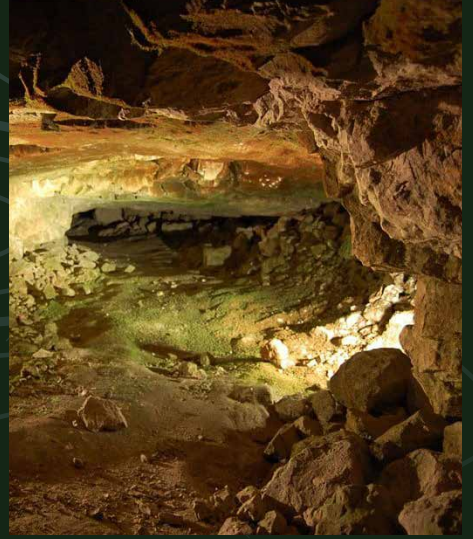


Monument Monitoring

LEVEL 1



Can you help protect our fascinating and important history for future generations to enjoy?

Introduction

Scheduled Monuments are the UK's legally-protected archaeological sites. We all have a duty to look after them, since they are part of our national story and our past. They range in scale from places like the Iron Age hill fort at Maiden Castle, which dominates the surrounding Dorset landscape, to buried archaeological remains where nothing is visible above ground. They are essential evidence of how people lived, fought, worshipped and shaped their environment, providing examples of all periods from prehistoric Stonehenge to Cold War bomb stores.

Some of the 20,000 monuments in England are well-maintained in good condition. Others have been impaired by scrub invasion, cultivation, burrowing animals, erosion and the effects of climate change. In many cases we just don't know what their condition is. This is why your help is needed.

Monument Monitoring is a chance for you to support England's heritage by reporting the condition of a Scheduled Monument to Historic England. In some cases, this will be the first report for a long time and it will be a vital baseline for the future.

No archaeological experience is needed. There is a quick and easy-to-follow process that will speed up even more when you are monitoring a local monument you come to know.

This Level 1 toolkit contains information on:

1. **Why your help matters**
2. **How to record a monument**
3. **Guidelines for a written report**
4. **Written report**
5. **Sample maps and photographs**

This will help you to record Scheduled Monuments with confidence as an individual or as part of a team. You will be contributing to the protection and understanding of England's heritage and we hope that you will feel encouraged to develop your interest through to Level 2.



Historic England

SOUTH DOWNS
NATIONAL PARK

This project was managed by the National Trust, the South Downs National Park Authority and Historic England. It was funded by Historic England and the South Downs National Park Authority and supported by archaeological societies and individual volunteers. We are very grateful for their help.

Images have been provided by the National Trust, Historic England or the South Downs National Park Authority except where stated otherwise.

1. Why your help matters

'Scheduling is the selection of nationally important archaeological sites. Although archaeology is all around us, scheduled sites form a carefully chosen sample of them. While some change may be possible, there is a presumption that they will be handed on to future generations in much the same state that we have found them.'

- Historic England

Why are Scheduled Monuments so important?

Scheduled Monuments are carefully-chosen examples based on features such as rarity and condition. Their range and extent of survival makes them a unique but fragile reflection of our history. They can be major historical reference points, such as the prehistoric burial mounds known as barrows that frame the skylines of downland landscapes or the eerie remains of Cold War airfields that were deserted only a generation ago. Sometimes there is surprising continuity, like the prominent barrows that became the sites of medieval gallows or provided the ideal conditions for rabbit farms. They can be important records of past environments, such as the ancient soils buried beneath prehistoric banks. Others were popular gathering points, such as Hambledon Hill in Dorset where thousands of Clubmen assembled in 1645 to protest at the excesses of both sides in the Civil War. They can be part of national identity, as at the remains of the Norman abbey built on the site of the Battle of Hastings.

What are the threats?

Monuments are legally protected, but they are vulnerable to damage, neglect and decline from many processes. These include erosion caused by livestock and visitor activities, animal burrows, damaging farming practices (both historic and current), scrub and tree encroachment and neglect. Damage can be made worse by the effects of climate change. These include general changes such as coastal erosion, flash flooding and storm damage. There are also specific ones such as at The Trundle hill fort in West Sussex, where prolonged hot summers have caused chalk and soil surfaces to become less stable, resulting in increased wash-off in the wetter winters that we now have.

Harm can arise from ignorance of a site's legal protection, but also through illicit activities including metal detecting and other forms of theft. The overall picture is certainly not one of doom and gloom as the examples on these sheets show. Understanding the present condition of, and threats to, our heritage can help ensure that suitable management and protection take place. That is why we need your help.

Scheduled Monuments can be held in either public or private ownership. Scheduling does not give members of the public any rights of access. However, some monuments can be seen

since they are on open access land, or adjacent to public rights of way or permissive paths. Moreover, organisations like the National Trust and local authorities often welcome the surveys and the information you can provide. But you still need to obtain permission for your survey. Private landowners need to be fully informed, even when you are surveying a monument from a public right of way, which only gives you the right to travel along it, not to use it for other purposes.

On all visits please follow the [countryside code](#).



▲ Erosion can be a significant problem on historical earthworks. It requires prompt recording and action before it gets out of hand.



◀ Until recently the medieval castle mound at the National Trust's Mount Stewart estate was completely lost in trees and scrub.



◀ Following clearance the mound is now a prominent landmark.

2. How to record a monument

Step 1 - Register on the Historic England Website

[Historic England](#) enables you to upload your reports and photos to any scheduled monument or listing page on their website where it will be saved for future reference. Once you have registered, which takes a few minutes, you can provide information to it in any way you like within the limit of 400 words and up to four photographs for each entry. This also means that you can see a record of your work and see what others have shared about Scheduled Monuments.

Step 2 - Identify

Find the monument you are interested in on [Search the National Heritage List for England \(NHLE\)](#) using its name or the online map to identify it. This will give a description, map, National Grid reference and monument number. If you do this on your phone you can toggle the map to show which Scheduled Monuments are near your location.

Step 3 - Check access

Some monuments are publicly accessible, but permission from landowners and tenants should always be sought. Many monuments are on private land ranging from large estates to small owner-occupied farms. In these cases, you could seek help from the parish council, Country Landowners Association, National Farmers Union, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) or National Park Authority in order to contact the right person.

Step 4 - Be prepared

In many instances, all you need is a mobile phone with a reasonable quality camera. If you want to make a fuller record, take a printed copy of the form, the editable pdf or Word version in this toolkit, as well as a scale and tape measure. A collapsible ranging rod that fits in a rucksack is ideal as a scale, but a walking stick, your rucksack or a companion will do. A 30m measuring tape can be easier to use than a measuring app on a mobile phone.

Advice on personal safety in the countryside is given by organisations like Ramblers and the National Trust

ramblers.org.uk/advice/safety/personal-safety.aspx

nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/staying-safe-at-national-trust-places

Voluntary groups, such as archaeological societies, usually have insurance for volunteer fieldworkers. The standards for lone workers are set by government advice hse.gov.uk/toolbox/workers/lone.htm.

Always follow the Countryside Code

Step 5 - Simple Observation

If you don't have much time to undertake a detailed condition report, a simple update with a photograph sent from the site on your mobile phone is fine.

- e.g. 'Severe erosion on monument NHLE 1234567 caused by trampling by cattle' plus a photograph.

- Access the list entry on historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list on your mobile phone.
- Open-up the entry for the monument.
- Submit your comments and photos to National Heritage List for England (NHLE).

That's it. You have already made a significant difference to the conservation of a nationally-important site.

Step 6 - Writing a report

If you are able and willing to do more, please fill in the written report. Support it with a sketch plan and photographs.

Guidelines for doing this are given on the next sheet. You are asked to tick boxes and make straightforward statements, then draw them together as a short narrative to post on National Heritage List for England (NHLE) in the same way as step 5. The guidelines give the principles of a sketch plan and photographic record.

Guidance for a more detailed record is given in Level 2.

3. Guidelines for a written report

How to get there

State access restrictions to and around the site, such as barriers formed by trees and shrubs, the danger of disturbing ground-nesting birds, or that livestock are usually kept in the field containing the monument. Make a record of permissions required for access.

Whole site or part? You may not be able to survey a large site in one go. Even if you can, dividing a complex monument into manageable chunks is likely to be more useful to the land managers than vague comments on the whole feature. The important thing is to make clear statements about the area or areas that you have surveyed, not to generalise about parts that you have not. A sketch map of your chosen area will be invaluable. It can be as quirky as you like, as long as it shows what you want it to clearly.

Measurements Monuments can be clear-cut and sharply-defined, like some prehistoric barrows which appear as large round bumps in the landscape. Or they can be indistinct shallow hollows and ridges like the sites of former dwellings. In some cases, rough and ready measurements from pacing will be sufficient. In others, such as easily-eroded earthworks on sandy soils, exact measurements of heights and slopes can be important, and you may need to recommend more detailed survey and monitoring.

Type Four categories are given on the form. An individual monument can have elements of all of them. Monuments such as deserted settlements often have slight features dispersed over a wide area so that their full extent needs to be understood. Masonry, brickwork and buried features are likely to need specialist assessment. But common-sense observations, such as noting shrubs growing through walls, are helpful. You should make clear which aspects of the monument you are assessing.

Vegetation The main types of vegetation on and around monuments are identified on the form and the percentages just need ticking. One of the key points to note is whether grassland is grazed by livestock or is unmanaged, 'rough' and vulnerable



▲ Small patches of turf removal on monuments often indicate metal detecting (Image Credit: Sussex Police)

to scrub invasion. Identifying patterns of increase or decrease can be difficult in a first visit, but the free [Google Earth Pro](#) has aerial photographs going back to at least 1985 that can easily be accessed on a laptop or tablet for comparison.

Legibility Vegetation can obscure a monument so that its role in the landscape cannot be understood. It can make assessment of earthworks and other above-ground features difficult or impossible. Make a judgment on the scale given and add comment if you can, but don't waste photos in demonstrating that something can't be seen.

Disturbance Major disturbance to monuments from ploughing, dumping waste, fly tipping etc. is fortunately rare and Historic England should be notified directly. However, in predominantly arable areas, monuments and the buffer zones around them are vulnerable to nibbling away at the edges. It is important to note this. Other types of damage include vandalism, metal detecting, vehicle trafficking and trampling by livestock.

Metal detecting is usually identifiable at Scheduled Monuments by areas of turf removal. Turf is cut from the surface and holes dug below in response to metal detector signals. Holes and turf can be left, or you may see some attempt to disguise the activity by covering the area with the removed turf. Metal detecting is illegal on Scheduled Monuments and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). A landowner cannot provide permission to detect on sites covered by legal protection of this kind.

Erosion Occasionally there will be erosion affecting a large area, such as that resulting from clearance of conifer plantations. But it is usually localised, so be as exact as possible in reporting it. The causes such as livestock, footpaths, off-road motorcyclists or mountain bikers, horses and flash flooding can often be identified.



▲ Erosion can sometimes be on a large and rapidly increasing scale, such as the damage here caused by off road biking.

Burrows Please also be precise about the location of burrows and, if possible, note signs of active use, such as freshly scraped-out soil at entrances. In your report, Consider splitting down the monument into segments based on compass points and indicate the percentage of disturbance in each.

Adjacent land use and recent changes Noting these can be helpful in assessing the potential for long-term changes that may affect the monument. They could include the spread of development, abandoning of grazing or new woodland plantations.

Structures Surveys of masonry, brickwork and related above-ground features should be left to specialists, but common-sense observations can be made.

Narrative Write out the observations that you have recorded in the same sequence as they appear on the form. Give a closing sentence with your suggestions for next steps if you feel able to make comments or recommendations.

Photographs Take photographs that illustrate an issue. Don't just point and shoot. Make sure that significant areas are not in shadow. Give captions that explain the purpose of the photograph and copy the photograph numbers onto the form.

Plan Sketch and annotate a plan of the area you have surveyed. Mark a north point and give an approximate scale. Photograph the plan and add it to your photograph listing.

Enter information on Scheduling or listing page Type out your narrative beginning it with #Condition. Enter the photographs, making sure that the captions correspond with those on the form. Store your form and photographs so that you can help with enquiries and subsequent visits. If you are part of a team, such as an archaeological society, it will help to have a collective archive. The landowner may also like to receive a copy.

What happens next?

Historic England, landowners, visitors and other monument recorders will be able to view your report through the Scheduling and Listing website. Historic England will use it to help to inform and update their assessment of the condition of the monument that you have visited.

All Scheduled Monuments are assessed for risk as part of the Heritage at Risk programme. To find out more about Heritage at Risk and this work programme please visit historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk.

4. Written report

Written Record

List entry no:

List name:

How to get there:

Recorder:

Area surveyed:

Location:

Whole/Part:

Dimensions:

Type: Earthwork Buried Structure Dispersed

| Vegetation | 0-25% | 25-50% | 50-75% | 75-100% | Inc/Decrease | Stable? | Comment: |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|---------|----------|
| Pasture | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Rough grass | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Scrub/bramble to 1.2m | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Scrub 1.2m+ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Wood .3m stems | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Mature wood | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Arable field | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Bracken | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Other | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |

Legibility: High: Medium: Low: Comment:

| | | | |
|--------------|-----------|---------|----------------|
| Disturbance: | Location: | Extent: | Comment : |
| Erosion: | Extent: | Active? | Cause/Comment: |

| Burrow Locations: | No. | Comment: |
|-------------------|-----|----------|
| | | |

| Burrow Locations (cont): | No. | Comment: |
|--------------------------|-----|----------|
| | | |

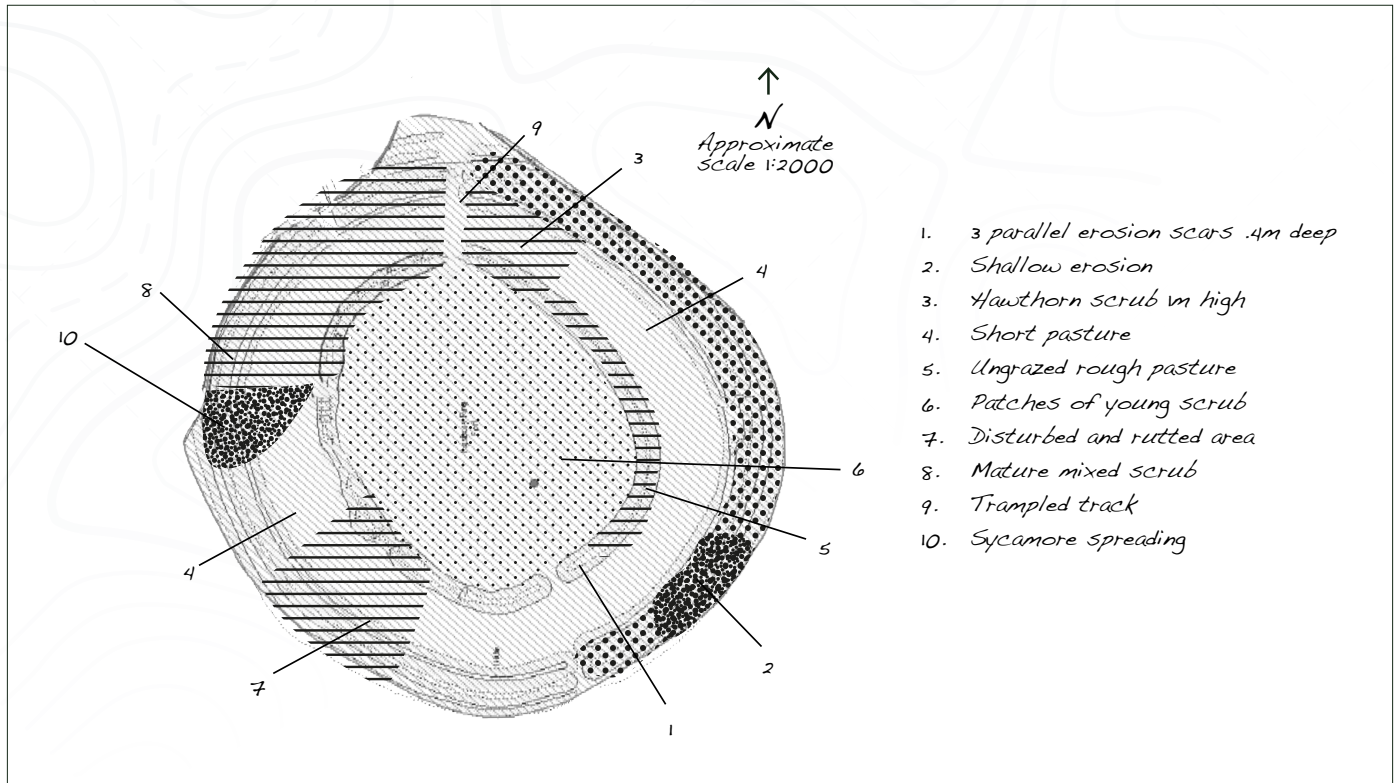
| | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|-------------|
| Adjacent land use: | Recent changes: | Structures: |
|--------------------|-----------------|-------------|

| Photos | Subject: | Location: |
|--------|----------|-----------|
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |

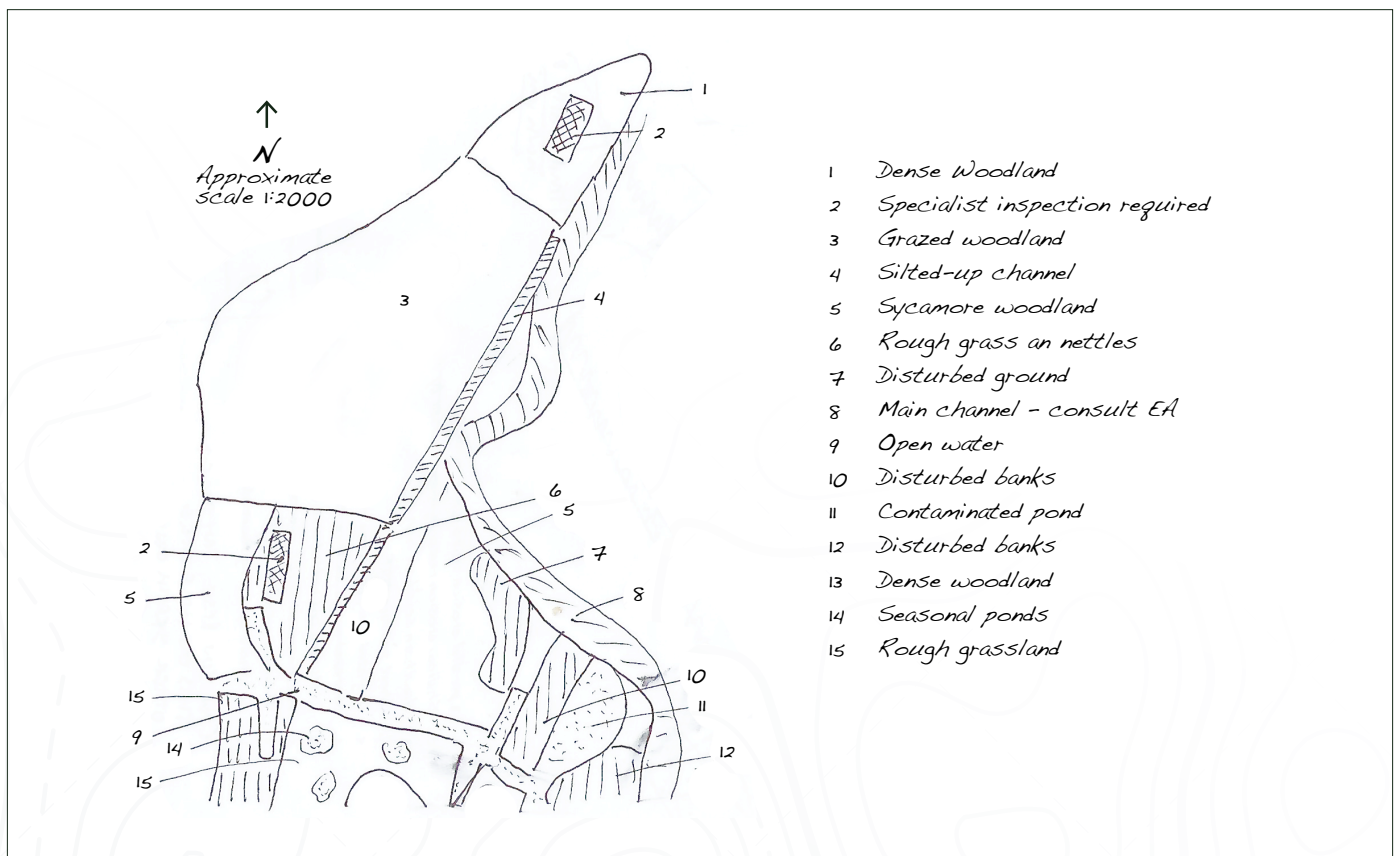
| Photos (cont) | Subject: | Location: |
|---------------|----------|-----------|
| 3 | | |
| 4 | | |

Narrative: #Condition

5. Sample Maps and Photographs



Example Map - Hill fort sketch plan



Example Map 2 - A sketch plan of Royal Gunpowder Mills



Example Photo 1
Wimpole, Cambridgeshire.

The terraces at the edges of the cultivated areas can be difficult to identify. They are best recorded when the sun is low on the horizon.



Example Photo 2
Wimpole, Cambridgeshire.

A wide-angle photograph enables the earthworks in the designed landscape to be understood.



Example Photo 3
Wimpole, Cambridgeshire.

This photograph of the site of the first main house on the estate shows that it was chosen for its wide views. But little can be made of the house itself within the rough grassland.