

Joint OA and Prospect Statement regarding safe working on site and COVID-19

25th March 2020

OA takes the COVID-19 Pandemic very seriously and is extremely concerned about its potential impact on our staff and the public we come into contact with. For this reason, OA and Prospect are working closely together and have agreed to the following statement.

OA is adhering to the current Government advice and we will adjust our practices when this changes. As of March 24th, the advice is that construction sites should keep working if staff can meet 'social distancing' and other safe working requirements. As you are aware, archaeology is closely integrated into the construction industry, our clients have legal obligations to facilitate archaeological works, and we have contractual obligations to them to undertake these. At OA we would like to continue to operate on site as long as we can do this safely. This involves adhering to OA's Health and Safety systems and procedures and enhancing these as necessary within a dynamic process of checks and reviews. Therefore, OA and Prospect have agreed to the following measures in order to ensure safe working practices on OA sites, as far as reasonably practicable.

The checklist below will be added to the OA RAMS template and used by OA Project Managers and their Supervisors/POs to implement appropriate measures for their sites.

The approach below is to be implemented within the structure of our existing H and S approach, but with some enhanced procedures as outlined below. It is even more crucial than normal that anyone with any concerns contacts the Supervisor/Project Officer/Project Manager, member of the Regional Management Team or an H and S Advisor (either OA or Prospect) immediately if any issues arise.

No sites will resume 'normal' operations until a member of the OA H and S Team has signed off the updated RAMS for that site to demonstrate that the measures below are in place.

Note, however, that some site operations have continued and will continue while these measures are being put in place; these are sites where the measures are already in place and only small-scale works are being undertaken e.g. machine watching or trench backfilling.

COVID-19 Measures

Overriding Principles

The 2m rule, and personal, tools, equipment and vehicle hygiene requirements and work practices, as outlined below, are the key measures required to keep everyone as safe as possible. In addition to OA's duty of care, each individual employee has a legal duty under H and S legislation to observe these rules. Please let your Supervisor/Project Officer/Project Manager know immediately if any circumstances arise while you are at work that make it impossible to follow these rules, and please do not continue with your work if this happens. In line with established OA policy, no one will be penalised if they have reasonable justification for refusing to carry on working in situations where OA's defined safe systems are not being implemented properly.

Social distancing

Vehicles

Vehicles will be measured to assess how many people can travel in them while still observing the 2m rule. This rule will be observed in all OA vehicles at all times. This rule may be relaxed when people from the same household e.g. couples or housemates are travelling together. Personal vehicles will be used as necessary and drivers reimbursed as per the OA driving expenses policy.

We will consider the risk of individuals using public transport to get to and from the regional offices or sites on a case-by-case basis.

Cabins/welfare/site offices

The 2m principal will be applied at all times. Cabins will be measured to allow a calculation of the number of people who can be present at any one time and all staff will be made aware of this.

If necessary, additional welfare cabins will be provided or vehicles will be used to provide extra capacity to keep people separated at breaktimes.

Where site facilities are being provide by the Client/Principal Contractor, and/or being shared with other contractors, the OA PM will ensure that these measures can be achieved, and that social distancing and hygiene is being rigorously enforced at all times. OA staff will not be required to work on sites where this cannot be consistently achieved.

Deployment

Movement of staff between site will be limited as far as practicable, and staff will be deployed as near to home as practicable.

Overnight Accommodation

Project Managers (or others e.g. Denise Price in Oxford) will check cleaning arrangements for B and Bs etc., and if these are not sufficient we will move people to alternative accommodation.

Personal hygiene and sharing of equipment

Hand washing will be enforced through supervision, and the 20 second rule will be observed. Hands must be washed before entering an OA vehicle, after arriving on site, before entering the welfare cabin(s) – whether at break time or not – and after using the toilet.

Sufficient stocks of soap, water, handtowels and cleaning products will be maintained; moisturiser will also be provided.

All staff will have their own cups/cutlery/crockery and will take them home to wash at the end of each day. All tea, coffee, water, milk etc containers will be included in the cleaning regime.

As far as practicable, food and drink (other than the water, milk, tea and coffee provided) should be brought from home to avoid the need to visit shops during the working day. There must be no sharing of food or drinks, and drinks must not be made for others. If possible, arrangements should be made so that the kettle should only be poured by one person to avoid potential contamination of the handle by multiple users – while at the same time maintaining social distancing.

Equipment such as tools, pens, pencils, clipboards and PPE to be allocated to each staff member and not shared. Labelling may be necessary.

Shared equipment such as cameras, survey kit, CAT and genny, metal detectors etc, will be cleaned after each use or allocated to only one member of the site team and shared as little as possible. A rota may be required to achieve this.

Ideally only one person per site will be responsible for dealing with paper archives where sharing is normally necessary, such as taking out numbers from registers. Folders should be cleaned regularly. Wherever possible, digital recording systems should be used.

Mobile phones are not to be shared, and laptop/tablets to be cleaned before use, if sharing is required.

Additional time to prepare and pack-up from work will be allowed for limits on use of wash and drying room facilities.

Cleaning

Cabins/welfare/site offices/vehicles will all be cleaned first thing in the morning and before each break. A rota will be drawn up and prominently displayed and communicated to the site team.

Hired vehicles will have been deep cleaned before being delivered to OA for the first time.

Surfaces, door handles, light switches, kettles, microwave buttons/handles all need to be included in this cleaning regime.

Emergency Procedures

An FFP3 Face mask, for emergency 1st Aid use only, must be present on site before work commences, and the First Aiders briefed on their use (face fitting advice will be given remotely by one of OA's trained staff) and on the measures to be taken if colleagues develop symptoms on site. PO/Supervisors will take advice from an OA H and S advisor before trying to take symptomatic colleagues home.

Mental Health

OA's Mental Health First Aiders are preparing guidance which will include an updated TBT – see <https://discuss.oacloud.org/t/coronavirus-mental-health-first-aid/634>

OA's approach to Mental Health and Stress Management will apply and individuals who are having difficulties should ask for help and guidance, in line with our Stress Management Policy, as required. The Policy is here: <https://files.oxfordarchaeology.com/nextcloud/index.php/f/178125>

Cover arrangements

Consideration will be given to the need for staff cover in the event that a key person on site (PO/Supervisor/Surveyor) develops symptoms – deputies will be nominated as far as practicable, and will be consulted and briefed in advance to ensure that they are happy to accept additional responsibilities.

Information regarding COVID-19 procedures

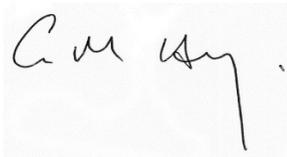
Dan Poore, Chief Business Officer, will call every site on the day it resumes to check that the measures above are in place. If this is not possible he will nominate a deputy – usually the Regional Manager or other member of the Regional Management Team.

All relevant documentation relevant to these measures – the updated RAMS, the COVID-19 TBTs and key information on self-isolation and vulnerable people’s needs - will be printed and in the site Health and Safety File before work commences. There will be daily morning briefings and feedback sessions, and one of the COVID-19 TBTs will be delivered daily.

A centralised register of all sites will be maintained by Dan Poore, to monitor the effective implementation of these measures.

These procedures will be kept under constant review by the OA H and S Team and updated dynamically. All sites will be inspected by and OA H and S Advisor, CBO or member of the Regional Management Team, using an updated version of the Site Safety Inspection Form, within 5 days of resumption of operations.

Signed:

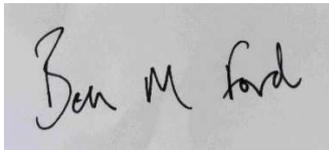
A handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background, appearing to read "Gill Hey".

Gill Hey

Chief Executive Officer

25/03/20

Ben Ford

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background, appearing to read "Ben M Ford".

Prospect Chair

25/03/20 16.20hrs