



BRITISH STEEL *Collection*

British Steel Archive Project: Volunteers Lone Workers Policy

Introduction

The safety of volunteers is of paramount importance to the British Steel Archive Project and while incidents are rare it is vital to recognise the potential risks involved in volunteering alone.

We have therefore provided these guidelines to advise volunteers on how to keep safe and how to act appropriate in the unlikely event should an incident occur.

Working Procedures

The British Steel Archive Project:

- Is responsible for agreeing, managing and ensuring the resources necessary to implement these guidelines available.
- Shall inform appropriate authorities in event of anxiety over a volunteer's safety.

The Project Manger:

- Is responsible for day to day implementation of these guidelines.
- Shall arrange an introductory meeting between the client and volunteer.
- Shall provide on-going support to the volunteer.
- Is responsible for keeping records of all contacts with clients and all untoward incidents.

The Volunteer:

- Should leave written details of when and where they are visiting and when they expect to be back.
- Volunteers should not proceed with a visit if for any reason they are concerned about their personal safety, and should terminate any visit at anytime if they have any reason to fear for their personal safety.
- Should always report any incident, however trivial, not doing so could put others at risk. Reporting is also important in case a complaint is made against you.

Woodcut by Viva Talbot (1900-83)



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Practical Advice

Prepare yourself

- Plan your journey in advance and avoid giving the impression you don't know where you're going.
- Assess the risks
- Carry a personal alarm and mobile phone if possible.

If you have any questions regarding these guidelines, please contact the Project Manager on 01642 384478 or email britishsteel@tees.ac.uk



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Look confident

- Be alert with a sense of purpose; be aware of your surroundings.
- Keep to well-lit roads and walk purposefully
- Radiate non-vulnerability, look confident, and be aware of the impact of your body language.

Avoid risk:

- No spur of the moment choices, let people know if you change your plans.
- If using public transport sit downstairs on buses and avoid empty compartments on trains
- Special consideration should be taken when volunteering after dark, take a personal alarm, try not to use unlit cash machines.
- Joint visiting is encouraged when concerns for safety are expressed.
- Keep a free hand.
- Don't turn your back
- Adopt non-aggressive body language
- Wear sensible clothing, you are more likely to escape wearing clothes you can move easily in.
- Never give your home address or phone number to clients; dial 141 before calling so your number cannot be traced.
- On entering a building note an exit route.

Never assume:

- It won't happen to me
- It's only a short journey.
- They look respectable

Anyone can be a victim, male or female, do not ignore your instincts. You need to strike a balance between sensible caution and exaggerated suspicion. If you feel scared or uneasy do not ignore the warning, act on it! It is not weak to walk away from violence, don't let pride overrule common sense, meeting aggression with aggression only leads to confrontation.

When you arrive, remember you are a visitor:

- Say who you are and why you are there.
- Check who you are talking to and do not enter if it is not the person you were expecting.
- You may decide not to go in or leave immediately, listen to your instincts, if you feel at risk leave as soon as possible.



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Preventing situations developing:

- Tension can escalate an aggressive situation, stay calm even if you don't feel it.
- Most violence occurs after a period of escalation, this is your opportunity to diffuse situations.
- Talk yourself out of problems, placate rather than provoke. Talking can be an effective way to help a client regain their self-control. Use the client's name to establish a rapport.

A copy of this Policy will be made available through the Project Manager, and on the BSAP Website. Attention will also be drawn to the Policy, and related policies, at volunteer induction sessions.

For further information please contact:

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