

## Guidelines for volunteers for keeping safe at the coast

Whether you are alone, or in a group, there are particular dangers to be aware of when working at the coast. Your safety during coastal surveys is paramount, so it is really important that you follow the guidance below.

**NEVER put yourself or others at risk when carrying out a coastal survey.** If you are unsure or consider the situation unsafe for any reason do not continue with the survey.

### Before you venture out

- I. Download a copy of SCAPE's model risk assessment for volunteers, read it carefully, and adapt it to include specific conditions about your own survey: [https://scapetrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/SCAPE\\_CoastSurvey\\_Model-Risk-Assessment.docx](https://scapetrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/SCAPE_CoastSurvey_Model-Risk-Assessment.docx).
- II. It is always preferable to carry out a survey with another person or people. However, if you do plan a survey alone, tell someone where you are going, your route and your expected return time – remembering to check in with that person to let them know when you have returned safely.
- III. ALWAYS check the state of the tide and the weather before you set out. Information on tides and weather is available on the BBC website [http://news.bbc.co.uk/weather/coast\\_and\\_sea/tide\\_tables/7/](http://news.bbc.co.uk/weather/coast_and_sea/tide_tables/7/).
- IV. Take a fully charged mobile phone. Remember that you may not have a signal. In an emergency, the Coastguard can be contacted by dialling 999.
- V. Do not undertake a survey if you are unfit, unwell, or under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- VI. Wear appropriate clothing and sturdy footwear.

### What to take with you

- VI. Even if you are only planning a short trip, take enough liquid and food to sustain you in the event of an unexpected delay.
- VII. According to the weather, take extra clothes, waterproofs, sun cream, hat, gloves.
- VIII. An emergency First Aid Kit.
- IX. Consider taking a large-scale map (e.g., OS Landranger).

### In the field

- X. Ruinous buildings, monuments and structures are common at the coast. NEVER enter or go close to unstable structures and buildings where there is a risk of falling masonry or debris. Take photographs and fill out your survey form from a safe distance.
- XI. NEVER climb up or down unstable coastal sections.
- XII. Beware of unstable cliffs and dunes and do not stand below them.
- XIII. Do not stand close to the edge of a cliff, it may be less stable than you think.
- XIV. Take great care in the intertidal zone. NEVER venture out onto mudflats or salt marshes if you are not absolutely sure it is safe to do so.

- XV. In areas of shipping and ferries, be aware of the danger of sudden large waves caused by boat wake.
- XVI. Take great care on slippery rocks.
- XVII. Wear gloves and take care when handling cultural material, especially glass and metalwork.
- XVIII. Do not touch any containers or drums that may contain hazardous substances, any hazardous rubbish or any unfamiliar objects. Potentially hazardous waste can be reported to your local SEPA office (<https://www.sepa.org.uk/contact/>).
- XIX. Avoid disturbing wild animals – any injured, stranded or dead animals can be reported to the SSPCA by dialling their animal helpline 0300 099 9999.