



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



PROTECTING OUR PAST

CODE FOR CARING FOR OUR MONUMENTS

#ProtectOurPast

Ireland's archaeological landscape is truly unique and we can take great pride in what our ancestors have given to us to enjoy and learn from. The built and archaeological heritage we have inherited has survived for thousands of years. These ancient structures have witnessed wars and famines, but unfortunately in recent years many sites have become at significant risk of damage.

The following guidance has been produced to help protect these unique sites for the future. We hope you will help share this information with others so that what we have inherited can continue to be passed on to generations to come.



CODE FOR CARING FOR OUR MONUMENTS



Many archaeological and built heritage sites are on privately owned land and, just like someone's home, **you can't always just walk through.**



So much information about archaeology is under the ground and new technology can read that information for us to reveal long-hidden secrets. However, **fires permanently damage our ability to read the hidden clues** and as a result we may never get to know some of the secrets of the site.



Graffiti is really damaging to archaeological or architectural monuments – we all have to pay the costs of having it removed and sometimes it's not possible to erase.



Take note of signage – these have useful information to keep you and your family safe.



Kids love to climb – it's a natural instinct. Bear in mind that **monuments and stone walls are old, often weak and can collapse** causing injury and ruining a day out.



Archaeological and built heritage sites are precious places; a direct link with our ancestors and how they lived. **They are not suitable locations for camping.**



Ancient sites typically do not feature rubbish or recycling bins. **Please leave the site as you found it.**



Off-road vehicles, mountain bikes and quads are a handy means to get around, but always **avoid driving through an old ruin or archaeological site.**



Without knowledge of the fragility of our heritage, some people **move stones** and rearrange material to create new mini monuments. Sadly, this means **no one can ever again experience the landscape or the site as it was** for thousands of years.



We love our **dogs**, but it's hard to explain the importance of good behaviour around burial sites to a beloved canine, so **please keep them on a lead and take waste away with you.**



Monuments have strong legal protection. Be careful not to break the law. **The illegal use of metal detectors causes serious damage to Ireland's archaeological heritage** and is subject to severe penalties.



Close the door when you leave – or is that a gate?



Enjoy your visit and take away great memories to share with friends and family.

For any queries or to report damage to a monument please contact nationalmonuments@housing.gov.ie

If you want to find out more about archaeological monuments, how they are protected and the work of the National Monuments Service see www.archaeology.ie

For information on visiting built heritage sites in the care of the Office of Public Works see www.heritageireland.ie

For further information on this campaign go to gov.ie/opw



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