



Why carry out a Metal Detecting survey?

The hobby of metal detecting has evolved into an activity for all ages and fitness levels and is one of the most accessible ways to discover your local heritage.

A metal detector is an electronic instrument which detects the presence of metal nearby. Metal detectors are useful for finding metal inclusions hidden within objects, or metal objects buried underground.

If metal detecting is carried out in a methodical way, with locations of finds recorded accurately, the process can offer a real insight into past settlement of an area. Metal detecting can be an interesting follow up once a fieldwalking survey has taken place, as buried metal finds won't have been discovered.

Metal finds can help give an indication of the past wealth and industry of a village.

Equipment needed:

- Metal Detector
- GPS device

Method:

The first and most important thing to remember is that all land has an owner and their permission is always required before the first swing of the coil. This includes 'public' areas such as parks, beaches, woods and even river banks. Most local authorities have a policy of refusing requests to metal detect on the public land in their care. It is also best practice to make an agreement with the land owner about what will happen to any finds before any metal detecting takes place.

There are also legal restrictions in certain areas such as scheduled monuments, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or farmers' agricultural agreements with government such as Higher Level Stewardship Schemes or Countryside Stewardship. The Wolds Historical Research Society has offered to support anyone needing further advice on the subject, contact details below.

Ploughed land is best to search as the finds are already out of any archaeological context but can still give excellent information on your site. Detecting on undisturbed pasture is to be discouraged as this may remove finds from sealed archaeological contexts.

Most finds are within six inches of the surface. Any holes dug need to be as small as possible to save your back as well as time! Holes need filling in afterwards, so that you leave nothing but your footprints.

It is important to make a note of the GPS and Grid Reference of where your find was dug up. This will help better understand the landscape it was buried in.



A pastime for all ages and abilities





You will find a lot of scrap, please ensure it is removed from the field as it may damage expensive farm machinery if left on the surface.

Ensure the land owner sees all the finds you discover, after all they are legally their finds. It also gives them a feel for the history of their land, which may in turn enable further community research projects to take place. If you don't have a metal detector but you wish to have a go or learn more please contact the Wolds Historical Research Society, a Wolds based metal detecting club, who have kindly offered to mentor groups by lending machines and giving tuition and guidance.

The best way is to have a go, it takes just a few minutes to learn and your first few finds have the potential to get you hooked on finding more of your local heritage. You may not get headline grabbing finds, but you will find items lost or discarded by ordinary Lincolnshire Wolds folk from the dawn of time to just last week.

All finds should be logged with the County's Finds Liaison Officer, Adam Daubney, who sits within Lincolnshire County Council. Adam can provide support with identifying finds as well as getting them recorded.

His telephone number is 01522 552361 or he can be emailed Adam.Daubney@Lincolnshire.gov.uk. All finds should be logged with The Portable Antiquities Scheme, which maintains a database of objects found by members of the public throughout England and Wales www.finds.org.

Where to find out more information:

Wolds Historical Research Society offer mentoring in small or larger groups and they have a few easy to operate machines for groups to use. If a more detailed survey is desired they can arrange that within a week if time is short. They also offer finds identification and survey report writing if requested. Please contact Kev Woodward at artefacts333@gmail.com for more information.

"Some finds have the power to reduce even the most hardened of farmers to tears as a dog tag I once found did to a big bear of a man, as it was from his favourite dog he had when he was a boy! Not all treasure is golden." Kev Woodward, Wolds Historical Research Society.



A small selection of the many metal detectors on the market

