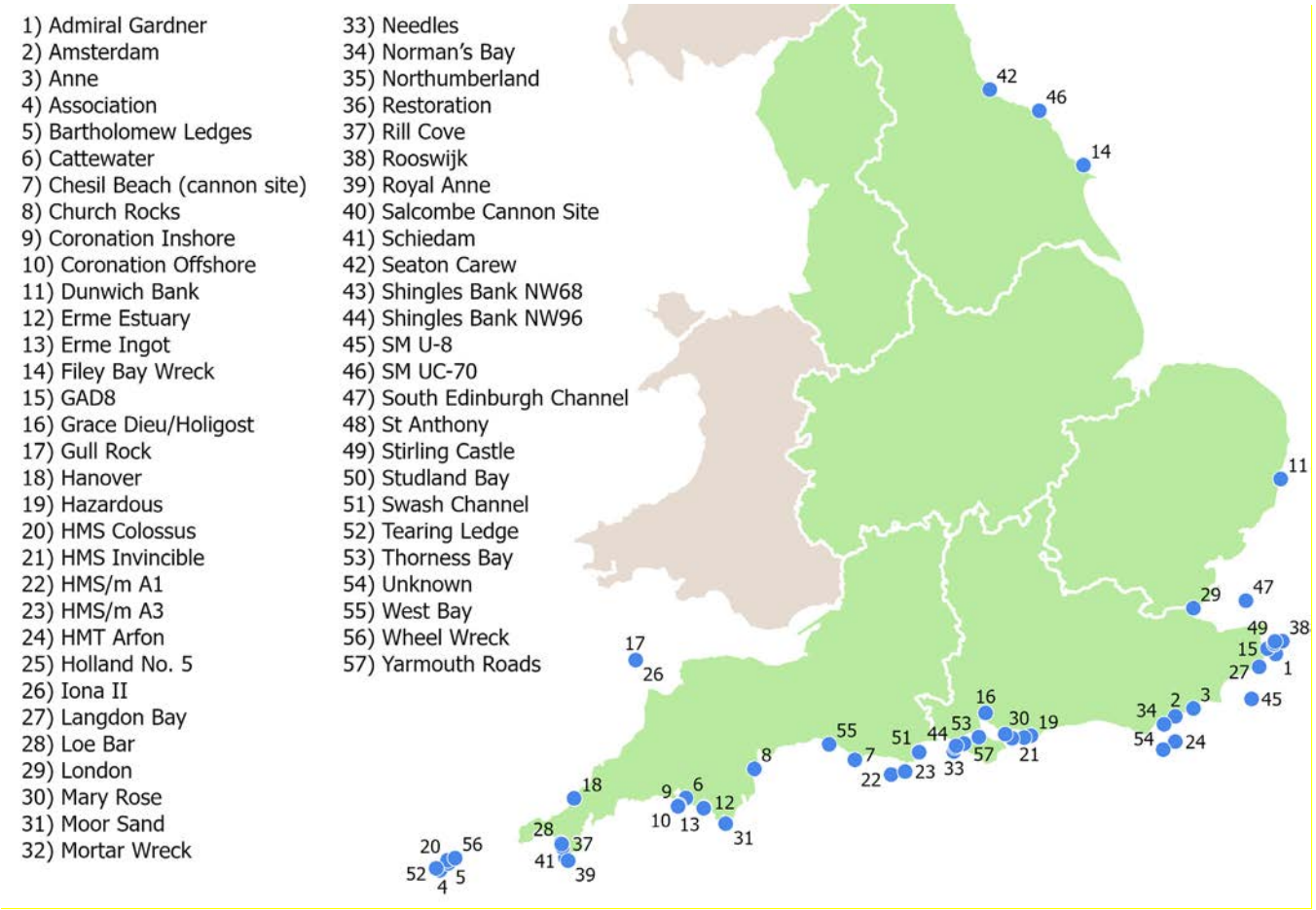


Figure 3: England's Protected Wreck Sites (March 2026).

It is against the law to:

Tamper with, damage, or remove any part of a vessel lying wrecked on or in the seabed or any object formerly contained in such a vessel

Carry out diving or salvage operations directed to the exploration of any wreck or removing objects from it or the seabed, or use equipment constructed or adapted for any purpose of diving or salvage operations. This includes the deployment of remotely operated vehicles

Deposit anything, including anchors and fishing gear, which, were it to fall on the site, would obliterate, obstruct access to, or damage any part of the site

Scheduled wreck sites

Scheduling a shipwreck site means it is recognised as a nationally important archaeological site and is closely managed. Scheduling protects these sites from illicit salvage and damage while allowing unrestricted access to recreational divers, on a look but don't touch basis. It is the most suitable form of protection for robust sites, such as those with metal hulls, or on sites where there is low risk of theft of artefacts.

Scheduling is our oldest form of heritage protection. It is the same type of protection that is applied to important archaeological sites on land such as standing stones, burial mounds, the remains of monastic buildings and more. It began in 1913, although its roots go as far back as the 1882 Ancient Monuments Protection Act when a 'Schedule' (hence the term 'scheduling') of

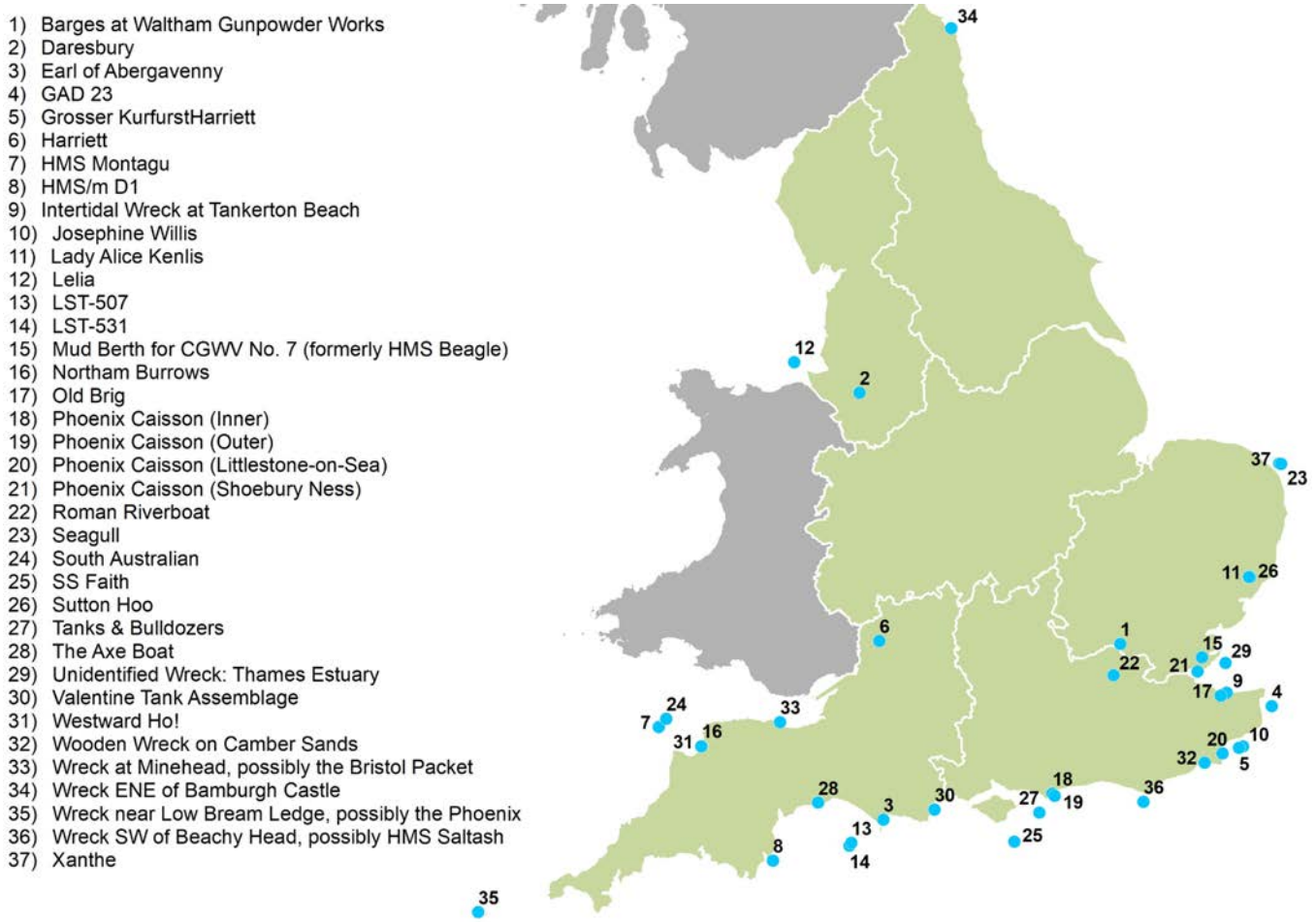


Figure 4: England's Scheduled Wreck Sites (March 2026).

almost exclusively prehistoric monuments deserving of state protection was first compiled. Scheduling derives its authority from the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. Under the terms of this Act, the Secretary of State has a duty to compile and maintain a schedule of monuments of national importance. The remains of vessels can be added to the Schedule (including examples buried under land) if the Secretary of State considers them to be of national importance, and that the protection which comes with scheduling would assist the site's conservation.

Anyone who wishes to undertake intrusive activity, including the recovery of artefacts or structural remains, on a scheduled site would be required to obtain Scheduled Monument Consent in advance.

A wreck which has been scheduled is protected against ground disturbance or unlicensed metal detecting. Written consent must always be obtained before any work on a scheduled wreck can begin.

Applications for Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) must be made to the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport before any work can be carried out which might affect a scheduled wreck. Historic England gives advice to the government on each application and administers the consent system. In assessing applications, the Secretary of State will aim to ensure that the significance of scheduled sites is safeguarded for the long term.

Further advice regarding what it means when a monument is scheduled and what requires consent can be obtained from the relevant local Historic England team. For further information

on Scheduled Monument Consent, see Scheduled Monuments: A Guide for Owners and Occupiers.

It is against the law to:

Disturb a scheduled monument by carrying out works (outside Class Consents) without SMC.

Cause reckless or deliberate damage to a monument.

Use a metal detector or remove an object found at a monument without consent from Historic England.

Conviction for these offences can lead to fines.

This guidance focuses primarily on sites designated under the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973. However, the principles set out here are also generally applicable to scheduled sites. Where differences in approach or requirements exist, these are noted and explained throughout the guidance.

Responsibilities of Historic England

Historic England's specific responsibilities to marine heritage assets derive from the *National Heritage Act* 2002, which modified strategic functions to include:

- securing the preservation of ancient monuments in, on or under the seabed; and
- promoting the public's enjoyment of, and advancing their knowledge of ancient monuments in, on or under the seabed

The 2002 Act also enabled the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport to transfer administrative functions (particularly with regard to licensing access) relating to the *Protection of Wrecks Act* 1973 to Historic England. Historic England's responsibilities in relation to designated wrecks also derive from the *National Heritage Act* 2002, whereby Historic England is able to grant-aid projects in relation to Protected Wreck Sites.

Contract for Archaeological Services

When considering an application for designation, Historic England is assisted by a team of contract professional archaeologists. The overall aim of the contract is to provide quality information to Historic England to enable the protection and management of heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, both at the coast and within English territorial waters. This is achieved through the provision and deployment of an array of archaeological field capabilities including, but not limited to, desk-based assessment, diver-based investigation and remote sensing in order to:

- Undertake specific assessment and/ or targeted investigation as directed by Historic England, and
- Maintain and deliver an archive of primary site data and reports to include site reports, documentary research and logs, digital data including GIS information, bathymetry and imagery



Figure 5: A diving archaeologist recording the *Rooswijk* protected wreck site on behalf of Historic England and the Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands. Image: © #Rooswijk1740 project

2. Applying for a licence

The role of a Licensee

The role of a voluntary Licensee and their team is essential to the system that helps to manage the most significant historic wrecks in English territorial waters. These sites provide valuable evidence for a wide range of past activities, and not just those on or in the sea. The diversity of Protected Wreck Sites indicates the wealth of maritime information preserved under the sea and around the coast of the UK.

The incentives for investigating and caring for a nationally important historic wreck are broad: Licensees and their work have been featured on national television and in the national press, presented papers at conferences, contributed to local, regional and national outreach events, published their work in archaeological journals and even written booklets, monographs and developed websites. The experience can be very rewarding, but it is important to note that Licensees also acquire a high level of responsibility. As activities within the designated area are limited to those agreed with Historic England and covered by the licence, the duties of a Licensee will vary depending on the work that is taking place and the conditions of the licence (see Standard licence conditions).



Figure 6: Protected wreck sites can generate a lot of publicity as was the case with the gun carriage from the *London*.

Licensees are not required to hold formal archaeological qualifications but are expected to have a technical knowledge of archaeological principles and practice. Further, Licensees are

expected to be competent to undertake and complete their proposed activity, including the preparation of a written report of results, and the preparation of archives as indicated below. Historic England recognises that ‘competence’ differs from ‘qualification’ (a quality or accomplishment) in that competence is simply the ability to do a task (NAS 2009).

All Licensees are required to do the following:

Comply with the conditions of their licence

Uphold archaeological principles (including the Rules annexed to the 2001 UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage)

Take the lead in maintaining close contact with the Nominated Archaeologist and with Historic England

Ensure that licensed activities are undertaken safely and by competent people

Produce a yearly report on their work on the site to Historic England

Principal Licensees are responsible for, and must manage, on-site activity during all operations under their licence. However, Historic England recognises that it is not practical, or indeed always possible, for a Principal Licensee to be on site at all times. The Principal Licensee can add a number of named additional Licensees who are responsible on-site when the Principal Licensee is not present. They must be named on the licence and can be added during the initial application or by notifying Historic England.

In order to reduce the burden of administration on Licensees, and to allow diving to occur at short notice, the license only needs to carry the name of the Licensees. The Licensees may take additional divers on dives under and in accordance with the terms of their licence without prior notification to Historic England as long as a Principal Licensee or an Additional Licensee is on site. Licensees therefore do not have to provide a list of additional divers when applying for a licence or apply for a variation to a licence to include further divers. Historic England collect the names of divers who have visited a site under a licence at set intervals throughout the year.

Named divers must be provided to Historic England at the end of the following set periods:

1 December – 31 May

1 June – 31 August

1 September – 30 November

It is the responsibility of the Principal Licensee to ensure a list of names is maintained and made available to Historic England upon request. Team members must comply with the terms of the licence and support the Principal Licensee.

Nominated Archaeologists

Where appointed by a Licensee, the level of input of a voluntary Nominated Archaeologist will depend on the type of activities being licensed, the experience of the project team and personal availability. A nominated archaeologist should have archaeological experience commensurate with the role. In most instances where the licensed activity is non-intrusive, the Nominated Archaeologist may not need to take any formal responsibility for the archaeological work, but they would be expected to provide advice on strategy and document preparation and must be available to give general archaeological advice.

If you do not know how to find an appropriate archaeologist, please contact Historic England. Additionally, the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) hold a register of professional accredited individuals who have been assessed for their knowledge, skills and behaviours and agree to uphold the values of the Institute set out in their Code of conduct. This can be found here:

https://www.archaeologists.net/register/enquiries/looking

It is the Licensee's responsibility to maintain regular contact with the Nominated Archaeologist. Nominated Archaeologists should be competent to provide archaeological advice appropriate for the type of licence held. They may not necessarily be able to dive, but where intrusive investigations are taking place, this would normally be a requirement. Nominated Archaeologists are expected to comply with established archaeological Codes of Conduct and have the appropriate measure of qualifications and experience to match the advice being given. Nominated Archaeologists should also acquire a sound knowledge of legislation, standards and guidance applicable to marine archaeology. It is permissible for a Licensee and Nominated Archaeologist to be the same individual.

Although Nominated Archaeologists advising on some licences may not need to visit or dive the site, it often helps; and it is imperative that no artefact is recovered without prior, specific consultation with the Nominated Archaeologist. The archaeologists need to make themselves available for telephone consultation or for pre- arranged meetings at intervals appropriate to the complexity of the work. On some sites this might be once every day while work is taking place, but it is more likely to be weekly, and less frequently when there is no on-going site activity.

Where archaeological material is exposed on the surface of the seabed, and a licence is issued to recover items, the Nominated Archaeologist will need to be more closely involved. The archaeologist must help to formulate the strategy so that recovery can take place without unnecessary disturbance of the underlying material and advise on post-recovery procedures. On-site presence may not be essential, but it is obviously useful. Material should not be raised before the Nominated Archaeologist has discussed and agreed the need, strategy and post-recovery stabilisation, conservation and deposition plan with the Licensee.

The amount of time a Nominated Archaeologist needs to make available to a project will vary considerably from site to site and team to team. The archaeologist would need to have input into the recording and interpretation of the distribution of material or topographical information and would be expected to be involved in the production of the reports. The archaeologist may also need to make sure the Licensee is following conservation advice.

Where a licence is issued that permits the disturbance of the seabed and/or the recovery of material, the Nominated Archaeologist will need to take total control of the archaeological side of the project. When controlling intrusive work on a designated site, they should have a close working relationship with the Licensee and a good working relationship with the whole team. The Nominated Archaeologist should be on site for most of the time disturbance is taking place, unless the site is suitable for supervision by someone with proven archaeological experience in excavation techniques. This person will need to be able to identify and record archaeological contexts, features and objects as they appear, and also manage the flow of information and objects as they come to the surface. This should be discussed in the Project Design and the experience and proposed responsibilities of this person should be clearly laid out.

The archaeologist should be experienced and confident enough to argue the archaeological case wherever necessary. This does not mean that they need vast experience of underwater

excavation, although that always helps. What is primarily required is the ability to transfer the basic archaeological procedures used on land to the underwater environment and communicate this expertise to the project team. Sometimes the archaeologist will have less diving experience than the Licensee and so safety and non-archaeological operational activities may be best left to the Licensee. If the archaeologist has any concerns over safety or diving procedures, these concerns should be expressed to the Licensee.

Nominated Archaeologists have the authority to stop work on sites if they have serious concerns regarding inappropriate activities.



Figure 7: Nominated archaeologists work closely alongside Licensees both above and below water. © Mark Beattie-Edwards.

Scheduled wreck sites

On a scheduled site access arrangements are different, and no licence is required to simply visit a site. However, it should be noted that any intrusive investigation or disturbance to a site, including the recovery of artefacts, will require Scheduled Monument Consent. Filming, measuring and photography are all non-invasive and good recording methods. Activities like putting pins or stakes into the site and moving structure or artefacts around would require permission from Historic England. In the first instance contact maritime@historicengland.org.uk to discuss your project.



Figure 8: Site Champions regularly dive scheduled wrecks and share information about the sites with Historic England. © Nick Reed.

Site Champions

Historic England encourage individuals who regularly dive sites to become Site Champions. A Site Champion is someone who dives a scheduled wreck at least once a year and shares information about their dives and the condition of the site with Historic England. More information on becoming a Site Champion is available from maritime@historicengland.org.uk. For additional support and advice on the practicalities of being a Site Champion contact the Protected Wreck Association.

Affiliated Volunteer Status

All volunteer Licensees, Team Members and Nominated Archaeologists on Protected Wreck Site Licences are eligible to be Affiliated Volunteers if they fulfil the criteria set out by Historic England. Licensees dive protected wreck sites to gather vital information on behalf of Historic England without payment. Historic England values and appreciates the full worth of Licensees and classifies them as Affiliated Volunteers because they give their time and expertise free of charge. As such, affiliated volunteers are recognised by Historic England through the commitments outlined in the Historic England Volunteer Policy, with the exception of travel and insurance arrangements which are overridden by the conditions on the license. Historic England work with affiliated volunteers in order to accommodate our organisational policies and procedures related to volunteering.

Affiliated volunteers are subject to the conditions on the license on which they are named; this classification does not affect health, safety and legal responsibilities. For the avoidance of doubt, affiliated volunteers are not employees or members of staff, and it is not intended that they should be.

Applying for a licence

Before licences are issued and before any authorised activity takes place on a Protected Wreck Site, it is important for Historic England and DCMS to know what is proposed and why; proposals should be discussed with a Nominated Archaeologist and with Historic England as early as possible, so that appropriate guidance can be given against the scope of proposed activities. All licences therefore include standard conditions. Applying to visit a site may be the first stage before applying for future further licences.

Where proposed activities will disturb the seabed or include the recovery of any material Historic England will require the submission of an accompanying Project Design; it is important that a detailed project plan and explanation of what is to be undertaken, and how, is prepared. More detailed advice on project design specification can be found throughout this document as well as in the Historic England publication *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The MoRPHE Project Managers' Guide* (Historic England 2015b). It is recommended that project designs to accompany applications follow this guidance.

Licences are granted on the expectation that information obtained as a result of authorised activity will be available and accessible to the public. Consequently, Licensees are required to deposit the project archive of work undertaken on any designated wreck in an appropriate repository and to ensure that there are no copyright restraints upon Third Party use of such material for non-commercial purposes. Additional information on archiving is set out later in these guidelines.

Protected Wreck Site Licences

Authorised access to England's Protected Wreck Sites is facilitated through a licensing scheme administered by Historic England on behalf of DCMS. In England, licences enabling access are subject to the authorisation of the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. Archaeology should be accessible to all and, mindful of the rights of individuals to engage with our shared heritage (coupled with their diving competence), anyone may apply to access a Protected Wreck Site. Historic England administer the licensing scheme associated with Protected Wreck Sites in England, our partner agencies administer it in Wales (Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments) and Northern Ireland (Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs). The Maritime and Coastguard Agency administer Section 2 of the Act, which relates specifically to dangerous wrecks, through the Receiver of Wreck.

Individuals and/or groups wishing to simply visit and/or undertake archaeological activities (including some types of remote sensing) on Protected Wreck Sites may only do so with an appropriate licence.

In autumn 2015 the licensing process was amended to move from four different types of licence to just one, framed by conditions that are relevant to the proposed activities. This change did not alter the processes for approving and issuing licences but rather amended the type of licence issued to make it fit for purpose with current archaeological techniques and to reflect the broad range of reasons for which people seek to access protected wreck sites. The change also introduced the term 'Principal Licensee' who is the main licence holder and, usually, the applicant.

A Licensee is a voluntary custodian of the site. It is important to note that the role of Licensee for a Protected Wreck Site does not confer ownership or salvage rights.



Figure 9: The Licensee and members of the licensed team working alongside an archaeological dive team during the #LondonWreck1665 project. © Luke Mair

Although anyone can apply to access a Protected Wreck Site, a licence will only be authorised by DCMS if it will be of benefit to the care, understanding or public appreciation of the site. On some designated wrecks, licences may be granted to more than one individual in a year, but these licences will be conditional on the co-operation of individual licence holders (Licensees) and the programme of proposed activity being integrated and mutually beneficial.

Although archaeological investigations will inevitably be undertaken by a team, licences are issued to a named individual (the Principal Licensee) who takes sole responsibility for the on-site activities of everyone in that team. Clubs or groups interested in undertaking authorised activities will have to decide who is to be the Principal Licensee. Certain types of licence will also require a named archaeologist to work with the team; a named archaeologist is referred to as the Nominated Archaeologist, which is usually a voluntary role. In all cases, Historic England acts as the default archaeological advisor.

Generally, licences will only be issued by the Secretary of State to people who are considered:

- to be competent, and properly equipped, to carry out operations appropriate to the historical and archaeological importance of any wreck lying in a restricted area and of any objects contained or formerly contained in a wreck as defined under the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973; and
- to have any other legitimate reason for doing things in the area that can only be done with a licence

All applications requesting access to Protected Wreck Sites are appraised on merit. All applicants are therefore invited to contact Historic England to discuss proposed projects before submitting a formal application (see Section 8 for contact details).

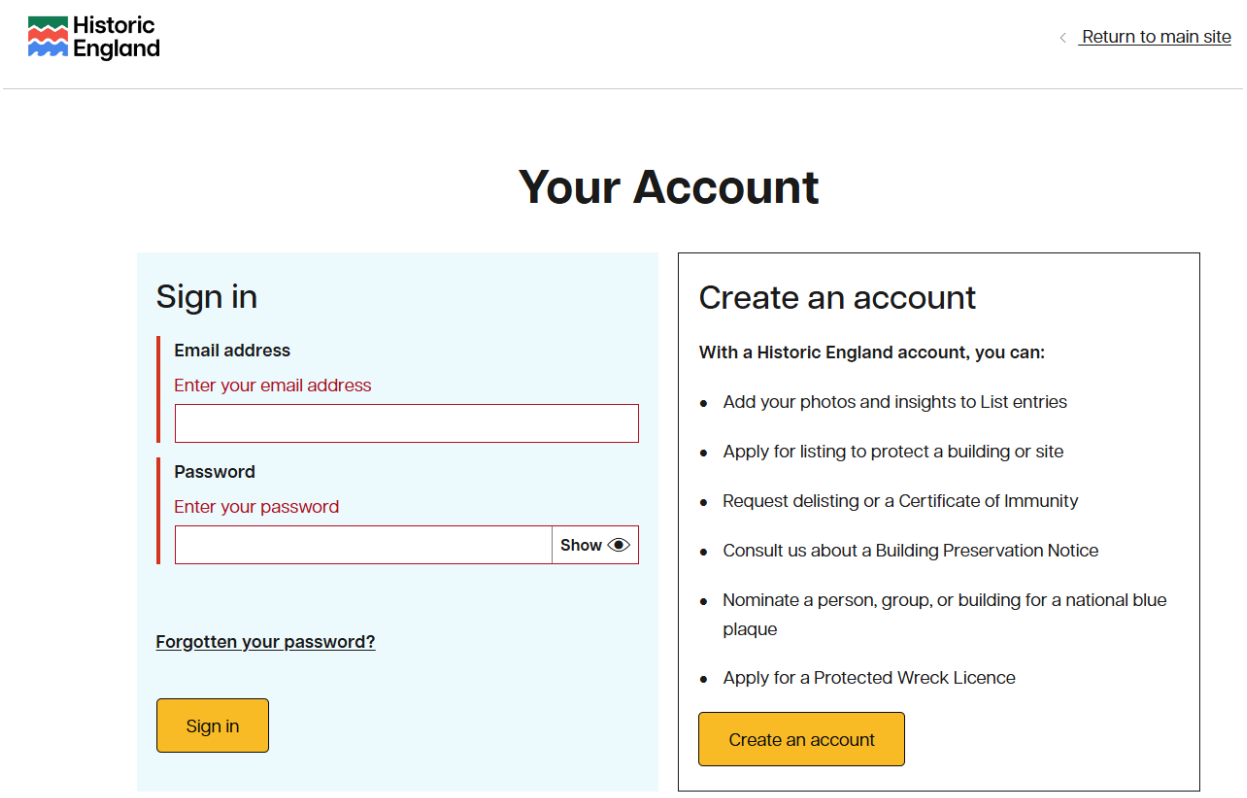


Figure 10: To apply for or renew a licence, or to notify Historic England about geophysical survey you will need to create an account online at https://account.historicengland.org.uk/

To apply for a licence, or to renew a licence you will need to register and create an account at https://account.historicengland.org.uk.

Once you have signed in you need to select ‘My Account’ at the top of the page. In this area you can:

- Apply for a new licence to visit a Protected Wreck Site
- Apply to renew an existing wreck licence
- Notify Historic England of exempt geophysical survey work.

In addition, you can view applications that are in progress or have been submitted.

Historic England will always provide additional guidance, upon request, to anyone wishing to apply for a licence to access a designated wreck.

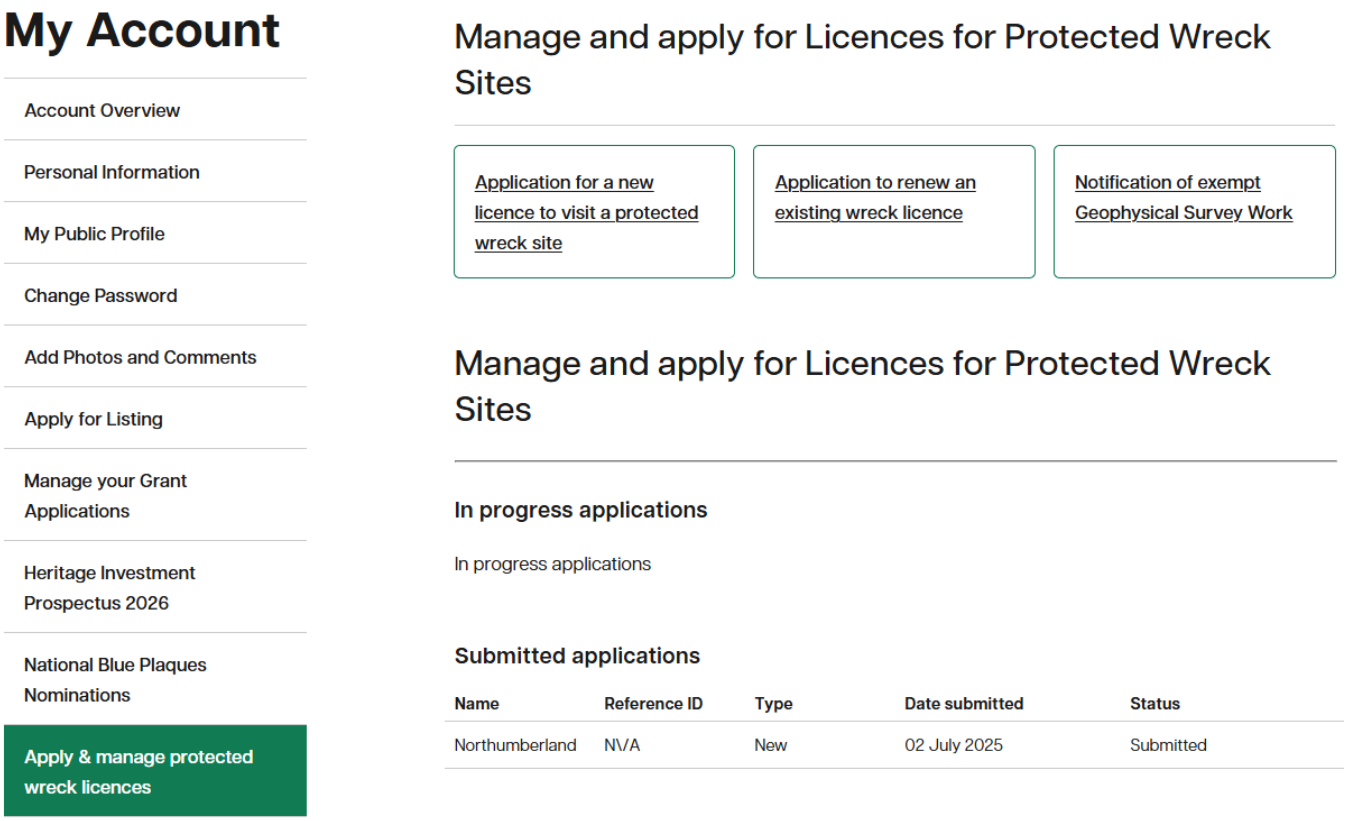


Figure 11: Once you have signed into your account you will find the area to apply and manage protected wreck licences, and notify Historic England of exempt geophysical survey, in the bottom left corner of your account.

The application process is made of 10 steps, The information required for each step is provided in Table 1.

Step Number	Information Required
Step 1 Before you start	This step requires no information but tells you the information you need at hand to complete the form.
Step 2 Site Details	Name of the site. Tip: If you are unsure you can consult the National Heritage List for England.
Step 3 Applicant – The Principal Licensee	Applicant's name Email address Phone number Postal address
Step 4 Applicant – Qualifications and Experience	Diving qualifications(s)and dates obtained Diving experience Archaeological qualifications (if applicable) Archaeological experience (if applicable)
Step 5 First Referee for the Applicant	Referee's name Referee's email address Referee's postal address
Step 6 Second Referee for the Applicant	Referee's name Referee's email address Referee's postal address
Step 7 Nominated archaeologist details	Certain types of licence will also require a nominated (named) archaeologist to work with the team. This section enables you to provide information on a nominated archaeologist if one is required. Nominated archaeologist's name Nominated archaeologist's email address Nominated archaeologist's postal address

Step Number	Information Required
	Diving qualification(s) and date(s) obtained Diving experience Archaeological qualification(s) Archaeological experience Relevant publications First referee details for nominated archaeologist (name, email and postal address) Second referee details for nominated archaeologist (name, email and postal address)
Step 8 Proposed activity	If you will be doing anything that may physically disturb the wreck site, seabed or plan to remove anything from the site, you must submit a Project Design which describes the proposed work in detail. Your application will not be processed until this is received. This action asks you to: Confirm if there will be any disturbance If this is any disturbance, confirm that a Project Design will be submitted Confirm that an annual site report will be submitted to Historic England at the end of the licence period
Step 9 Additional Licensees	Historic England and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport recognise that the Principal Licensee may not be present at all times. Please list any additional licensees to whom on site responsibility may be delegated to (please note the Principal Licensee or an Additional Licensee must be on site at all times) For each additional licensee the following information must be provided: Name Email address Postal address Diving and/or archaeological qualifications and experience .
Step 10 Summary	This section provides a summary of the information you have provided and allows you to change elements if required before submitting. You can also print a copy of your application or save a PDF on this page.

Table 1: The online Historic England application form requires the information contained in this table.

The application process following Historic England receiving your application is shown in Figure 12.

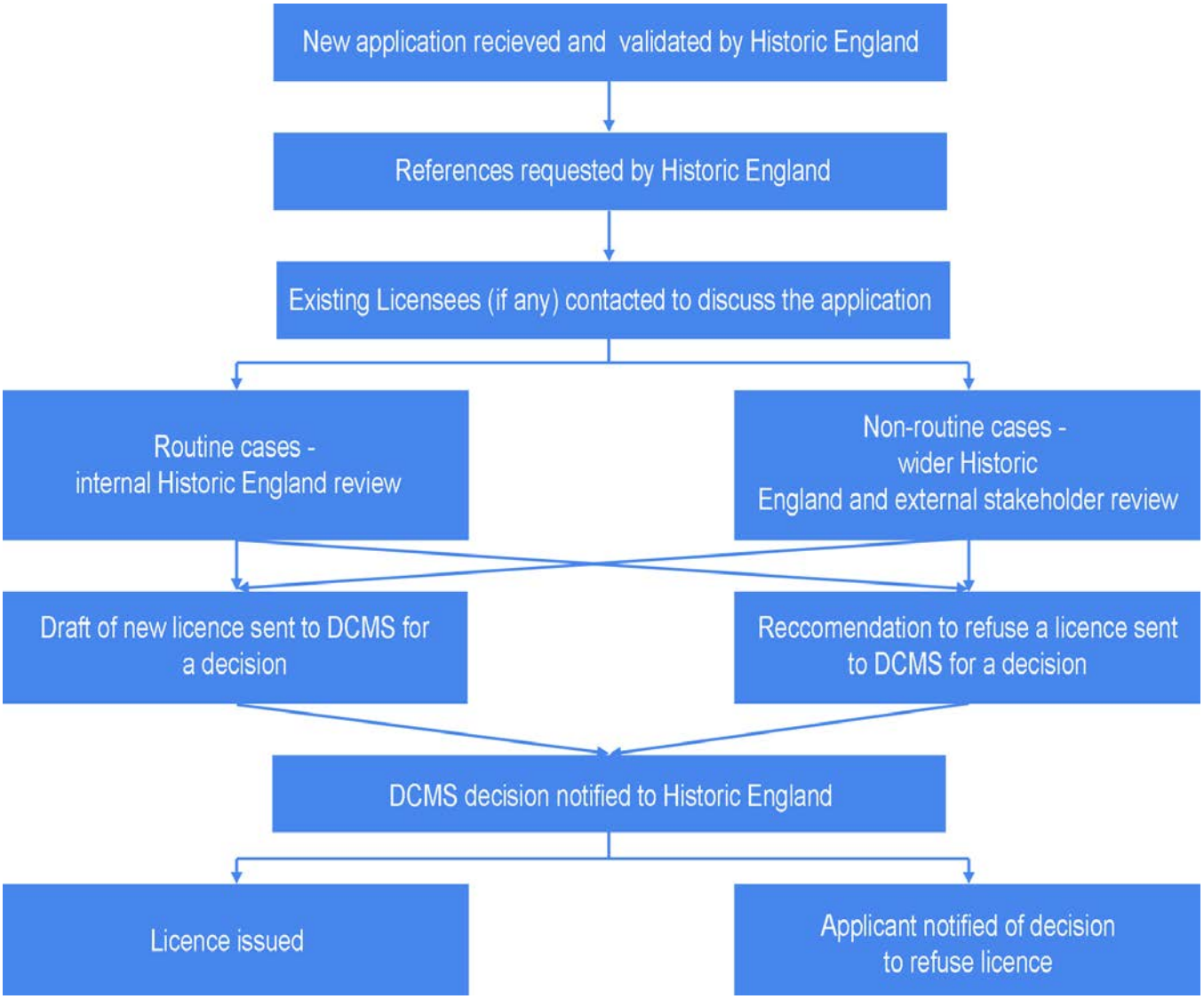


Figure 12: The licensing application process.

Recovery of material

An application to allow the recovery of material, both exposed items and those revealed through excavation, will not normally be recommended by Historic England to the Secretary of State unless a strong case is made that the recovery of exposed artefacts is appropriate. Any application will need to:

- provide a Project Design indicating how recoveries address established research questions and a methodology for recovery including a selection strategy, and provide detail on conservation measures in place to receive the material
- provide evidence of an agreement in principle that a museum is willing to house the collection of the recovered material (subject to the investigations of the Receiver of Wreck)
- provide evidence that sufficient funds to enable the conservation and deposition of the items are in place

Further, Historic England requires Licensees to waive their rights to a salvage award (under the *Merchant Shipping Act* 1995) in favour of an appropriate museum in recognition of the special historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest of the site, consistent

with advice given in *Our Portable Past* (Historic England 2018) and in line with the Annex of the UNESCO convention.

Recovered finds are subject to the controls of the *Merchant Shipping Act* 1995. The Receiver of Wreck has a policy of trying to keep historic material together where possible and offering it to registered museums but it cannot be assumed that an appropriate museum will have the resources to acquire and conserve material from a wreck site. Therefore, it is essential that conservation and long-term curation of any recovered material is set out in the Project Design for any project that includes the proposed recovery of material. Agreement should be sought from a museum in advance of submitting a licence application and a copy of the museum's agreement should be included with the licence application.



Figure 13: Work, such as this Historic England funded excavation on the Swash Channel wreck which disturbs the seabed or involves the recovery of material will require a full Project Design. © Bournemouth University

Disturbance of the seabed through excavation

An individual applying for a licence for work that will disturb the seabed will be required to:

- provide a Project Design indicating how recoveries address established research questions and a methodology for recovery including a selection strategy, and provide detail on conservation measures in place to receive the material; and
- provide evidence of an agreement in principle that a museum is willing to house the collection of the recovered material (subject to the investigations of the Receiver of Wreck)
- provide evidence that sufficient funds to enable the conservation and deposition of the items are in place
- provide evidence that all necessary consents will be sought prior to work commencing

In most cases, the direction of excavation and/ or sampling activities would have to be under the total control of an appropriately qualified and experienced Nominated Archaeologist. The Nominated Archaeologist would need to be involved in preparation of a Project Design for the intended investigation and would normally need to be on site for most of the time the work was taking place.

Example activities that might take place on a Protected Wreck Site	PWA licence required?	Project Design required?
Geophysical Survey	No (in most but not all cases)	n/a
Site Visit Photography Videography Visual monitoring Measured survey Photographic survey Compilation of site plans Recording of seabed topography Ecological survey (non-intrusive) ROV survey	Yes	No Project Design required in most cases
Installation of dive trail stations Installation of sandbags or other protective material Recovery of high risk items exposed on the seabed	Yes	Yes
Controlled removal of sediments (including through excavation) Collection of samples for research	Yes	Yes

Table 2: Example activities that may take place against the licensing requirements.

Case Study

The #Rooswijk1740 project is an excellent example of a large complex excavation project running over many years with many facets.

On the 8th of January 1740, the Dutch East India Company (VOC) ship *Rooswijk* weighed anchor and left harbour on the Dutch island of Texel, carrying a varied cargo that included large quantities of silver coins and bullion intended for trade. However, by the next day Rooswijk had been driven onto the Goodwin Sands off the coast of Kent and subsequently broke up – sinking with no survivors. Passing into obscurity, it was not until 2005 that the ship was re-discovered following a search by recreational diver Ken Welling.

The #Rooswijk1740 project was both funded and led by the Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands (Ministry of Education, Science and Culture), working in collaboration with project partner Historic England and UK-contractor MSDS Marine.

Lying in approximately 25 metres of water, the remains of the vessel were the focus of two intense excavation seasons in the summer months of 2017-18. A full Project Design was required to secure a licence to excavate the site under the terms of the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973. An additional licence from the Marine Management Organisation was also required due to the large volume of material removed from the seabed. The excavation was complex and was undertaken on surface supplied diving equipment.

The post-excavation work was largely undertaken by Historic England in their research facilities at Fort Cumberland. A large team of heritage science and finds specialists enabled the maximum amount of information to be retrieved from finds. The conservation process was lengthy with finds having to desalinate before conservation could commence.

The Project Design identified that material would be transferred back to the Netherlands. This required an export licence from Arts Council England. In addition, the presence of an ivory comb meant a separate licence to export the ivory was required under the CITES Convention, and permission was sought from the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Ivory Team in relation to the Ivory Act 2018.

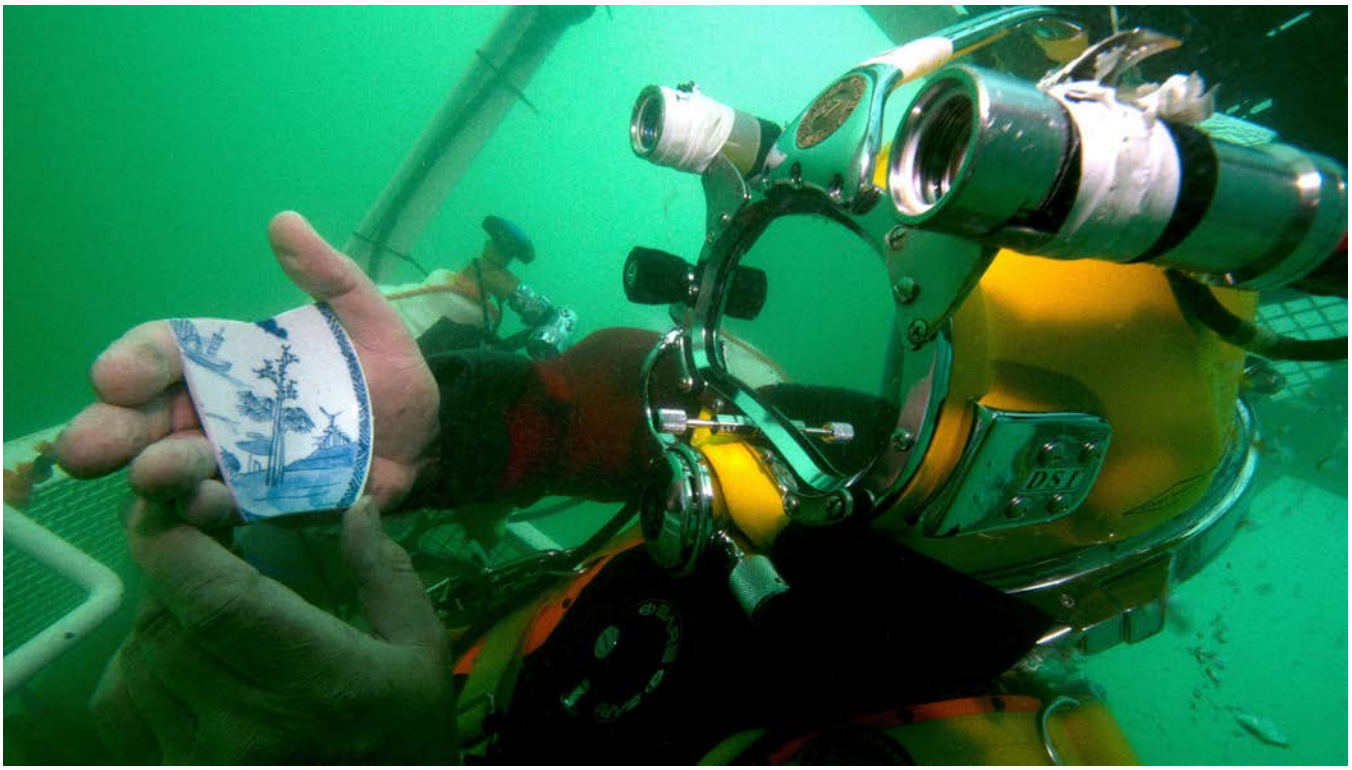


Figure 14: A SSDE diver examining a ceramic artefact during the *Rooswijk* excavation. © #Rooswijk1740 Project

The #Rooswijk1740 project ensured they delivered public benefit by creating opportunities throughout for visits, training and engagement. Throughout, the project acted as a hub for training and capacity building in the sector whilst additionally providing numerous opportunities for public involvement to raise awareness of the site.

Over 1,600 people attended the open days in the field and the laboratories, nearly 20,000 people accessed material in virtual reality through either the virtual trail, the online exhibition of the Dutch Huygens Institute or the Sketchfab models and over 34,500 people have visited exhibitions about the project.

Public engagement was also achieved with an active media strategy. Apart from the news stories during the expeditions, long-running productions were made together with mainstream media. With series episodes and documentaries, like an episode of Drain the Oceans by National Geographic, Digging for Britain on the BBC and an hour-long documentary by Dutch public broadcaster WNL millions of people were reached.

During the excavation the Ramsgate project base became a focus for events. The project undertook local awareness initiatives such as project information boards on the quay-wall and presenting at local events such as the Ramsgate Festival. Providing a British Sign Language interpreter and hosting 50 home-schooled children and their parents allowed engagement with hard-to-reach audiences.

During the excavation the project ran two diving campaigns for avocational SCUBA divers, a non-traditional audience. One campaign allowed divers to dive on the site and see what the archaeologists were doing. On a terrestrial excavation it is commonplace to open the site to visitors but this is not normal practice on a site 25m under the sea. The second campaign enabled archaeological and volunteer divers to investigate an outlying anomaly to contribute to the main project.



Figure 15: A public open day during the *Rooswijk* excavation. © #Rooswijk1740 Project

Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) Survey

Remote Operated Vehicles (ROV) and Autonomous Underwater Vehicles (AUV) are increasingly common in underwater investigations. There is considerable risk of accidental damage to the site through loss of control and collision. Therefore, the use of ROVs and AUVs to undertake operations directed to the exploration of a protected wreck, or for the removal of objects from a protected wreck, will require a licence under the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973.

Further advice is available from Historic England.

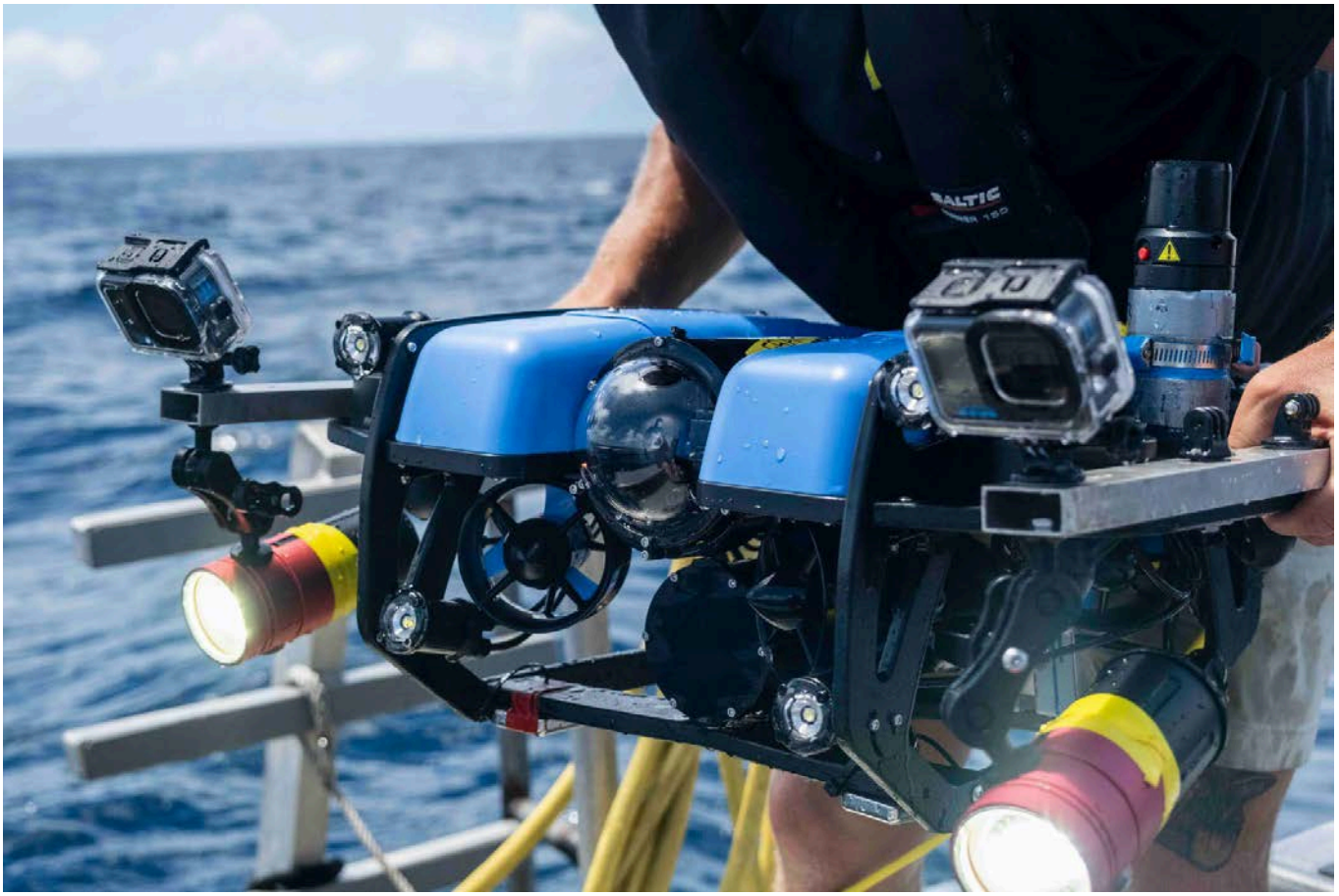


Figure 16: The use of an ROV on a protected wreck site will require a licence under the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973. © MSDS Marine.

Geophysical Survey

Most geophysical survey projects will not require a licence under the *Protection of Wrecks Act* 1973. However, Historic England would ask that people planning such projects notify us of their intentions and the likely dates of any survey beforehand. This can be done by completing the online form. Please note, as with applying for a licence you will need to register and log into the Historic England portal to complete the form.

This helps to ensure that all stakeholders for a site are aware of the planned work and avoids operations occurring simultaneously. There are a small number of cases where a licence might be required, for example during sector scanning sonar survey work there is the requirement to place a frame on the seabed and this would require a license under the *Protection of Wrecks Act*. If you are unsure, or would like to discuss your planned work, then please consult Historic England.

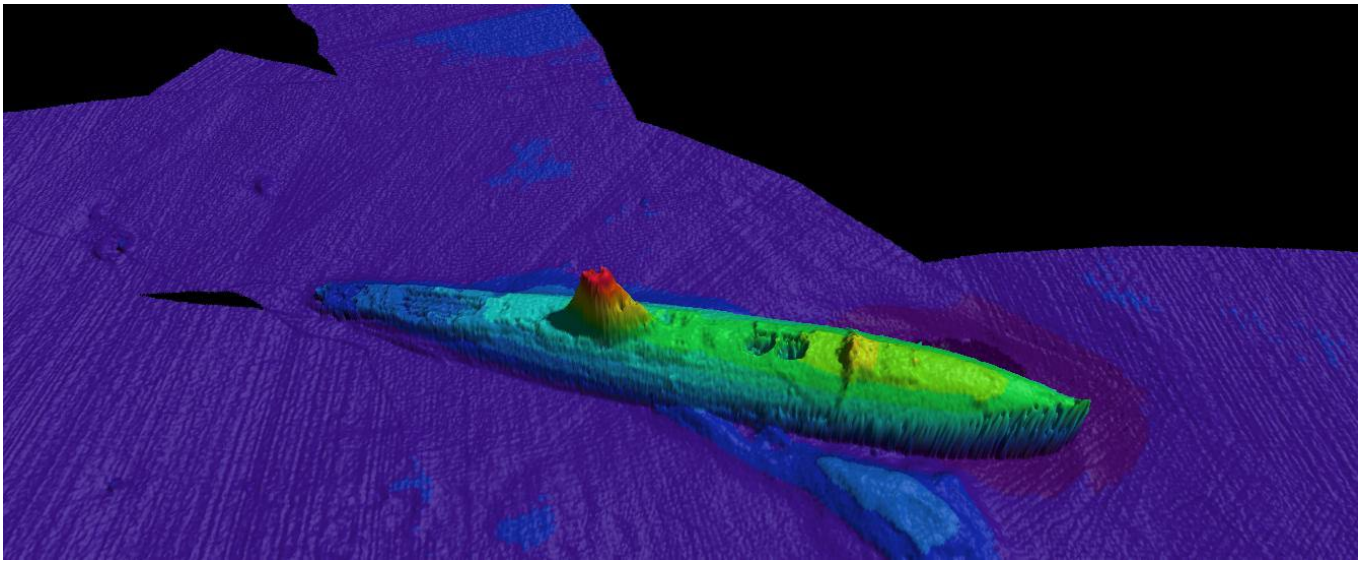


Figure 17: Geophysical survey, such as this Multibeam on HMS/m *A1*, will not require a licence in most cases. © MSDS Marine.

Further guidance on marine geophysics is available from Historic England:

Marine Geophysics: Data acquisition, processing and interpretation (2025)

Duration of Licences

Licences are normally valid from the date of issue to the following end of November. Where an existing licence is due to expire, the Principal Licensee may re-apply for the continuation of the same licence using a Licence Renewal Form. It is important to note that licences can be varied or revoked by the Secretary of State at any time, after giving not less than one week's notice to the Licensee.

Referees

Applicants are required to provide the names of two referees (plus an additional two referees for Nominated Archaeologists). Referees must be able to confirm the identity, experience and qualifications of the applicant and/or Nominated Archaeologist. The referee should also include comment on the applicant's adherence to the Rules annexed to the 2001 Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage. Through this process the Historic England can advise the Secretary of State that the applicant is sufficiently competent to be recommended a licence or to act as a Nominated Archaeologist.

To avoid unnecessary administration, references will only be sought when a new person applies for a licence, or when an existing Licensee applies for a licence that entails more intrusive work than on their existing or previous licence(s).

Referees should not be named without their permission and cannot be listed as an additional licensee on the application form. Referees must not be employees of Historic England.

Communication with Licensees

Historic England regularly issues information to Licensees and to Nominated Archaeologists through a Marine & Coastal Newsletter. This electronic newsletter provides information on

public policy, links to new initiatives and other relevant matters for Licensees to forward to their respective teams. Licensees are invited to provide material of interest to other project teams.

Historic England has also developed online access to site reports derived from Archaeological Contractors. These reports indicate some of the most recent research being undertaken on many of the designated wrecks.

It is also important for the Principal Licensee to maintain communication with their team members so that information is shared, all participants are kept informed and the results of research by any member are relayed effectively to everyone involved with the project

Protected Wreck Association

The Protected Wreck Association act as a forum to facilitate open communication, discussion, collaboration and co-operation within the community of avocational and professional archaeologists who strive to survey, monitor, excavate or research inland, foreshore, intertidal and underwater cultural heritage sites around the UK coastline which are protected under cultural heritage legislation or its equivalents in the devolved administrations of the UK.

The Protected Wreck Association:

- Raise awareness of protected sites, the legislation they are protected under, the threats they face and the work being undertaken on them.
- Help attract new members into the maritime archaeological community and the Association
- Encourage participation in the activities of the Association

Membership of the Protected Wreck Association is free and is open to all Licensees and their teams, as well as to other interested parties. The members only area of the website contains:

- A register of equipment held by various teams that can be shared for other members at a free or reduced rate
- Recording sheets that have been shared by other teams
- Site security information and guidance
- A number of useful documents including regulatory guidance and technical guides

The Protected Wreck Association is recognised as the official voice of the Licensees, Site Champions and their teams and allows Licensees and Site Champions formal recognition by heritage bodies and representation on relevant policy bodies.

The Protected Wreck Association provides a forum for all Licensees, Site Champions and team members to share ideas, views and raise issues, which can be formally expressed through the Committee. More information can be found at: www.protectedwrecks.org.uk

The Protected Wreck Association holds an annual meeting for Licensees, Site Champions, Nominated Archaeologists and team members. These meetings are usually attended by Historic England, Historic England's Archaeological Contractor and representatives of the other UK heritage agencies. These meetings provide a valuable opportunity to discuss views about work on designated wrecks and to make contact with other Licensees and Site Champions and their Nominated Archaeologists.

The Protected Wreck Association provide an email newsletter for members and welcome content from anyone working on historic wreck sites. In addition, a WhatsApp community enables members to stay in touch, share ideas and knowledge and support others.



Figure 18: Volunteers recording cannon on Chesil Beach protected wreck site. © Maritime Archaeology Trust

3. Planning a Project

This section offers guidance on how to plan your project. Applying for different types of licenced access will require different levels of planning. Please note that any work that disturbs the seabed or involves the recovery of artefacts will require a full Project Design to accompany the application form and additional licences may be required from the Marine Management Organisation and the Crown Estate.

Site ownership, location and administrative responsibility

Some historic shipwrecks have an identifiable owner, particularly if they were naval or East India Company vessels. Of the current Protected Wreck Sites in English waters, about a fifth are owned by the Ministry of Defence, while almost three- fifths do not currently have a recorded owner. The remaining sites are largely owned by private individuals or by Trusts. However, title to personal effects of people on board will normally lie with the beneficiaries of each individual's estate. Cargos may also have separate, identifiable owners. Under the Merchant Shipping Act 1995, ownership is usually vested in the Crown if the original owners cannot be traced. Licensees are encouraged to engage in early discussion with the owners of protected wreck sites, where known, at the initial stages of project planning.

It is important to recognise in England that the seabed within which a wreck lies is owned and administered; the administrator would normally be The Crown Estate, but it may also be the National Trust or another land-owning body. As a general rule, The Crown Estate encourages legitimate use of the foreshore, and this would probably extend to the seabed. Any intrusive investigations or the fixing of equipment to the seabed will usually require Crown Estate consent in addition to consent from other regulatory bodies. For work on protected wreck sites, Historic England holds a Crown Estate seabed survey licence which means Licensees do not need to apply for their own.

In addition, some sites are located in areas where navigational and administrative responsibility lies with a Harbour Authority. Such areas are clearly marked on Navigational Charts and local by-laws may be in force to ensure navigational safety. Licensees are expected to make contact with owners and appropriate authorities, where known.

Many protected wreck sites are located within Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) and other areas designated for natural environment considerations. Historic England has a duty to ensure that any activities it supports are compatible with the conservation objectives of MCZs.

Sources of information

There are many places you can find out information about previous work that has taken place on protected wreck sites including by speaking directly to Historic England.

Historic England holds information relating to the historic investigation of protected wreck sites, including annual licensee reports dating back to the early days of the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973 which are available via the Historic England Archive.

The results of Historic England grant funded projects can be accessed via the HE Research Reports database.

In addition, the Marine Historic Environment Record service is responsible for the curation of the Marine Historic Environment Record (MHER). The MHER dataset includes 37,000 shipwrecks, including approximately 6,000 wreck sites where physical remains have been identified on the seabed. The remaining 31,000 wrecks are known only from documentary sources, including historic newspapers as well as authoritative secondary sources such as Richard and Bridget Larn's Shipwreck Index of the British Isles. In addition to shipwrecks, there is also information on approximately 7,500 unidentified seabed obstructions, approximately 1,000 isolated findspots, as well as supporting information related to archaeological activities, people, organisations and bibliographic sources.

Intrusive and non-intrusive investigation

All activities undertaken on Protected Wreck Sites must comply with accepted standards of archaeological investigation. It is also recommended that projects are compatible with, and reflect, Historic England's Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment and its published policies and guidelines, as well as with the wider statutory and policy framework, inclusive of the UK Marine Policy Statement and Rules of 2001 UNESCO Convention, as set out below.

The investigation of archaeological sites can be separated into non-intrusive and intrusive activities. Non-intrusive activities include measured and geophysical survey, drawing, photography, note-taking or even simply visiting a site. Intrusive investigations can range from geotechnical (bore-hole) surveys, evaluation and excavation to other interventions, such as recovering artefacts exposed on the site, probing and sampling.

All intrusive investigations are destructive to a greater or lesser extent. Every time a part of a site is dismantled by excavation, the information in that area will no longer survive in its original form. With good archaeological techniques there will be a record kept of the sediments, the objects within them and the relationship between the finds and the matrix in which they are held. This 'preservation by record' is only of use if the records are detailed, well-ordered and stored in a suitable archive where others can have access to them in the future.

A site destroyed by excavation is irreplaceable. There are a finite number of historic wrecks in the sea and it is therefore important to consider whether excavation is necessary, or whether investigation should wait for some time in the future when, inevitably, new techniques may enable fuller investigation without disturbing the site. Many buried sites will last almost indefinitely if left undisturbed. Intrusive investigations are also more demanding in terms of finance, time, commitment, expertise, conservation and publication.

At the outset of a proposed marine project on a Protected Wreck Site where material is proposed for recovery, owners (where known) and project participants must be asked to sign a waiver recognising the requirement to report wreck material to the Receiver of Wreck foregoing any claim and foregoing any claim to non-wreck material. Also, discussion of the deposition of material must be undertaken to include the Receiver of Wreck as well as the potential receiving museum, although it is recognised that the final deposition of wreck material cannot be agreed until the legal process of establishing ownership has taken place.

Because of the potential complexity and the potential destruction of archaeological evidence, applications for intrusive work on Protected Wreck Sites have to be considered in detail before a licence is issued.

Thought should be given to the preliminary dissemination of results and data, where appropriate. Some organisations already publish assessment reports – usually online – so that useful or significant data is made available in advance of analysis (see Section 5 for more information).



Figure 19: Intrusive excavation such as this excavation on the *Rooswijk* will require a full Project Design. © #Rooswijk1740 Project

Dive Trails

Historic England's strategy for making the past part of the future includes fostering a dynamic heritage cycle of understanding, valuing, caring and enjoying the historic environment. Maritime archaeology is often by its very nature inaccessible, lying deep beneath the waves and out of sight of the majority of the population. This means that is it vital to engage audiences with maritime archaeology through specific education and outreach programmes designed to raise the profile of our shared submerged cultural heritage. By making the results of research widely available it is possible to increase knowledge and understanding, attract new visitors, and prompt new questions to ensure that the historic environment is placed high in the consciousness of future generations. Dive trails are one mechanism that enables this to be achieved.

If you are thinking about installing a dive trail on a protected wreck site, the first step is to discuss the proposal with Historic England.

Dive trails provide interpretation material and enhanced access by licensed visiting divers. Historic England benefits from increased visitors to these sites as divers are encouraged to share with us photos taken on their visits which can enable site monitoring (for Heritage at Risk

purposes) while the additional presence of licensed divers on site can act as a deterrent to anyone thinking of illegally accessing the wrecks.

There are additional surprising secondary benefits too; it has long been established that the heritage values of wreck sites can also provide social and economic benefits through being utilised as a learning or recreational resource or as a generator of tourism. Research commissioned by Historic England, and undertaken by the Nautical Archaeology Society, has also demonstrated that diver trails have local economic benefits too (over and above heritage values) which demonstrate the importance of underwater heritage and tourism as a contribution to the growth agenda – a fact recognised by all UK Governments. For example, the diver trail on the Protected Wreck *Coronation* (in the Plymouth area) was worth £42,557 to the local economy in 2012 alone. Likewise, the excavations on *Rooswijk* in 2017 and 2018 brought in nearly £50,000 to the local economy in the first year alone.

Case Study

The trail on the wreck of the *Coronation* is a good example of a successful dive trail. The Coronation was a Second Rate Ship of the Line launched in 1685, and wrecked off Penlee Point, Cornwall in 1691. There are two main areas of wreckage, known as the offshore and inshore sites, lying some 800 metres apart.

The topography of the offshore site comprises of rugged rock formations and sand-filled gullies and is the location of the dive trail. The site is in a general depth of 18 – 20m and has a wide variety of marine life. The site has seventeen cannon and three anchors within it which provide a visually impressive sight for visitors. One of the small artefacts found on the inshore site by Peter McBride, the site finder and former licensee, was a folded pewter plate. This plate bears the crest of Captain Charles Skelton, captain of the *Coronation* at the time she sank. This combined with the discovery of a large ships bell dated 1686 confirmed the site as that of the *Coronation*.

Funding from Historic England, as well as funding from the Maritime Archaeology Sea Trust (MAST), local charter boats and the project team, enabled the *Coronation* Wreck Project to plan and to install a dive trail on the *Coronation.*

Divers can book online which makes visiting simple and when visiting the site are provided with an online booklet preparing them for their visit as well as an underwater slate which guides them around ten numbered seabed stations that highlight interesting features. The dive guide also provides compass bearings and distances between stations – although on a good day visibility can sometimes mean you can see each station as you navigate each in turn.

The project team ask visiting divers to send in photographs and observations from their dive which helps them monitor the site and rapidly respond to any changes or concerns. They also ask for a small donation to assist in dive trail maintenance which helps ensure the trail is kept well maintained for future visitors. Since the trail was established in 2011 nearly 2,500 divers have visited and enjoyed the trail.

For non-divers the team have established a virtual trail which allows people to find out more without getting wet.

Find out more about the *Coronation* Wreck Project here: https://coronationwreck.org/

Working on the Coronation Wreck Project has been an all-consuming activity. From the initial dive to being the Principal Licensee has introduced me to a whole new circle of friends and like-minded individuals. My involvement has led to increasing my own personal skill set through attending various training courses and seminars and the exposure to both avocational and professional archaeologists and enthusiasts. With over 1000 dives attributed to the protected wreck site either as a maintainer of the Diver Trail or researcher

and surveyor the site never disappoints and always has something new to be experienced, be that environmentally, archaeology, or natural history based. Acting as a voluntary custodian of the site brings its challenges but the benefits in my opinion far exceed the challenges. Collaboration with other groups and the ability to share the story of the wreck site through various outreach programmes is time well spent and contributes to my individual wellbeing and hopefully that of others.

Ginge Crook, Principal Licensee of the *Coronation*

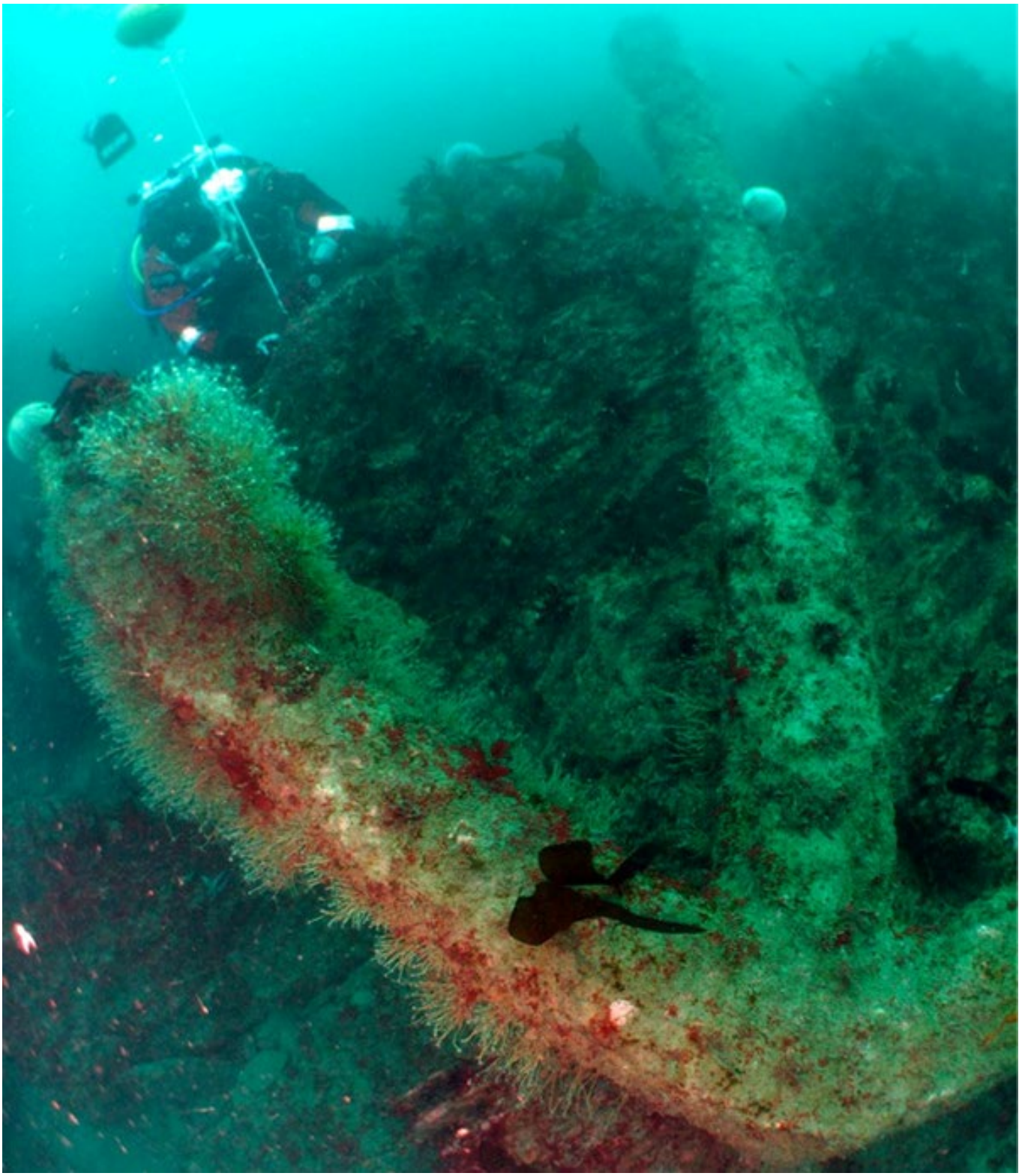


Figure 20: A diver explored the dive trail on the wreck of the *Coronation*. © Coronation Wreck Project

Fieldwork Safety

All activities taking place under licence should avoid unnecessary risks and must conform to recognised safe operational practices. It is therefore a condition of all licences that fieldwork is carried out to recognised safety standards. The Licensee has a responsibility to ensure that all authorised activities on a Protected Wreck Site are undertaken in a manner that is both safe and appropriate. In line with the main diving training agencies, Historic England will not endorse solo diving procedures.

Recreational diving organisations have published guidance on safe diving practices and guidance on Risk Assessment for diving which aim to place emphasis on the prevention of incidents while promoting safe diving practices to all divers. General advice on diving safety is also available from the British Diving Safety Group (BDSG).

For vessel safety, the Combined Diving Associations have produced *Guidelines for the Safe Operation of Member Club Dive Boats*. However, it must be remembered that Small Vessels operating commercially under the British Flag or in British waters must comply with the Merchant Shipping Regulations or an appropriate MCA Code of Practice.

As a minimum, it is also recommended that team members who work on vessels undertake Personal Survival Training or the RYA Small Craft Basic Sea Survival course and be familiar with appropriate emergency radio procedures. First Aid, Oxygen Administration and recognised Boat Handling qualifications should also be considered.

For those diving at work, the *Health and Safety at Work Act* 1974 forms the basis for much of the legislation covering health and safety at work.



Figure 21: All team members should conform to recognised safe operating practices. © Luke Mair

The main set of regulations that apply to diving are the *Diving at Work Regulations* 1997. These regulations cover all dives when one or more divers are at work and seek to control the hazards and risks associated with diving. Guidance offered by the *Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) Diving at Work Regulations* 1997 defines a diver as 'a person at work who dives'. This phrase covers divers who dive as part of their duties as an employee, but diving does not have to be the main activity of the employee.

All divers at work must hold an approved diving qualification suitable for the work they intend to do. A list of current approved qualifications can be obtained from the HSE; employed divers without a HSE approved qualification will not be considered competent to dive as a nominated member of a dive team.

The Health and Safety Executive has produced a set of five *Approved Codes of Practice* (ACOPs), one for each of the different sectors of the commercial diving industry. The ACOPs give advice on meeting the requirements of the *Diving at Work Regulations* 1997. Further information on diving at work, including free diving information sheets, is available from the HSE: www.hse.gov.uk/diving

The Scientific Diving Supervisory Committee (SDSC) is the recognised representative body for the Scientific and Archaeological sector with regard to the Diving at Work regulations. Further information on the SDSC is available online at: www.uk-sdsc.com

Environmental Considerations

The *Marine and Coastal Access Act* 2009 introduced a new system of marine management and established an independent body, the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) which regulates marine activities in the seas around England and Wales.

Through its regulatory activities, the MMO administers a marine licensing system that covers a broad range of activities, inclusive of projects directed at historic or archaeological sites, as described in section 66 of the 2009 Act.

Section 69 of the 2009 Act details how the MMO (as appropriate licensing authority) in determining an application must have regard to 'the need to protect the marine environment'. This is defined in section 115(2) as inclusive of "any site (including any site comprising, or comprising the remains of, any vessel, aircraft or marine structure) which is of historic or archaeological interest". Historic England therefore acknowledges that activities (as described in section 66 and not subject to any exemption order) directed at seabed historic or archaeological sites will require a licence from the MMO; this includes some activities on Protected Wreck Sites. If you are unsure if you require a marine licence you can check online using the MMO self-service tool, If a licence is required, a self-service marine licence is normally suitable for activities that are considered by the MMO to be low risk such as those directed to protected wreck sites. The MMO considers activities low risk if they're consistent in nature and extent. You can apply for a self-service marine licence online.

The MMO publish *Statutory Guidance on Marine Licensing Exempted Activities* online. Dive trails on protected and scheduled wrecks are currently exempt from licensing.

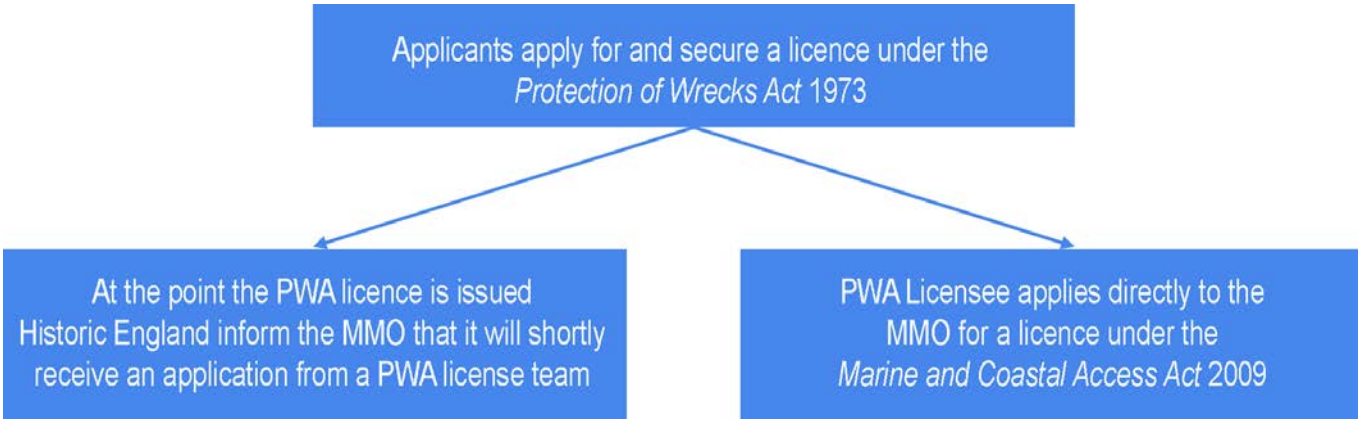


Figure 22: The process for applying for licences under both the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973 and the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009.

Historic England strongly advises you to consult with the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) before submitting a marine licence application for projects aimed at underwater and foreshore archaeology on Protected Wreck Sites.

All legal requirements to report 'wreck' as defined by the *Merchant Shipping Act* 1995 remain applicable in addition to securing any marine licence consent.

The *UK Marine Policy Statement*, jointly published by all UK Administrations in 2011, recognises the need to protect and manage marine cultural heritage according to its significance. In order for the MMO to determine the significance of seabed historic or archaeological sites, Historic England is the primary advisor to the MMO for all marine works requiring consent that affect the marine historic environment under the Marine Licensing system in England. Historic England's advice is given to the MMO:

- without prejudice
- within the framework of the Rules annexed to the 2001 *UNESCO Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage*
- within the framework of the *UK Marine Policy Statement*, and
- within the framework of *Conservation Principles*, which can be summarised as follows:
  - the historic environment is a shared resource
  - everyone should be able to participate in sustaining the historic environment
  - understanding the significance of places is vital
  - significant places should be managed to sustain their values
  - decisions about change must be
  - reasonable, transparent and consistent, and
  - documenting and learning from decisions is essential

If you are planning to undertake an archaeological project on a Protected Wreck Site that is likely to involve excavation and/or deposition, Historic England encourage you to contact the MMO before you submit a marine licence application.

The MMO will advise you on the level of pre-application preparation required, as it will depend on what you propose to do. For example, it might be sufficient to look at the main issues governing underwater and foreshore archaeology combined with the need to

address other issues as relevant to marine licensing (e.g. navigation safety, natural habitat protection etc) and they will help you to deal with those issues relevant to your application.

For more information please see Marine Licensing and the Historic Environment.

Additional consent is likely to be necessary in the case of sites within the jurisdiction of a Port or Harbour Authority, and the appropriate authority should be consulted.

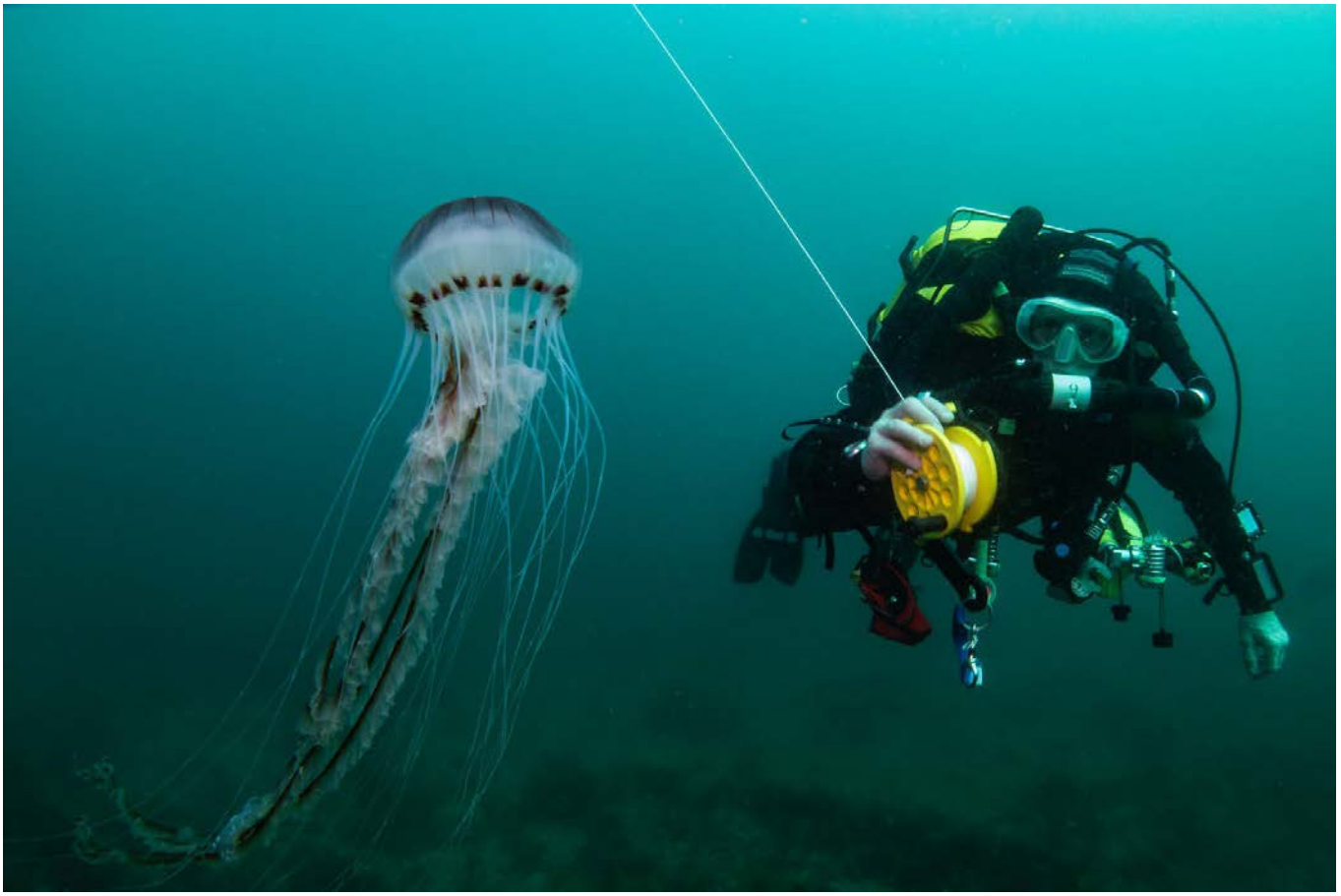


Figure 23: Protected Wreck Sites can be a home for marine wildlife. © Coronation Wreck Project / Dom Robinson

Funding and training

Although the *National Heritage Act* 2002 enables Historic England to grant-aid archaeological work below the low water mark, this opportunity must be balanced against the Historic England Corporate Plan which sets out how Historic England together with partners in the heritage sector will prioritise and deliver heritage protection. Historic England fund a broad range of activities which help people to protect and connect with England's heritage. The level of funding we offer depends on the type of activity and the needs of the individual project. There is no minimum or maximum amount you can apply for but the grants we offer are typically between £1,000 and £500,000. Our grant priorities are directly informed by our corporate plan. The grants we give play an important part in the journey towards our vision of an historic environment that everyone can connect with and learn from, and that we are proud to pass on to future generations.

To be eligible to apply for a grant your activity needs to meet one or more of our four grant priorities to:

1. Help more people to connect with, enjoy and benefit from the historic environment

2. Use heritage to improve civic pride, prosperity and wellbeing

3. Achieve a positive change and sustainable future for historic places including buildings, landscapes, archaeological sites and marine assets

4. Ensure heritage plays an important role in the fight to limit and manage the effects of climate change

We know there will be many worthwhile projects applying for our grants that will meet our priorities. However, our funding is limited, and the application process is competitive. Unfortunately, we cannot support all the applications we receive.

Because our grants use public funds, we carefully ensure those we award have maximum public value and align with our corporate plan. We may also consider the geographical spread of our grants across England.

We particularly invite applications for our places and people funding that address these areas of focus:

- **Need:** projects to serve the most in need communities, using English indices of deprivation as a tool to identify that

- **Partnership:** projects which support the resilience, innovation and growth of partners, building skills and confidence in communities

- **Growth:** projects which support getting vacant sites back into use, securing existing beneficial uses and promoting positive change in places

You can find out more about the type of things Historic England fund online here:

https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/grants/what-we-fund/

The first formal step in the application process is submitting an Expression of Interest, a simple online form that takes about 30 minutes to complete. Before you start, you'll need to set up a Historic England Account, if you do not already have an account. This is the same account you will use to apply for a protected wreck licence. It is quick and easy to do and will allow you to submit as many applications as you like.

Some of the key information we'll ask you about includes:

- Your project's aims
- The change and benefits you think your project will bring
- Roughly how much it will cost
- Roughly when your project will start and finish
- Why you think Historic England should support your project

Guidance on how to complete an Expression of Interest is available here:
https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/grants/apply/expression-of-interest/

If we think your project is something we would like to consider for funding, we will invite you to make a full application.

Other sources of project funding should also be considered. For example, grants are available from the British Academy (the national academy for the humanities and the

social sciences) to support archaeological fieldwork, together with related general and scientific post-excavation work.

Project funding can also be sought from the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF), which distributes a share of the income from the National Lottery to projects aimed at preserving and making accessible the nation's heritage. Each of the English regions has its own dedicated NLHF team and decision-making committees.

The sale of antiquities recovered from a Protected Wreck Site is not to be considered as a potential source of project funding. If a wreck is sufficiently important to warrant designation, then the material archive (finds) should be kept together in a publicly accessible place for the benefit of present and future generations. Licences will not be issued simply to allow the recovery of objects for dispersal.

Depending on the nature of a proposed project, appropriate training may be necessary for successful licence applications. The Department of Culture, Media and Sport attaches great importance to appropriate training in archaeological techniques and encourages applicants, Licensees and their teams to attend courses available from a number of organisations involved in promoting nautical archaeology, in the first instance.

Case Study

The *Hazardous* wreck site was found by members of SAA 308 in 1977. During the 1980's, artefacts and concretions were raised and examined proving to be late 17/18th century. Cannon were surveyed in situ and a full pre-disturbance plan of the wreck site was completed. It was established from the evidence collected and from historical records that the wreck was that of the warship *Hazardous*, wrecked in Bracklesham Bay, West Sussex in 1706. Built in the L'Orient shipyard, the ship started life in 1701 as the French Third Rate ship, *le Hazardeux* before subsequently being captured and commissioned into the English Navy.

The wreck was designated under the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973 in 1986 and the *Hazardous* Project Group, a small group of dedicated avocational divers assisted by an archaeological advisor, was subsequently formed to investigate, survey and catalogue the wreck.

Since finding the site the group have been instrumental in its ongoing management and have dedicated thousands of hours to diving the site including undertaking monitoring work and excavation to help address research questions. In addition, the group undertakes a considerable amount of work in support of their diving including maintaining equipment, processing artefacts and fulfilling regulatory conditions. Routine dive activity consists primarily of observing and recording the ever-changing state of the site and to take any action required to preserve archaeological integrity. The wreck sits in an area with a longshore drift that moves sediment along the shoreline. The effect, aside from deciding water clarity, is that sometimes the site gets buried and on other occasions scoured and new sections exposed. Winter storms too can have a very unpredictable and detrimental effect.

Preserving archaeological integrity includes the collection of exposed artefacts to ensure they are not lost to erosion. However, logging and lifting is just the start of a much longer process of identification, cataloguing, reporting, stabilizing, preserving and eventually setting them for public display.

The *Hazardous* team were one of the first to establish a dive trail scheme on a protected wreck site in England and in addition have been active publicising the work undertaken by the group including producing a booklet about their work.

The variety of work undertaken by the *Hazardous* Project Group illustrates the wide variety of skills required to contribute to a successful project.

UK divers are very fortunate in that our legislative environment permits controlled public access to its protected wreck sites, something totally forbidden in many parts of the world. For those volunteers privileged with the task and responsibility of actively working on those sites, it is beholden on us to do the best job we can to record and disseminate information before our sites are inevitably destroyed by nature.

It is a real honour to be entrusted with the role of principal licensee, having worked my way up from diver trail sign scrubber, through project logistics and increasing paperwork to take over when the previous licensee retired after 40 years on the project; it does become an all consuming passion!

The bureaucratic tasks of reporting, project management, project design, fundraising and "leading" an active project largely fall to the principal licensee (and can be both very time consuming and potentially a significant annual financial outlay), it is still very much a team effort to keep the project going, with a tight-knit and dedicated group of comrades from diverse backgrounds all giving time, expertise and funding to contribute.

Dave Johnston, Principal Licensee



Figure 24: The Licensee and *Hazardous* project team members planning a dive with new volunteers.

Producing a Project Design

The Project Design sets out the academic justification for the proposed project. It will usually be multi-authored, with specialists in each area contributing as required.

Project Designs are considered necessary for all licence applications for work that disturbs the seabed or involves the recovery of artefacts.

The more relevant information that is provided within a Project Design, the easier it is for Historic England and DCMS to understand exactly what is proposed. The Project Design should set out the plan for the fieldwork and include all standards to be met and all processes that will be used. Developing a Project Design is straightforward and advice can be sought from Historic England. Some types of licence require a Nominated Archaeologist to be part of the team, and it is important that they are involved in the preparation of the Project Design.

Thorough guidance for the preparation of a Project Design is given in Section 7 and in The MoRPHE Project Managers Guide. However, the following elements will always need to be addressed:

- Project background
- Aims and objectives
- Method statement
- Resources and programming
- Safety statement
- Data Management and Archiving

Data Management and Archiving

Data management and archiving should be considered at the outset of a project and plans for both should be clearly set out in the Project Design. The archive is not just the physical material such as artefacts but also includes digital data collected. For more about archiving see Section 5.

For complex projects, a Data Management Plan should be developed at the outset of the project. Thinking about managing your data at the outset of the project prevents many difficulties later on. ADAPt (The Archaeological Digital Archiving Protocol Toolkit) is a Historic England toolkit of templates, checklists, and pro-forma specifically designed to integrate archiving into the data creation process. ADAPt should be seen as a guide through the processes of managing data from the development of a data management plan, through adopting conventions for file naming and folder structures, to the addition of metadata.

4. During a Project

Fieldwork: data collection

Archaeological investigation encompasses an increasing variety of activities and techniques, with different types of projects having different means of collecting data and assessing value and significance and achieving increased understanding. However, each project will share a number of key stages: data collection and assessment, analysis, understanding, and dissemination.

As the value of the knowledge gained is entirely dependent on the quality of the fieldwork, it is important that every team member is able to competently undertake any task allocated to them. Similarly, it is essential that all team members understand their role in the project and are familiar with project documentation, such as the Project Design.

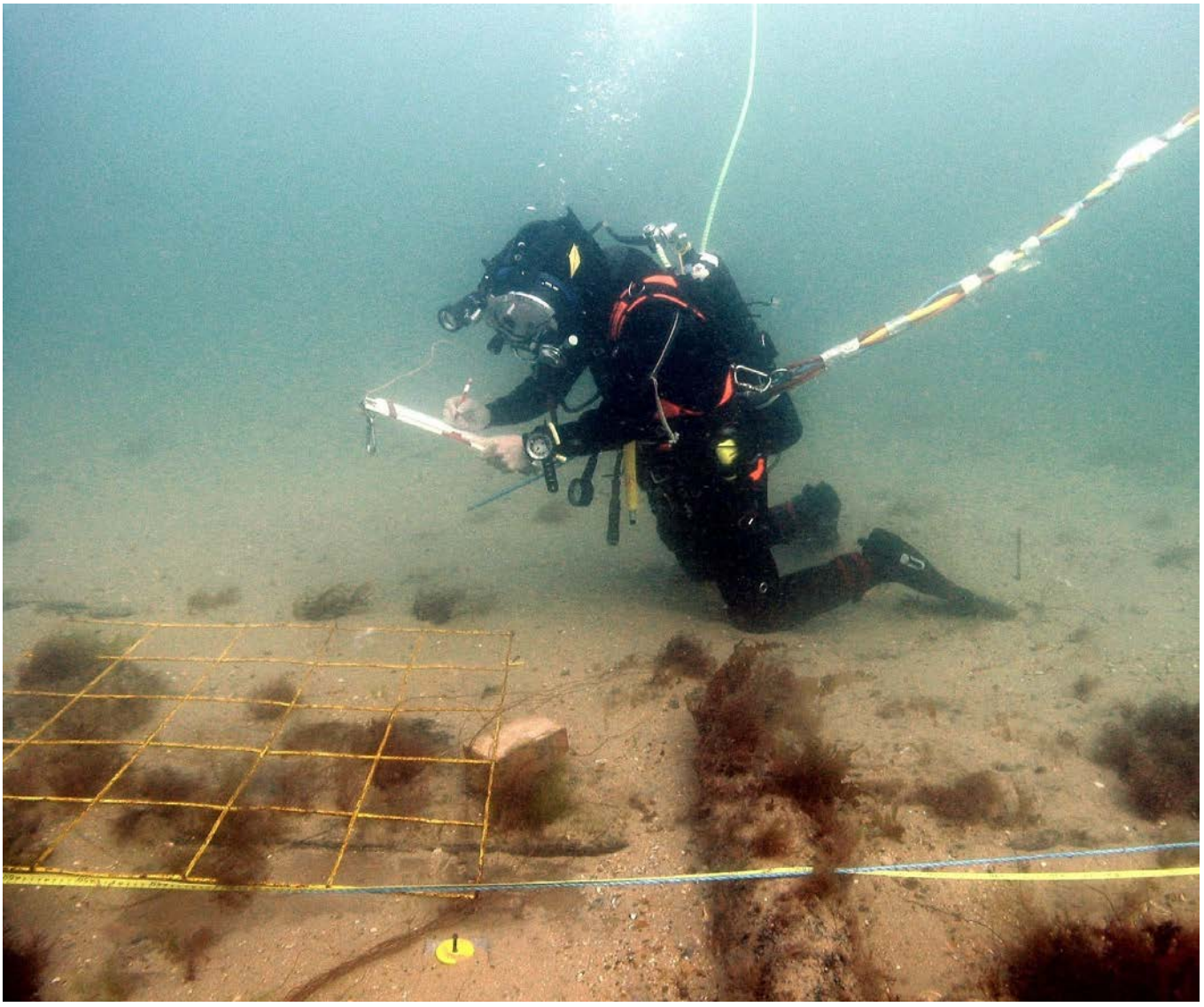


Figure 25: A diver records archaeology on the seabed. Wessex Archaeology, © Crown Copyright.



Figure 26: Recording finds during the post excavation process. © #Rooswijk1740

Dealing with finds

Surface recovery and excavation is likely to generate archaeological material (finds). This raises a number of important issues:

- A marine licence under the *Marine and Coastal Access Act* 2009 may be required for such recoveries
- There is a legal requirement to report the recovery of material to the Receiver of Wreck, under the *Merchant Shipping Act* 1995
- A retention and disposal strategy is required for recovered material. All retained material will require conservation
- Permanent deposition and curation of artefacts must be arranged with an accredited archive repository. The repository must agree the retention and disposal strategy
- Funding must be in place to ensure conservation, archive deposition and curation can be completed

Any wreck material recovered in UK territorial waters (which extends12 nautical miles from the coast), or outside the UK and brought within UK territorial waters, must by law be reported to the Receiver of Wreck within 28 days of removal (under section 236 of the *Merchant Shipping Act* 1995). Finders should assume that all recovered material has an owner.

The Principal Licensee is responsible for reporting wreck, maintaining records and liaising with the Receiver of Wreck, however they can delegate matters to another member of the licensed team.

The rights to items of wreck lie firstly with the owner. The Receiver will research ownership and seek archaeological advice as to the identity, age and importance of historic finds. If no owner is found within a year, the Crown becomes the owner of finds from UK territorial waters and Receiver will decide how these items will be dealt with. In cases of historically or archaeologically important material, such as that recovered from Protected Wreck Sites, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency has a policy of placing such material in registered repositories where the public can access them.

It should be noted that Historic England requires Licensees to waive their rights to a salvage award (under the Merchant Shipping Act 1995) in favour of an appropriate museum in recognition of the historic, artistic or archaeological importance of the site, consistent with advice given in Our Portable Past.

Conservation advice should be sought before any recovery takes place. Guidance on caring for a range of objects and materials is also available from the Institute of Conservation, as is the Conservation Register: a service that provides information on accredited conservator-restorers in the UK. Guidance may also be sought from Historic England's Archaeological Conservation Department. Published guidance from Historic England includes:

Waterlogged Organic Artefacts: Guidelines on their recovery, analysis and conservation (2018)

Waterlogged Wood: Guidelines on the recording, sampling and conservation of waterlogged wood (2025)

In addition, the online First Aid for Finds guide to the identification and preservation of archaeological materials and the Society for Museum Archaeology (SMA) Material Fact sheet on Waterlogged Materials may be of use.

The necessary conservation facilities need to be planned in advance of any licence application involving artefact recovery and the expertise of a recognised conservation laboratory or an accredited conservator will need to be arranged and confirmed by them in writing. Early engagement with the intended archive repository should also be made to agree both the retention and disposal strategy and conservation strategy. Permission must be obtained from the Receiver of Wreck if reported objects held on indemnity to the Receiver, are moved away from the address registered on the report form, even temporarily. Those holding wreck material on indemnity to the Receiver must also ensure that objects are not altered and do not deteriorate within this time. It is extremely important to manage and control the records relating to the site and its objects carefully and to ensure that records are made available in recognised, publicly accessible archive; in England this is usually with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS).



Figure 27: Archaeological excavations can generate significant finds that require immediate conservation treatment such as this chest containing thimbles from the *Rooswijk*. © #Rooswijk1740 project

With regard to recovered objects, all Licensees are required to do the following:

Keep it wet ➔ Waterlogged material must not be allowed to dry out. Irreversible loss will occur that may render the artefact worthless for future study.

Keep it dark ➔ Reduced light levels or ideally, dark storage will hinder microbiological growth and keep temperatures down.

Keep it cool ➔ Reduced temperatures will slow decay rates down and hinder microbiological growth. Fridges, cool boxes or cooling porta-cabins are suitable. Freezing is only recommended as a last resort and in consultation with a conservator. Artefacts will suffer physical damage if they are not stored correctly and subjected to uncontrolled freeze-thaw cycles over the winter.

Monitor it ➔ Routinely monitor the condition of the artefacts, packaging and the water levels. Establish procedures to respond if the condition deteriorates including informing project manager, conservator and finds specialist.

Finding a Museum or other Archive Repository

The Project Design should clearly identify the destination for finds and samples recovered from a site, as well as the digital and paper archive. Preference should be given to local Museums or Museums holding other collections from the site.

The Society of Museum Archaeology have produced an interactive map designed to provide easy access to details of organisations that are accepting archaeological archives

Case Study

The work of the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Maritime Archaeology Society (CISMAS) on *Colossus* is an excellent example of a volunteer group undertaking site monitoring over multiple years whilst providing opportunities for public access. CISMAS was formed in 2004 to promote maritime archaeology in Cornwall and the Scillies and to encourage community archaeology. Since then, CISMAS has undertaken over twenty projects on sixteen different sites including *Colossus*. Comprehensive reports have been produced for all their projects and can be downloaded from their website.

HMS *Colossus* was a 74-gun warship built in 1787 by a private shipyard at Gravesend and wrecked at Scilly in 1798. The 74-gun warships were among the most successful of the period. They were c. 51 m (170 feet) in length and had a crew of 600. In December 1798 *Colossus* was returning to England for a refit with a remarkable cargo including eight crates of Greek antiquities, wounded sailors from Nelson's victory at the battle of the Nile and the body of a dead admiral. Why was a British warship carrying ancient Greek antiquities? Because *Colossus* was in Naples during Nelson's 40th birthday celebrations organised by Nelson's mistress Emma Hamilton. The Greek pots belonged to Emma's husband Sir William Hamilton, who wanted to have his valuable collection transported to England. Little did he suspect that they would soon be lying on the seabed in the Isles of Scilly.

While sheltering from a gale in St Mary's Roads the anchor cable parted and *Colossus* was driven aground to the south of Samson. All but one member of the crew were taken off safely, before the ship turned onto its beam ends and proceeded to break up. The stern section of the *Colossus* was designated in 2001 and the site includes a large section of ship structure, cannon and - among other items - muskets, mizzen chains and a rudder gudgeon.

Since 2001 the team have undertaken annual surveys of the site as well as specific projects which have included stabilisation trials, a survey of the wider debris trail, sediment monitoring and a small-scale excavation to address research questions. In addition, the team are working with Historic England on a long-term project using objects recovered from the site in reburial trials that will span fifty years.



Figure 28: A diver exploring the dive trail on *Colossus*. © CISMAS

There is still a large amount to see on the site and many small objects have been deliberately left on the seabed for visiting divers to enjoy. It was realised that this would make a site that would be of great interest to visiting divers and funding from Historic England enabled CISMAS to plan and install a dive trail on *Colossus*. The team have also produced a virtual trail which allows access to the site by non-divers.

When CISMAS was originally formed, the majority of our volunteers came from a single dive club in west Cornwall. Many of these divers are still active in CISMAS today, but we now also have active members from outside Cornwall. Training has always been an important feature of our projects; this is particularly important in an organisation composed entirely of volunteers. We originally enabled all our volunteers to undertake the NAS training courses, but more recently we have switched to delivering 'in house' training, which is more targeted and aims to prepare volunteers for specific projects.

CISMAS usually has more applicants than places for our projects. We have funded several recent projects by selling equipment, but that source of revenue is now exhausted. Our most important asset is our volunteers, and the archaeological skills they have gained over two decades of CISMAS projects. What we need now is the opportunity to continue projects on Colossus long enough to pass those skills on to the next generation.

Kevin Camidge, CISMAS and Principal Licensee of *Colossus*

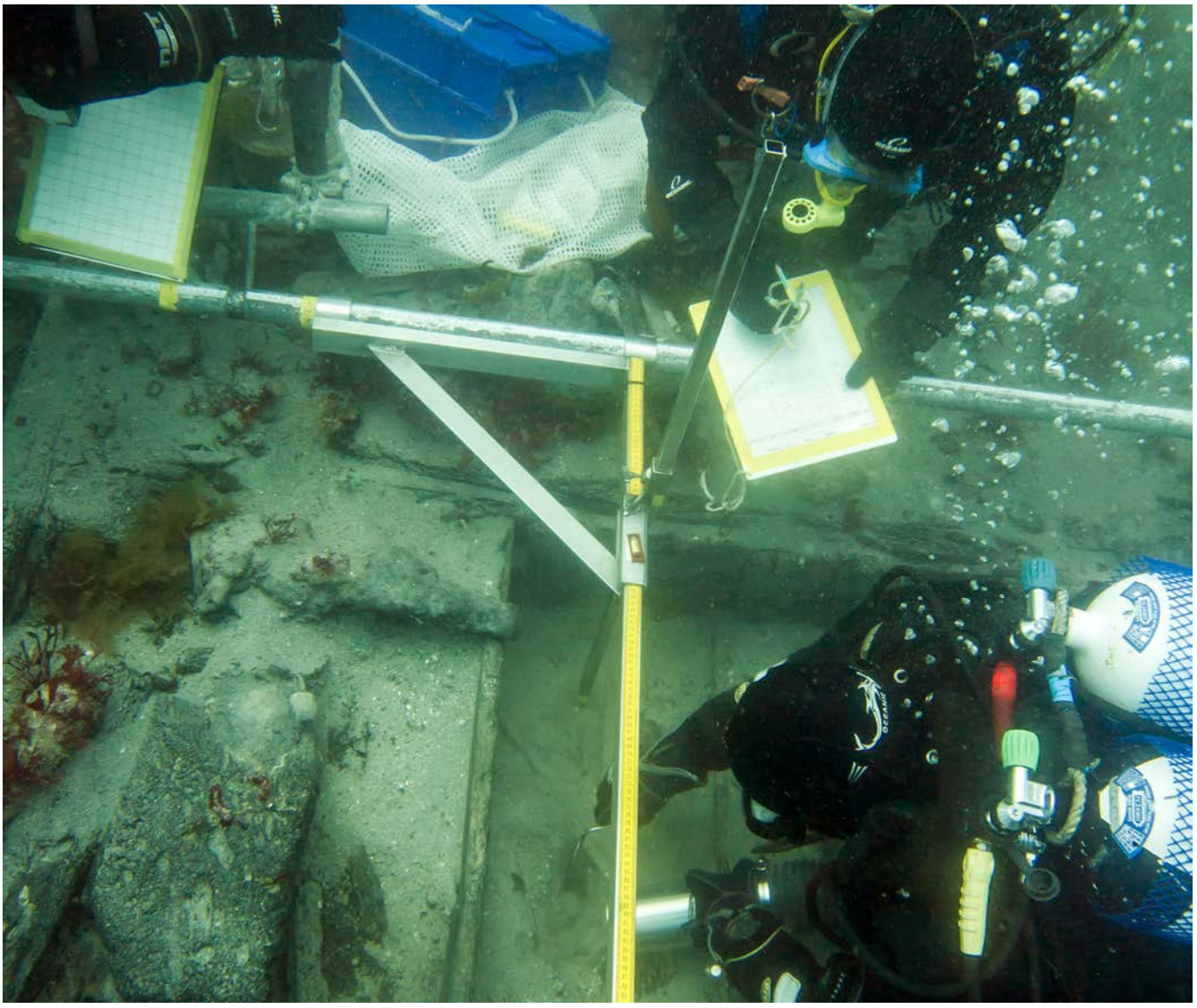


Figure 29: CISMAS members excavate the wreck of HMS *Colossus*. © CISMAS.

Environmental archaeology

For Protected Wreck Sites, sampling to recover environmental materials is usually aimed at understanding the vessel (date, construction, re- fit, and repair), the nature of life on board (cargo and supplies), and the post-wreck environment. Different sampling strategies will be required to fulfil these aims: for example, wood samples for dendrochronology and wood analysis, samples from deposits within the vessel or objects from it, or samples for geoarchaeological analysis from within and around the vessel. As sampling usually requires an excavation licence, it needs to be detailed in a Project Design and the following points should be addressed:

- the reason for sampling
- the size, likely number and location of samples required
- the level of disturbance involved
- the sampling procedure
- the resources and equipment needed for processing
- the nature of the analysis proposed
- details of the institution or individuals who have agreed to carry out the analysis, together with their written acknowledgement, and the possible impact of the disturbance on the site or its surrounding environment
- Permission should be sought from the Receiver of Wreck prior any destructive analysis

Further advice in is available from Historic England's Environmental Studies team and Science Advisors. For further information on environmental archaeology, geoarchaeology and dendrochronology see the following publications:

Environmental Archaeology: a guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling to post-excavation (2011)

Dendrochronology: guidelines on producing and interpreting dendrochronological dates (1998)

Geoarchaeology: using earth sciences to understand the archaeological record (2015)



Figure 30: Divers recovering samples from the Salcombe Cannon protected wreck site. © MSDS Marine / Flora Tomlinson Pilley

Heritage Crime

Under the terms of the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973, it is a criminal offence to do any of the following in a designated area without a licence granted by the appropriate Secretary of State:

- tamper with, damage or remove any part of a vessel lying wrecked on or in the seabed or any object formerly contained in such a vessel
- carry out diving or salvage operations directed to the exploration of any wreck or to removing objects from it or from the seabed, or use equipment constructed or adapted for any purpose of diving or salvage operations, and
- deposit, so as to fall and lie abandoned on the seabed, anything that, if it were to fall on the site of a wreck (whether it so falls or not), would wholly or partly obliterate the site or obstruct access to it, or damage any part of the wreck

It is also an offence to permit any of these things to be done by others in a restricted area, other than under the authority of such a licence. Where a person is authorised by a licence to access the site, it is an offence for any other person to obstruct them, or cause or permit them to be obstructed, in doing anything that is authorised by the licence.

If you see anything suspicious you should note:

- Day, date, time and place
- Vessel, number of suspects and descriptions (with photographs and video if possible)
- If artefacts are recovered record the details if you can
- Report these details as detailed below

Do not endanger yourself whilst trying to obtain crime details.

Bathing, angling and navigation are permitted within a restricted area provided there is no likelihood of, or intention to, damage the wreck or obstruct work on it. Anchoring on the site is only permitted for licensed activities or in cases of maritime distress. In some cases the presence of a site is indicated by a buoy, usually yellow and inscribed ‘Protected Wreck’. Suitably placed notices sometimes indicate sites close to the shore. Some are warning signs; and others are public information notices giving a brief explanation of why the wreck is important and a description of the site.

Any suspicion of unauthorised access to a Protected Wreck Site should be reported to the relevant local Police Service, Maritime and Coastguard Agency and Historic England.

You should call 999 and choose police or coastguard when a crime is in progress or someone suspected of a crime is nearby and state home office recording code – 98/65 (99 other notifiable offence). State *‘I suspect that a heritage crime is being committed on a protected heritage site and Section 1 of the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973 legislation has been broken’*, followed by details.

Where you believe that an offence may have been committed and the suspect is no longer at the scene you should call the Police using the national non-emergency number 101.

If you have information about a crime relating to a protected wreck but you do not wish to be a witness, you can pass on your information to Crimestoppers by calling 0800 555 111. The service is confidential, and you will not be asked for your name or personal details.

All reports of unauthorised access will be fully investigated.



Figure 31: Site security champions are supported with a range of resources available on the members area of the Protected wreck Association website and are seen as an important part of tackling heritage crime. © MSDS Marine / Ollie Pitts

All Protected Wreck Sites are listed in an annual Admiralty Notice to Mariners. New, or amended, designations are also included in the weekly Notices to Mariners as they are announced. Further, the locations of restricted areas are readily available as they are clearly marked and annotated on Admiralty Charts, the Government's Multi-Agency Geographic Information system and available in a range of formats and APIs from Historic England's Open Data Hub. In addition, Statutory Instruments setting out the designation details of individual sites are available from the National Archives on behalf of HM Government.

Reducing Crime

A partnership project between the Protected Wreck Association and MSDS Marine, funded by Historic England has created a toolkit to champion, support and enable the Licensees to reduce the number of marine heritage assets that are at risk of heritage crime. Resources include a Site Security Document guide and template and a risk assessment calculator. These can be found in the members area of the Protected Wreck Association website.

A Site Security Document is an invaluable tool in the long-term management of historic sites. The security of a site (be it on land or underwater) is how we safeguard that site for future generations. The process of assessing how secure a site is from illegal access is in itself a safeguarding process as this will inevitably spark ideas on a sites security which can then be implemented. It is encouraged that the team on each site appoints a Site Security Champion to fill in the Site Security forms and to become a key contact with local enforcement officers. Site Security Champions are encouraged to establish relationships with marine enforcement

agencies (such as local Coastguard officers, Marine Police Units and Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority officers) in order to facilitate and promote site security. National Coastwatch Institutions should also be contacted to assist with the recognition of authorised vessels and the identification of unauthorised sea-users. In all cases, Historic England can advise on contact details upon request.

The National Coastwatch Institution In (NCI) are a tremendous asset in the fight against Heritage Crime. There are currently 56 NCI stations around the UK. The NCI watch keepers provide an extra set of eyes and ears along the coast, monitoring radio channels and providing a listening watch in poor visibility. The NCI work closely with the Coastguard and can be contacted on marine radio VHF Channel 65. Not all protected wrecks will be covered by an NCI station, but it is part of the role of the Site Security Champion to ascertain if their wreck site is and if so to build a relationship with that NCI Station.

The toolkit includes a supporting Wreck Site Security Risk Calculator. The Microsoft Excel based calculator is simple and straight forward to complete and at the end produces a report which should be attached to the completed Site Security Document before circulation to all stakeholders including Historic England. The Wreck Site Security Risk Calculator Report states the level of risk the site is at from Heritage Crime. It will describe the nature of this risk and will give quick win opportunities to Licensees to easily improve site security and thus the sites risk level. By assessing the wreck sites security and looking at the sites as a whole, resources and funding can be allocated to those most in need. This in turn will reduce the number of marine heritage assets that are at risk and aid Historic England in the management of the sites designated under the PWA 1973.



Figure 32: The role of a Site Security Champion can include liaising with Police and other enforcement agencies to ensure everyone knows what to do if a Heritage Crime occurs. © MSDS Marine.

Historic England, alongside the University of Plymouth, have produced a Common Enforcement Manual (CEM). The CEM is a tool for law enforcement authorities operating at sea within the English region, to inform them of the most appropriate actions to take at marine

heritage crime incidents. The CEM provides a consistent set of operating procedures that can be followed by any law enforcement authority in the UK to ensure efficiency of evidence gathering and provides quick access to single points of contact in the event that an incident has taken place.

Simple steps including placing tags on fishing pots that have been placed within designated areas and underwater and land-based signage have been shown to have great effect in reducing repeated offences. In addition, technology is helping protect sites. Historic England have been working with MSDS Marine to develop new forensic marking solutions that will deter potential thefts and provide law enforcement agencies with the ability to accurately identify the provenance of objects or artefacts that have been recovered as part of a criminal investigation or process of due diligence. The forensic marker is a traceable product (used to mark lead on church roofs on land) that helps reduce the risk of theft, as artefacts can be traced back to a particular site. This is invaluable evidence in court and a real game changer for protecting marine heritage assets. The Maritime Archaeology Sea Trust (MAST) have joined forces with OceanMind, a not-for-profit organisation which specialises in monitoring of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing for governments and the private sector, to harness the growing capabilities of the space sector. Together they have launched the international Maritime Observatory to protect global underwater cultural heritage. The Observatory uses a combination of satellites, artificial and human intelligence to study and detect such illegal activity developing patterns to promote the evolution of a predictive intelligence tool.

The Alliance to Reduce Crime Against Heritage (ARCH) is a voluntary national network which will take forward initiatives to tackle heritage crime and galvanise local action as part of the Heritage Crime Programme. The overriding objective of the group is to reduce the amount of crime that causes damage to or interferes with the enjoyment of heritage assets in England. Members of ARCH have a shared interest in preventing and seeing effective enforcement of heritage crime. Membership of the group is free and open to all organisations and groups that have an interest in preventing and enforcing heritage crime; Licensees and their teams are strongly encouraged to become members.



Figure 33: Partnership working with a range of stakeholders including enforcement agencies, archaeologists and volunteers is key to tackling heritage crime. © MSDS Marine

If you are interested in finding out more about the Heritage Crime Programme, or becoming a member of ARCH, please contact Historic England's Customer Services Department: customers@HistoricEngland.org.uk

No one solution in isolation can protect sites from Heritage Crime but bringing together a range of tools maximises impact and supports enforcement authorities.



Figure 34: New technologies are helping reduce the threat of heritage crime on protected wreck sites including the development of underwater forensic marking solutions. © MSDS Marine.

Monitoring and site restitution

It is accepted that all wreck sites are vulnerable simply because of the nature of their environment. Licensees should therefore monitor and record the effect that authorised activities have on the stability of sites and should seek advice if erosion is observed or deterioration of exposed material begins to accelerate.

Historic England has developed a risk assessment methodology in order to both identify and manage risks to historic wreck sites which includes a single-page checklist which Licensees can use to record annual change to individual sites.

Any equipment that the Licensee wishes to deploy on a Protected Wreck Site should be described, before its use, in the licence application or annual Licensee's report. Licensees

should be prepared to remove unwanted material at the end of any period of organised work especially if it is uncertain whether work will take place the following season. Consideration should be given to leaving survey datums in place to aid future surveys and allow site monitoring.

Material abandoned on Protected Wreck Sites in the past includes scaffold poles from surveys and evaluation trenches; steel diver-support structures and platforms; sheet steel piling; airlift manifolds and air-lines; survey and mooring ropes/lines; concrete and iron weights used for survey points or moorings and steel rods used as datum points. Such debris can cause scouring, trap drifting debris, accelerate erosion and affect the viability of any site stabilisation measures.

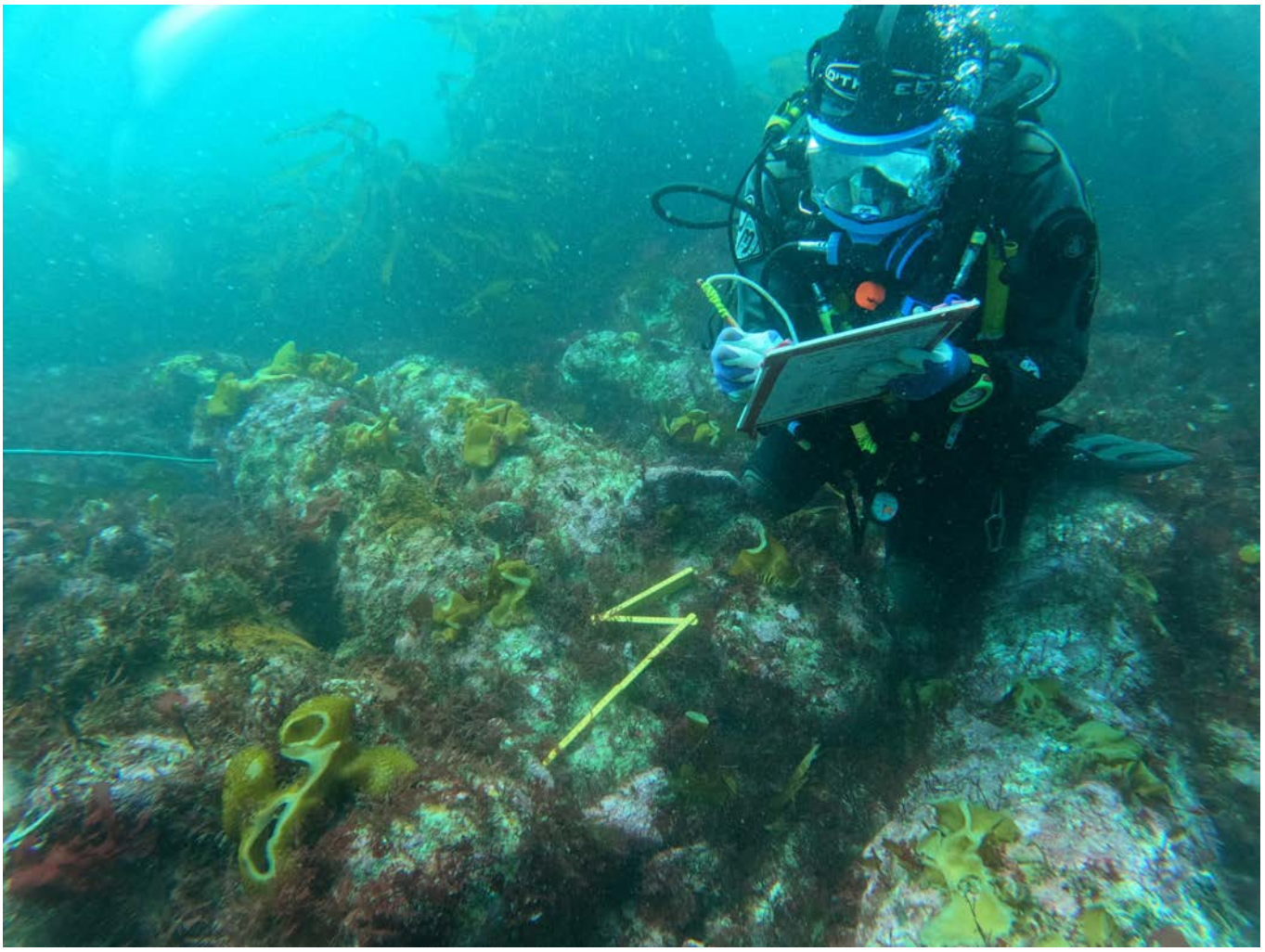


Figure 35: A diver monitors a site and records changes. © Wessex Archaeology

5. Reporting, Archiving and Dissemination

Submitting Licensee reports

In order for a Protected Wreck Site to be managed in accordance with its significance, it is essential that the licensing authority receives accurate reports on authorised activities. Licensees are therefore required to submit a report, signed by the Licensee and the Nominated Archaeologist (where appropriate), to Historic England by the date specified in the licence conditions. These reports are discussed further in Section 7. Licensees should be aware that annual reports form part of the public archive of each site.

Licensees are expected to formally report any instances of unauthorised access to Protected Wreck Sites to both the local Constabulary and Historic England.

It is a condition of all licences that a report is submitted to Historic England and the Historic England Archive. The purpose of the report is to keep Historic England and DCMS informed about what is happening on the sites for which they have a responsibility. It also gives them information that can inform site management decisions.

Licences will not be renewed if a Licensee fails to submit a report.

Reports should contain information about the quality and outcomes of the project and requirements will vary between, for example, a licence issued to allow a site visit and a licence issued to undertake a major research-based excavation. A guide to a suggested format is set out in Section 7.

The Nominated Archaeologist, where there is one, must countersign all reports. If the licence is to be renewed the report should also state what your intentions are, although a revised Project Design will be necessary if a new research question or a new project is to be pursued. If an archaeologist is going to be required for the next phase of work, then their willingness to collaborate must be indicated by their signature on the application.

The investigation of Protected Wreck Sites can reveal significant information and licences are issued on the understanding that resulting information will be made available to others (forming part of the public archive for the site). This requirement can be achieved in a variety of ways, including short reports in a newsletter, published conference proceedings, full articles in academic journals, or even in separate publications.

A standard condition of licences requires that a report of the investigation be submitted to Historic England. The report will be lodged with the Historic England Archive and may be made available to the wider community online through the Historic England website. Licensees and their archaeologists are also encouraged to produce popular accounts of their work that might appeal to a wider audience. Advice on how to set about publishing can be obtained from Historic England.



Figure 36: The archive includes both physical and digital items including records, artefacts and samples.

The project archive

All archaeological investigations will generate an archive, which will generally consist of the paper, artefact and environmental archive and the evaluation report. These materials should be submitted to the relevant archive repository to an agreed timetable, as identified in the Project Design. In addition, a summary of the work must be submitted to OASIS. OASIS is an online reporting form enabling archaeological and heritage practitioners to provide information about their investigations to regional Historic Environment Record (HERs) and respective national heritage organisations. As well as being an information gathering tool, researchers may share reports with HERs for public release in the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) Library. These steps are required of all evaluations, even if the results are negative or unlikely to lead to subsequent work.

Original drawings, photographs and measurements, together with details of research and geophysical survey data, form the essential part of the site archive. It is important to keep all information about the site in one place and store it in an orderly way. The archive must be accessible to the Nominated Archaeologist and, ideally, to all the team members. At the end of the project a copy of the archive must be offered to a suitable public repository, with a view to its being made publicly available. Suitable repositories include the Historic Environment Record (HER) of the local county or the national Marine Historic Environment Record (MHER). A catalogue of the contents of a site archive should be made available to the appropriate heritage agency. Where copyright is retained by the Licensee in respect of any information relating to the site, the Licensee will normally be expected to authorise the use of that information by others for non-commercial use.

Further information on archives is given in Archaeological Archives: a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation (Brown 2011). Archive deposition must be planned as part of the dissemination strategy, including the deposition of electronic datasets with an appropriate digital archiving repository, such as the Archaeology Data Service (ADS). The CIfA

Dig Digital Toolkit should be consulted for further advice on digital archiving. The Dig Digital guidance aims to provide support for those creating digital data in archaeology, helping archaeologists manage digital data throughout projects and enabling the production of complete, ordered and stable archives that meet professional standards. Data repository bodies should be consulted for guidance on data structure, formatting, and limitations prior to project completion and data submission.

Geophysical data should be archived with the appropriate MEDIN Data Archive Centre (DAC). The MEDIN portal allows users to find information on marine datasets held at the DACs. Further information on depositing geophysical data is available in Marine Geophysics: Data Acquisition, Processing and Interpretation Guidance Notes (2nd Edition).

Publication

Many Licensees expand their reports to produce publications intended for a wider audience. You do not have to be a formally trained archaeologist to have something published about a site. If it is clearly written, well-illustrated and brings interesting facts to light, then it stands a good chance of being accepted for publication. Letting people know about the work being carried out on Protected Wreck Sites is an important part of maritime archaeology, and it can be as rewarding as the archaeological investigations of the site itself and the associated historical research.

The method of publication can be as a short report in a newsletter, a full article in a journal or a separate publication in its own right. Licensees and their archaeologists are also encouraged to produce popular accounts of the work that might appeal to a wider audience. Alternative forms of dissemination such as websites, public lectures or presentations are also encouraged.

Licensees are requested to submit an annual summary report of archaeological work undertaken to a relevant county archaeological journal.



Figure 37: All projects generate an archive and when a project lasts over many years the archive can be considerable as was the case with the archive from the South West Maritime Archaeology Group. © SWMAG

Case Study

Access to a Protected Wreck site is restricted to those who hold a licence granted by the Secretary of State. Volunteers play an essential role in the care of protected shipwrecks. The volunteer Licensees are the eyes and ears on the ground. The presence of an active group of divers is a deterrent to those who may be tempted to interfere with the site or remove artefacts without authorisation. Locally based licensees are also best placed to investigate sites at short notice. This is beneficial as it allows for the rapid recording which may need to take place, such as when storm events expose previously buried areas of archaeology.

Since the discovery of the Erme Estuary, Erme Ingot, Salcombe Cannon and Moor Sands sites, the South West Maritime Archaeology Group (SWMAG), as Licensees for the sites, have undertaken all their investigations in an exemplary manner, with recording undertaken to the highest standard and all recovered artefacts deposited with the British Museum. The group were the first to establish a site security protocol and assisted in the role out of site security guidance for other sites. They have received two BSAC Duke of Edinburgh awards for their work.

In recent years SWMAG have been working to ensure the knowledge and skills they have gained over the past 35 years is passed on to a new generation. They recognised it was vital to ensure that a new generation of divers and volunteers came forward to become the custodians of these nationally important sites. The project has been a resounding success. New people responded to the call for volunteers, and following fieldwork, desk-based research, training activities and outreach events, have become fully embedded within the team. The team were awarded the 2025 Marsh Community Archaeology Project of the Year Award for this work.

In addition, SWMAG have been addressing their legacy and starting to undertake deposition of the archive relating to the sites on which they have worked. The first step was a rapid audit of the archive to establish its extent, where it is currently located and how it is stored and accessed. The archive will ultimately undergo a selection appraisal before some elements are digitised and deposited with the Archaeology Data Service.

The work of SWMAG taking an active approach to their archiving and knowledge transfer to the next generation has ensured that the wreck sites will continue to be cared for future generations and has provided a model for how other Licensee groups around the UK can ensure a successful transition and ensure a continuing legacy as long-standing Licensees retire.

It was when a spear fisherman spotted cannon in the seabed of the Erme Estuary in 1989 that our lives changed and diving became serious. Archaeological qualifications had to be gained, individual hidden skills emerged and a group of divers morphed into a proficient team of amateur archaeologists working together for over 35 years with Historic England and the British Museum.

It has enriched my life though new friendships and enhanced my wellbeing without a doubt! Friendships are everlasting and who else gets to go to Buckingham Palace four times to meet the Duke, learns so much about history and gets to give over 250 talks about our discoveries?

Ron Howell, SWMAG



Figure 38: SWMAG members sharing their knowledge about the site and equipment with the next generation of divers. © MSDS Marine.

6. Where to get advice

Anyone may apply for a historic wreck site to be designated under the terms of the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973; application forms can be filled in online on Historic England's website:

https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/planning/consents/protected-wreck-sites/applying-for-licensing/

A copy of the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973 can be obtained from www.legislation.gov.uk.

Further information on Protected Wreck Sites and England's Maritime Archaeology is available from the Historic England website:

http://historicengland.org.uk/advice/planning/consents/protected-wreck-sites/



Figure 39: The *#PWA50: Diving into History* film features a number of protected wreck sites and licensed teams and tells the story of fifty years of work on these nationally significant sites. © MSDS Marine

Useful resources

In 2023, to celebrate fifty years of Protected Wreck sites and the role volunteers have played in their management Historic England commissioned a short film that reveals some of the history of work undertaken on protected wreck sites. The film can be viewed online here.

The Protected Wreck Association maintain a series of regional YouTube playlists that bring together online video content relating to protected wreck sites into one place.

Historic England have provided the Nautical Archaeology Society with funding to create a series of short, jargon-free, bite sized training videos. The videos are free to access and aimed at supporting existing licensees as well as reaching new areas of the recreational diving community. The online training sessions are now on YouTube. Topics include:

- An introduction to the designation and licence application process
- Accessing MoD wrecks
- Site security and preventing heritage crime
- Writing project proposals and applying for funding
- Monitoring wrecks for climate change indicators
- Marine geophysics
- Depositing archives and working with Museums and a conservator
- Marine licensing and the Merchant Shipping Act
- Wreck research and identification
- Human remains

For more in depth guidance, and for a general introduction to maritime archaeology, Historic England have funded the development of Nautical Archaeology Society eLearning courses that are available online.

The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) have produced a number of toolkits that may be helpful when planning a project. Toolkits of particular interest include:

- Toolkit for managing digital data (Dig Digital)
- Toolkit for public engagement
- Toolkit for recording archaeological material
- Toolkit for finds: Pottery
- Toolkit for selecting archaeological archives

Portland Museum have created a guide to assist people undertaking cataloguing and digital recording. The guide, *Diving into the Digital Archives of the Earl of Abergavenny,* is a useful starting point for anyone considering making finds more accessible.



Figure 40: Public engagement is an important part of Protected Wreck site engagement and can range from simple low tech engagement through to high tech experiences. The Mary Rose Trust 4D experience is one high profile way that new audiences can experience sites without getting wet. The CIfA Toolkit for public engagement can give ideas for getting started. © Mary Rose Trust / Harvey Mills

References and further reading

Brown, D 2011 Archaeological Archives: a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation. Reading: Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

Bowens, A, et al (eds) 2008 Underwater Archaeology: the NAS Guide to Principles and Practice. Oxford: Wiley Blackwell

Campbell, G, Moffett, L and Straker, V 2011 Environmental Archaeology. A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation (second edition). Portsmouth: English Heritage

https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/environmental-archaeology-2nd/

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2022 Code of Conduct: Professional ethics in archaeology. Reading: Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/2023-11/CIfA-Code-of-Conduct-2022.pdf

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2021 Professional Practice Paper: Delivering Public Benefit. Reading: Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/2024-11/CIfA-Delivering-Public-Benefit_2021.pdf

Dromgoole, S 1999 Legal Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage: National and International Perspectives. The Hague: Kluwer Law International

English Heritage 2006 Taking to the Water. Swindon: English Heritage

Historic England 2008a Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance, for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment. Swindon: Historic England

https://www.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/conservation-principles-sustainable-management-historic-environment/

Historic England 2015a *Marine Licensing and the Historic Environment.* Swindon: Historic England

http://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/marine-licensing-and-englands-historic-environment/

Historic England 2015b *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The MoRPHE Project Managers' Guide.* Swindon: Historic England

www.historicengland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/project-management-for-heritage

Historic England 2017a Protected Wreck Sites at Risk: A Risk Management Toolkit. Swindon: Historic England

https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/historic-wreck-sites-at-risk-toolkit/

Historic England 2017b Ships and Boats; Prehistory to Present – Designation Selection Guide. Swindon: Historic England

http://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/dsg-ships-boats/

Historic England 2017c Ships and Boats; 1840 - 1950 – Introduction to Heritage Assets. Swindon: Historic England

http://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/iha-ships-boats-1840-1950/

Historic England 2017d Ships and Boats; Prehistory to 1840 – Introduction to Heritage Assets. Swindon: Historic England

http://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/iha-ships-boats/

Historic England 2018 Our Portable Past. Swindon: Historic England

https://www.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/ourportablepast/

Nautical Archaeology Society 2009 *Benchmarking Competence Requirements and Training Opportunities related to Maritime Archaeology.* Portsmouth: Nautical Archaeology Society

https://www.nauticalarchaeologysociety.org/benchmarking-competence-requirements

Nautical Archaeology Society 2013 *The Local Economic Value of a Protected wreck.* Portsmouth: Nautical Archaeology Society

https://www.nauticalarchaeologysociety.org/local-economic-benefit-of-a-protected-wreck

Robinson W 1998 *First Aid for Marine finds.* London: Archetype Press/Nautical Archaeology Society

UNESCO 2001 *Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage*. Paris: UNESCO

Useful contacts

Department of Culture Media & Sport (DCMS)
100 Parliament Street
London
SW1A 2BQ
020 7211 6000
www.culture.gov.uk

The Receiver of Wreck
Maritime and Coastguard Agency
Spring Place
105 Commercial Road
Southampton
SO15 1EG
023 8032 9474
www.gov.uk/government/groups/receiver-of-wreck

Ministry of Defence
The Third Sector
2nd Floor Navy Command Headquarters
HMS Excellent
Portsmouth
PO2 8BY
NavyStratPol-SEC3RDSECTOR@mod.gov.uk

Nautical Archaeology Society
Fort Cumberland
Fort Cumberland Road
Eastney
Portsmouth
PO4 9LD
023 92818419
www.nauticalarchaeologysociety.org

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
www.archaeologists.net
admin@archaeologists.net

Protected Wreck Association
info@protectedwrecks.org.uk
https://protectedwrecks.org.uk/

Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers (ALGAO)
Maritime Committee c/o Rebecca Loader
Isle of Wight County Archaeology and Historic Environment Service
Westridge Centre
Brading Road
Ryde,
Isle of Wight
PO33 1QS
(01983) 823810 / 821000 ext.5867
www.algao.org.uk

Health and Safety Executive (HSE)
Diving Inspection Team
Rosebery Court
Central Avenue
St Andrews Business Park
Norwich
NR 7 0HS
Tel. 0300 003 1747
www.hse.gov.uk/diving

The British Diving Safety Group
www.bdsg.org

Natural England
Foss House
Kings Pool
1-2 Peasholme Green
York
YO1 7PX
0300 060 3900
https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england

Marine Management Organisation (MMO)
Tyneside House
Skinnerburn Road
Newcastle upon Tyne
Tyne & Wear
NE4 7AR0300 123 1032
https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/marine-management-organisation

7. Glossary

Additional Licensee	A person formally authorised by the UK Government to carry out specified activities at a designated protected wreck site, under defined conditions and controls set out in a licence. Their name is listed on the licence.
Admiralty Notice to Mariners	An official update issued by the UK Hydrographic Office that provides corrections and important information for nautical charts and publications, including new hazards, wrecks, and changes affecting safe navigation.
Class Consents	Pre-approved permissions issued by the UK Government that allow certain low-impact activities to take place at scheduled heritage sites without the need for an individual licence, provided stated conditions are followed.
Controlled Site	A location designated by the UK Government under the Protection of Military Remains Act 1986, where the remains of a sunken military vessel are legally protected. Designation creates an exclusion zone around a wreck where disturbance, interference or unauthorised access is prohibited, without a licence from the MoD. Wrecks must be less that 200 years old, and the exact position must be known.
Data Management Plan	A formal document that sets out how project data will be created, stored, documented, protected, shared, and preserved throughout its lifecycle, to ensure it remains secure, usable, and accessible where appropriate.
Designated heritage asset	A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.
Droit	A "droit" in the context of the Receiver of Wreck refers specifically to the formal "Report of Wreck and Salvage" form (often termed a "droit" or report) that must be submitted to notify the Receiver of any wreck material recovered from UK waters or brought into the UK. This report is required by law under the Merchant Shipping Act 1995.
English Territorial Waters	The sea area extending up to 12 nautical miles from the English coast, where the UK exercises sovereignty and English law applies, including control over navigation, resources, and heritage protection.

Heritage asset	A building, monument, site, place, area, or landscape identified as having a degree of historic, archaeological, architectural, or artistic interest that merits consideration in planning and decision-making. This includes both designated and non-designated assets.
Historic environment	All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including archaeological remains, buildings, landscapes, and other heritage assets, whether visible, buried, or submerged.
Historic Environment Record	A publicly maintained database of known heritage assets, archaeological sites, and historic buildings within a defined area, used to inform planning, research, and heritage management decisions.
Licensee	A person formally authorised by the UK Government to carry out specified activities at a designated protected wreck site, under defined conditions and controls set out in a licence, either as Principal Licensee or Additional Licensee.
Marine heritage asset	A heritage asset located in or under tidal waters, including shipwrecks, submerged landscapes, structures, and associated remains, that has archaeological, historical, or cultural significance and merits consideration in management and decision-making.
Marine Historic Environment Record	A database, maintained by Historic england, of known heritage assets including shipwrecks, archaeological sites and historic buildings within England's marine planning area, used to inform planning, research, and heritage management decisions.
National Heritage List for England	The official register of England's designated heritage assets, including listed buildings, scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered parks and gardens, and battlefields, maintained by Historic England. Sometimes referred to as The List.
Nominated Archaeologist	A suitably qualified archaeologist named on a wreck licence who is responsible for providing professional archaeological advice and oversight for activities carried out at a designated protected wreck site.
Non-designated heritage asset	A heritage asset that has recognised historic, archaeological, architectural, or artistic interest but is not formally protected through statutory designation. It is still considered in planning and management decisions.
OASIS	The online system for reporting archaeological investigations and linking research outputs and archives
Principal Licensee	The named individual who takes sole responsibility for the on-site activities of everyone in the team on a licence issued under the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973

Project Design	A formal document that sets out a project's aims, methods, scope, resources, timetable, and reporting arrangements, used to plan and control delivery of archaeological or heritage work.
Protected Place	Vessels which sank after 4th August 1914 can be designated as protected places under the Protection of Military Remains Act 1986. Diving is permitted on a look but don't touch basis. Entry into the wreck is not permitted. All aircraft lost on military service are automatically designated in this way. All vessels designated as protected places are specifically designated by name. It's important to note that the location of the wreck isn't specified in the statutory instrument, so a wreck can be designated as a protected place without specifying its exact location. It is an offence to disturb, damage, move or remove any remains or associated items without a licence from the UK Government.
Protected Wreck Site	A shipwreck site, or cargo, designated by the UK Government for legal protection under the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973, due to its historical, archaeological, or artistic importance. Activities such as diving, disturbance, or recovery are restricted and require a licence.
Receiver of Wreck	The UK Government official responsible for administering reports of wreck material recovered from the sea, determining ownership, and managing claims and salvage in accordance with the Merchant Shipping Act 1995.
Scheduled Monument	A nationally significant archaeological site or monument given legal protection by the UK Government under the Ancient Monument and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. Any works or disturbance require prior consent under scheduling legislation.
Site Security Champion	A named individual responsible for promoting and overseeing good security practice at a heritage site, including reporting risks or incidents and encouraging lawful and responsible behaviour by site users.
Site Security Document	A controlled document that sets out the security risks, protective measures, reporting arrangements, and responsibilities for safeguarding a heritage site and its associated information.
Team Member	Someone who is involved with working on a Protected Wreck site. To access a site they must dive with a Principal or Additional Licensee.
Underwater Cultural Heritage	All traces of human activity of historical, archaeological, or cultural significance that are located underwater, whether fully or partially submerged, including wrecks, structures, artefacts, and submerged landscapes.

8. Acronyms

ADAPt	Archaeological Digital Archiving Protocol Tookit
ADS	Archaeology Data Service
AMAA 1979	Ancient Monuments and archaeological Areas Act 1979
ARHC	Alliance to Reduce Heritage Crime
CEM	Common Enforcement Manual
CIfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
CIfA RO	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Registered Organisation
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
DAC	Data Archive Centre
DCMS	Department for Culture, Media and Sport
DMP	Data Management Plan
GIS	Geographic Information System
HER	Historic Environment Record
ICON	The Institute of Conservation
JNAPC	Joint Nautical Archaeology Policy Committee
MCA	Maritime and Coastguard Agency
MEDIN	Marine Environmental Data and Information Network
MHER	Marine Historic Environment Record
MMO	Marine Management Organisation
MoRPHE	Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment
MPS	Marine Policy Statement
MSA 1995	Merchant Shipping Act 1995
NCI	National Coastwatch Institute
NHA 2002	National Heritage Act 2002
NHLE	National Heritage List for England
PWA 1973	Protection of Wrecks Act 1973
PWAssoc	Protected Wreck Association
RoW	Receiver of Wreck
SMA	Society for Museum Archaeology
SMC	Scheduled Monument Consent
TCE	The Crown Estate
UCH	Underwater Cultural Heritage
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UKHO	United Kingdom Hydrographic Office
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
VOC	Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie / Dutch East India Company

9. Appendices

Annex to the 2001 UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage

Rules concerning activities directed at underwater cultural heritage.

General principles

Rule 1: The protection of underwater cultural heritage through in situ preservation shall be considered as the first option. Accordingly, activities directed at underwater cultural heritage shall be authorized in a manner consistent with the protection of that heritage, and subject to that requirement may be authorized for the purpose of making a significant contribution to protection or knowledge or enhancement of underwater cultural heritage.

Rule 2: The commercial exploitation of underwater cultural heritage for trade or speculation or its irretrievable dispersal is fundamentally incompatible with the protection and proper management of underwater cultural heritage. Underwater cultural heritage shall not be traded, sold, bought or bartered as commercial goods.

This Rule cannot be interpreted as preventing:

(a) the provision of professional archaeological services or necessary services incidental thereto whose nature and purpose are in full conformity with this Convention and are subject to the authorization of the competent authorities;

(b) the deposition of underwater cultural heritage, recovered in the course of a research project in conformity with this Convention, provided such deposition does not prejudice the scientific or cultural interest or integrity of the recovered material or result in its irretrievable dispersal; is in accordance with the provisions of Rules 33 and 34; and is subject to the authorization of the competent authorities.

Rule 3: Activities directed at underwater cultural heritage shall not adversely affect the underwater cultural heritage more than is necessary for the objectives of the project.

Rule 4: Activities directed at underwater cultural heritage must use non-destructive techniques and survey methods in preference to recovery of objects. If excavation or recovery is necessary for the purpose of scientific studies or for the ultimate protection of the underwater cultural heritage, the methods and techniques used must be as non-destructive as possible and contribute to the preservation of the remains.

Rule 5: Activities directed at underwater cultural heritage shall avoid the unnecessary disturbance of human remains or venerated sites.

Rule 6: Activities directed at underwater cultural heritage shall be strictly regulated to ensure proper recording of cultural, historical and archaeological information.

Rule 7: Public access to in situ underwater cultural heritage shall be promoted, except where such access is incompatible with protection and management.

Rule 8: International cooperation in the conduct of activities directed at underwater cultural heritage shall be encouraged in order to further the effective exchange or use of archaeologists and other relevant professionals.

Project design

Rule 9: Prior to any activity directed at underwater cultural heritage, a project design for the activity shall be developed and submitted to the competent authorities for authorization and appropriate peer review.

Rule 10: The project design shall include:

(a) an evaluation of previous or preliminary studies

(b) the project statement and objectives

(c) the methodology to be used and the techniques to be employed

(d) the anticipated funding

(e) an expected timetable for completion of the project

(f) the composition of the team and the qualifications, responsibilities and experience of each team member

(g) plans for post-fieldwork analysis and other activities

(h) a conservation programme for artefacts and the site in close cooperation with the competent authorities

(i) a site management and maintenance policy for the whole duration of the project

(j) a documentation programme

(k) a safety policy

(l) an environmental policy

(m) arrangements for collaboration with museums and other institutions, in particular scientific institutions

(n) report preparation

(o) deposition of archives, including underwater cultural heritage removed, and

(p) a programme for publication

Rule 11: Activities directed at underwater cultural heritage shall be carried out in accordance with the project design approved by the competent authorities.

Rule 12: Where unexpected discoveries are made or circumstances change, the project design shall be reviewed and amended with the approval of the competent authorities.

Rule 13: In cases of urgency or chance discoveries, activities directed at the underwater cultural heritage, including conservation measures or activities for a period of short duration, in particular site stabilization, may be authorized in the absence of a project design in order to protect the underwater cultural heritage.

Preliminary work

Rule 14: The preliminary work referred to in Rule 10 (a) shall include an assessment that evaluates the significance and vulnerability of the underwater cultural heritage and the surrounding natural environment to damage by the proposed project, and the potential to obtain data that would meet the project objectives.

Rule 15: The assessment shall also include background studies of available historical and archaeological evidence, the archaeological and environmental characteristics of the site, and the consequences of any potential intrusion for the long-term stability of the underwater cultural heritage affected by the activities.

Project objective, methodology and techniques

Rule 16: The methodology shall comply with the project objectives, and the techniques employed shall be as non-intrusive as possible.

Funding

Rule 17: Except in cases of emergency to protect underwater cultural heritage, an adequate funding base shall be assured in advance of any activity, sufficient to complete all stages of the project design, including conservation, documentation and curation of recovered artefacts, and report preparation and dissemination.

Rule 18: The project design shall demonstrate an ability, such as by securing a bond, to fund the project through to completion.

Rule 19: The project design shall include a contingency plan that will ensure conservation of underwater cultural heritage and supporting documentation in the event of any interruption of anticipated funding.

Project duration – timetable

Rule 20: An adequate timetable shall be developed to assure in advance of any activity directed at underwater cultural heritage the completion of all stages of the project design, including conservation, documentation and curation of recovered underwater cultural heritage, as well as report preparation and dissemination.

Rule 21: The project design shall include a contingency plan that will ensure conservation of underwater cultural heritage and supporting documentation in the event of any interruption or termination of the project.

Competence and qualifications

Rule 22: Activities directed at underwater cultural heritage shall only be undertaken under the direction and control of, and in the regular presence of, a qualified underwater archaeologist with scientific competence appropriate to the project.

Rule 23: All persons on the project team shall be qualified and have demonstrated competence appropriate to their roles in the project.

Conservation and site management

Rule 24: The conservation programme shall provide for the treatment of the archaeological remains during the activities directed at underwater cultural heritage, during transit and in the long term. Conservation shall be carried out in accordance with current professional standards.

Rule 25: The site management programme shall provide for the protection and management in situ of underwater cultural heritage, in the course of and upon termination of fieldwork. The programme shall include public information, reasonable provision for site stabilization, monitoring, and protection against interference.

Documentation

Rule 26: The documentation programme shall set out thorough documentation including a progress report of activities directed at underwater cultural heritage, in accordance with current professional standards of archaeological documentation.

Rule 27: Documentation shall include, at a minimum, a comprehensive record of the site, including the provenance of underwater cultural heritage moved or removed in the course of the activities directed at underwater cultural heritage, field notes, plans, drawings, sections, and photographs or recording in other media.

Safety

Rule 28: A safety policy shall be prepared that is adequate to ensure the safety and health of the project team and third parties and that is in conformity with any applicable statutory and professional requirements.

Environment

Rule 29: An environmental policy shall be prepared that is adequate to ensure that the seabed and marine life are not unduly disturbed.

Reporting

Rule 30: Interim and final reports shall be made available according to the timetable set out in the project design, and deposited in relevant public records.

Rule 31: Reports shall include:

(a) an account of the objectives

(b) an account of the methods and techniques employed

(c) an account of the results achieved

(d) basic graphic and photographic

(e) documentation on all phases of the activity

(f) recommendations concerning conservation and curation of the site and of any underwater cultural heritage removed, and

(g) recommendations for future activities

XII Reporting

Rule 30: Interim and final reports shall be made available according to the timetable set out in the project design, and deposited in relevant public records.

Rule 31: Reports shall include:

(a) an account of the objectives

(b) an account of the methods and techniques employed

(c) an account of the results achieved

(d) basic graphic and photographic documentation on all phases of the activity

(e) recommendations concerning conservation and curation of the site and of any underwater cultural heritage removed, and

(f) recommendations for future activities

Curation of project archives

Rule 32: Arrangements for curation of the project archives shall be agreed to before any activity commences, and shall be set out in the project design.

Rule 33: The project archives, including any underwater cultural heritage removed and a copy of all supporting documentation shall, as far as possible, be kept together and intact as a collection in a manner that is available for professional and public access as well as for the curation of the archives. This should be done as rapidly as possible and in any case not later than ten years from the completion of the project, in so far as may be compatible with conservation of the underwater cultural heritage.

Rule 34: The project archives shall be managed according to international professional standards, and subject to the authorization of the competent authorities.

Dissemination

Rule 35: Projects shall provide for public education and popular presentation of the project results where appropriate.

Rule 36: A final synthesis of a project shall be:

(a) made public as soon as possible, having regard to the complexity of the project and the confidential or sensitive nature of the information, and

(b) deposited in relevant public records

The foregoing is the authentic text of the Convention duly adopted by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization during its thirty-first session, which was held in Paris and declared closed the third day of November 2001.

(source: https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/convention-protection-underwater-cultural-heritage)

Standard licence conditions

Listed below are the standard conditions placed on licences issued for protected wreck sites in English waters. Additional conditions may be placed on licences as necessary. For example, sites with more than one active Licensee may have the following additional condition placed on the licence: The Licensee will contact Historic England prior to accessing the site.

All relevant conditions form part of the licence and it is important to note that: a licence can be revoked at any time if any of the general or specific conditions are not complied with.

1 Dives will only be permitted when a licensee is present at the site

2 The Licensee(s) on the site will be responsible for the supervision at all times of all divers participating in dives at the site

3 During the carrying out of licenced operations divers must not tamper with or damage the said Protected Wreck. No objects whatsoever may be recovered by them from the site with the exception of objects under immediate threat of significant harm or loss and only after prior consultation with and the approval of Historic England

4 Only non-intrusive dives are permitted

5 The Principal Licensee submits a report on the progress of their operations to Historic England no later than [date]

6 Diving must be carried out to an approved code of practice as indicated on the application form

7 Diving operations within the restricted area must be carried out in accordance with the application & Project Design where appropriate submitted to Historic England dated [date]

8 The Principal Licensee must deposit a copy of the archive of the project at the Historic England Archive

9 Geophysical data must be made available to all researchers in a non-proprietary format upon request ie raw xyz data: TXT, CSV

10 The Principal Licensee must obtain any necessary consents from other marine regulating bodies

11 The Principal Licensee ensures that any objects recovered from the restricted area are reported to the Receiver of Wreck under the terms of the Merchant Shipping Act 1995

12 The Principal Licensee ensures that any objects recovered from the restricted area are given ‘first aid’ conservation treatment

13 The Principal Licensee ensures that any samples recovered from the restricted area are stored appropriately

14 The Licensee(s) must ensure that all activities conform to the Rules annexed to the 2001 Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage

15 The Principal Licensee must provide Historic England with the names of all divers diving under this licence. Names must be submitted within 2 weeks of 31 May, 31 August and 30 November during the validity of this licence

16 Anyone convicted of an offence under section 3(3) of the Act, or under comparable legislation outside England, which is not a spent offence within the meaning of section 1 of the Rehabilitation Act 1974 may not dive under this licence, except in exceptional circumstances and with the permission of the Secretary of State

Licensee's annual report

Archaeological reports usually follow a standard layout, namely:

- Project background
- Aims and objectives
- Methodology
- Results
- Recommendations

A suggested format for archaeological reports is given in Rule 31 of the Annex to the UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage 2001 (see Appendix 1). The following format is recommended for Annual Licensee's Reports:

(a) Summary

(b) an account of the project's objectives

(c) an account of the methods and techniques employed

(d) an account of the results achieved

(e) (basic graphic and photographic documentation on all phases of the activity

(f) recommendations concerning conservation and curation of the site and of any underwater cultural heritage removed, and

(g) recommendations for future activities A Licensee's report should not contain any discussion or comment of a personal nature that the Licensee would not wish to be part of the public site archive, as the report will be deposited with the Historic England Archive.

Where copyright remains with the Licensee (and save where confidentiality is justified), the Licensee will be expected to grant a non-exclusive licence authorising the use of the report, and any material within it, for non-commercial purposes including teaching, research and private study. In any case where confidentiality is required, this should be made clear in the report, along with the reasons for such a requirement.

The report should be as objective as possible, factual, independent and to the point.

10. Contact Historic England

East of England
Brooklands
24 Brooklands Avenue
Cambridge CB2 8BU
Tel: 01223 582749
Email: eastofengland@HistoricEngland.org.uk

Fort Cumberland
Fort Cumberland Road
Eastney
Portsmouth PO4 9LD
Tel: 023 9285 6704
Email:
fort.cumberland@HistoricEngland.org.uk

London and South East
4th Floor, Cannon Bridge House
25 Dowgate Hill
London EC4R 2YA
Tel: 0207 973 3700
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Midlands
The Foundry
82 Granville Street
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Email: midlands@HistoricEngland.org.uk

North East and Yorkshire
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Finzels Reach, Hawkins Lane
Bristol BS1 6JQ
Tel: 0117 975 1308
Email: southwest@HistoricEngland.org.uk

Swindon
The Engine House
Fire Fly Avenue
Swindon SN2 2EH
Tel: 01793 445050
Email: swindon@HistoricEngland.org.uk

For all protected wreck licencing enquiries, contact the Historic England National Listing & Marine Team.

Email: Maritime@Historicengland.org.uk

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