

## Archaeology on the Isle of Man

Situated in the middle of the British Isles, the Isle of Man has a rich and varied heritage including prehistoric, early Christian, Viking, Medieval, post-Medieval, Industrial and Military archaeology. The Island is a self-governing British Crown dependency with its own parliament, its own national heritage organisation - Manx National Heritage (MNH) - and consequently its own ancient monuments, portable antiquities and underwater heritage legislation. Those looking to embark upon archaeological projects on the Isle of Man should be aware of the requirements of working on the Island.

### Archaeological Sites and Monuments

Under the Manx Museum and National Trust Act, no archaeological excavation can take place without first obtaining a licence from MNH.

### Archaeological Artefacts and Portable Antiquities

Under the Manx Museum and National Trust Act, there is a **legal requirement to report the discovery of any archaeological object**, including those discovered during licenced excavations, within 14 days. The Act also states that no archaeological object can be altered, damaged or taken off the Island without a licence from MNH. The definition of an archaeological object is different from that in other parts of the British Isles: it includes all treasure, and human remains when recovered by archaeological excavation.

There is additional legislation covering Treasure procedure, and the practice is for the objects to be deposited at the Manx Museum whilst the Treasure process takes its course.

### Underwater Heritage

Under the Wreck and Salvage (ships and aircraft) Act 1979, any finds of wreck within the 12 mile Manx territorial waters limit must be reported to the Island's own Receiver of Wreck (separate to the UK Receiver of Wreck).

For further information and advice, please contact:

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Links:

Manx Museum and National Trust Act:

[http://www.legislation.gov.im/cms/images/LEGISLATION/PRINCIPAL/1959/1959-0004/ManxMuseumandNationalTrustAct1959\\_1.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.im/cms/images/LEGISLATION/PRINCIPAL/1959/1959-0004/ManxMuseumandNationalTrustAct1959_1.pdf)

Treasure Act:

[https://legislation.gov.im/cms/images/LEGISLATION/PRINCIPAL/2017/2017-0002/TreasureAct2017\\_1.pdf](https://legislation.gov.im/cms/images/LEGISLATION/PRINCIPAL/2017/2017-0002/TreasureAct2017_1.pdf)

Receiver of Wreck:

<https://www.gov.im/about-the-government/departments/infrastructure/harbours-information/information-and-legislation/diving-and-wrecks/?iomg-device=Desktop>