

PORTABLE ANTIQUITIES SCHEME

Managing/Meeting Finder's Expectations

The Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) employs 45 Finds Liaison Officers (FLOs) across England and Wales, as well as Finds Liaison Assistants and other staff. These are usually based locally within 'host' partners (mostly museums).

The PAS is managed through the British Museum (in England) and Amgueddfa Cymru – Museum Wales. FLOs do similar work (i.e. liaising with the public and recording their finds), but there will be some differences, reflecting the fact that FLOs also work within local priorities, directives and guidelines.

We (PAS England and Wales) are keen that there is a good degree of commonality in how the PAS functions across England and Wales, so that finders can be clear on what to expect from us. It is hope this document can help with that.

There are as many as 40,000 people metal-detecting in the UK, and although PAS is keen to record as many finds as possible, it is not practical for FLOs to record every find made by each detectorist, as well as finds made by the wider public also.

Therefore, FLOs must be selective in what they record, though they are assisted greatly by interns and volunteers, including (detectorist) self-recorders.

To help us record finds we ask finders to:

- ✓ Make time for finds to be handed over for recording.
- ✓ Show us all the finds made: finders should be prepared that we might only record some of them (prioritising the most significant).
- ✓ Provide (at least) an 8-figure NGR (National Grid Reference) for all recordable finds. In accordance with the [Code of Practice for Responsible Metal Detecting in England and Wales](#), these should be bagged/packaged separately and have the NGR written on the bag.
- ✓ It is helpful if finders can provide good quality images of all recordable finds, as well as weights and measurements.
- ✓ **Please be patient as FLOs liaise with many finders.**

X PAS will not tolerate abusive or threatening behaviour towards its staff and will take appropriate action to ensure the safety of all colleagues and volunteers.

In return, finders should expect:

- FLOs to be professional. It is the job of FLOs to liaise with the detecting community (and others) to record their finds.
- Prompt responses to enquiries. Most FLOs will have 'holding replies', but we aim to provide a response within 7-14 days (this may differ depending on where the FLO is based). Finders should be mindful that FLOs have lots of enquiries, some work part-time, and there are other pressures on their time.
- Receipts to be given for all finds taken in and returned. This is so finders can be clear on what we have in our care.
- A clear understanding about when finds will be returned: this might be marked on the receipt. In terms of club visits and finds days, most FLOs will expect to return finds at the next visit. Normally this will be 3-4 months (but be clear on this with your FLO).
- Regarding Treasure, the PAS is only one part of the process. We aim to deal with cases as quickly as possible, but complex (i.e. an unusual item or a hoard that needs extensive cataloguing) will inevitably take longer.

Any complaints or comments about PAS staff should be directed to the local manager and the Heads of PAS in England (mlewis@britishmuseum.org) or in Wales (steve.burrow@museumwales.ac.uk), as appropriate. Unless you ask otherwise, we will liaise with the local FLO on how to respond to any matters raised. Please also send a copy of your email to (generalsecretary@ncmd.co.uk)