

Maritime Archaeology Trust – Diving Principles and Values

The MAT is promoting the following diving principles and values related to diving and treatment of historic wreck sites.

Safe Diving

- Always follow safe diving practices.
- Be buoyancy aware - you could be stirring up silt or damaging parts of a wreck.
- Be careful about positioning of shot lines and mooring of dive boats close to wrecks.

Maritime Heritage

- Treat all cultural heritage with respect and follow a 'look but don't touch' approach where possible.
- Check if wrecks you are diving on are protected by legislation. Historic wrecks designated under the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973 require a special licence to dive. Sites designated under the Protection of Military remains Act 1986 are either 'look but don't touch' (Designated Protected Place) or diving is prohibited (Designated Controlled Site). It is your responsibility to ensure you are acting within the law. Please see below for further information links.
- When undertaking survey be aware of where you attach tape measures and / or datum points.
- Do not be tempted to move or pick up artefacts as the information about their position within a site can be vital to understanding the wrecking process and distribution of material that was carried on board. This applies to items that appear to be 'scattered' away from the main structure of a site, this debris trail material can provide vital clues to the wrecking and break up of a ship.
- Never buy or sell items from historic wreck sites, encouraging such trade creates a market.

Marine Life

- Wrecks form important habitats for a wide range of species. Avoid harming or disturbing marine life encountered on wrecks.

Further information

Protected Wrecks Sites, Historic England:

<https://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/what-is-designation/protected-wreck-sites/> [last accessed 02/04/2015]

Protection and Management of Historic Military Wrecks outside UK Territorial Waters, April 2014:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/307961/Protection_and_Management_of_Historic_Military_Wrecks_outside_UK_Territorial_Waters_April_2014.pdf [last accessed 02/04/2015]

The Protection of Military Remains Act 1986 (Designation of Vessels and Controlled Sites) Order 2012

Designated Vessels (Protected Places – look don't touch):

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukSI/2012/1110/schedule/1/made> [last accessed 02/04/2015]

The Protection of Military Remains Act 1986 (Designation of Vessels and Controlled Sites) Order 2012

Controlled Sites (NO access): <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukSI/2012/1110/schedule/2/made> [last accessed 02/04/2015]