

HOUSESTEADS ROMAN FORT, NORTHUMBERLAND

Hazard Information for Education Visits

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

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

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

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

- There is a public car and coach park adjacent to the entrance to the site. The car park can get very busy at peak times and cars travel through via a one-way system.
- Authorised vehicles may use the farm tracks up to the museum and fort.

The natural landscape of the site may pose possible hazards.

- Access to the fort is via a steep path over land owned by the National Trust. The surface is rough with loose stones and can be muddy and slippery, especially on descent.
- The area becomes more exposed the further you ascend towards the fort. Where possible, groups should stick to the gravel pathways.
- The sloping, grassy nature of the site means that pathways may become slippery.
- There are occasional potholes and animal burrows underfoot.

The ruinous nature of the fort presents many potential hazards.

- There is low masonry throughout the site. Walls are rough and contain uneven and often sharp stones.
- Climbing on the walls is not permitted and poses a significant hazard.
- There are unfenced drops in many places, including along the fort wall, inside the latrine block and by the north gate.
- The ground within the fort is grassed and often slippery during and after wet conditions.
- The wooden decking and steps used to access parts of the fort can be slippery in wet conditions.

The museum and exhibition space may pose possible hazards for use by large groups.

- There are a range of low-level display cases, as well as larger display cases, in the museum.
- Space around the exhibit is limited and is best visited in groups of up to 15 at a time.

Housesteads Roman Fort is home to a wide variety of wildlife.

- Livestock grazes in the fields and grounds around the fort. These animals can bite and kick and should not be approached.
- There are other animals and birds on site, and their droppings can present a zoonotic hazard.
- Visitors should wash their hands prior to eating.

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

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

Covid-19 and flu.

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