

# Guidance Note

## Metal Detecting on Council Land

This document sets out West Berkshire Council's (WBC) guidance on metal detecting on Council land.

In general, metal detecting on West Berkshire Council (WBC) owned/managed/tenanted land (including land to which the public has a right of access) is not permitted. This guidance is effective from the review date below and it supersedes any previous guidance. All previous agreements concerning metal detecting that may have been made between WBC and metal detectorists will also cease to have effect from the date of the adoption of this guidance (see below).

Any proposal to undertake metal detecting on WBC land will only be considered where detecting is part of an appropriate programme of research. This is because removal of an archaeological object from its context, unless carried out by a qualified archaeologist, can cause the loss of valuable contextual information, as well as damage to the artefact itself.

Persons wishing to carry out such research will need to apply for and obtain WBC's written permission in order to use a metal detector as well as to undertake associated survey work on WBC owned land. Permission will only be granted on the understanding that the primary aim of allowing detecting or survey work is the gathering of information about the archaeology on the Council's land.

WBC works closely with the Finds Liaison Officer (FLO) for Berkshire, who has been appointed by the Portable Antiquities Scheme to record archaeological finds made by the public, including those made by metal detectorists. Before permission is granted, an applicant must be able to satisfy the FLO that they have a proven track record of reporting and recording finds.

Metal detectorists seeking permission should write, with a sufficient amount of detail to address the requirements in this guidance, to the Council's **Senior Archaeologist, Development and Regulation, West Berkshire Council, Market Street, Newbury RG14 5LD**.

All items of treasure as defined by the Treasure Act 1996 (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/24/contents>), together with any artefacts including metal objects (coins, weapons and jewellery, etc), worked flints, pottery, building materials, slags and worked bone that are found on Council land remain the property of West Berkshire Council.



The person in control of the day to day management of each Council owned site and the tenants of other land have been made aware of this guidance and will be consulted before permission is granted.

Other regulations may restrict the use of metal detectors on certain areas, such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest or Access Land designated under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. These will be considered during the approval process. It is against the law to use a metal detector or remove an object found on a Scheduled Monument without a licence from Historic England.

**Guidance note reviewed – 06/08/2021**