

Kenneth Dodd and Mark Daniels, Visitor Safety in the Countryside Group
(www.vscg.org), £15 paperback (1st edition)

Managing Visitor Safety in the Historic Built Environment: principles and practice

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This sister publication to *Managing Visitor Safety in the Countryside* follows the same style and format, including a wealth of colour pictures and easy to read text. A must-buy if you have any responsibilities for managing historic sites, be they cathedrals, industrial heritage sites, stately homes or parks.



Rating:



The guide is split into three sections; the first deals with the principles of ensuring the safety of visitors and staff, but without destroying the heritage and visitor experience which makes these attractions valuable additions to our environment. This involves balancing risk against the benefits. The book takes into account the lessons learned, sometimes the hard way, from accidents and incidents at such sites. The two initial chapters explore the difference

between remote areas and urban buildings, where more advanced levels of intervention are required. In some locations, such as on Hadrian's Wall, it is reasonable to expect higher levels of self-reliance by the visitor.

Part 2 looks at the practices required to implement the principles explained in part 1. The five chapters look at planning and organising, using the plan-do-check-act flowchart that appears in the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) HSG65 guidance, assessing and managing risk (the largest chapter in this part of the book deals with the risk assessment process), information and education, incident reporting and investigating and emergency planning.

All these chapters use case studies, illustrated with colour photographs and useful explanations of why the control measures were taken.

Chapter 5 discusses the merits of information and education, ranging from the traditional safety signs and information boards to waymarking paths and their condition.

Part 3 focuses entirely on visitor safety and the law. This chapter briefly summarises the criminal and civil law that applies to visitor attractions, using examples taken from various court cases, some of which will be familiar to readers.

This book provides a useful guide to the pragmatic management of safety and health at historic attractions, as recognised by the HSE. It takes a balanced view of safety versus heritage, without advocating miles of fencing and a plethora of safety signs; a refreshing viewpoint expounded by an enthusiastic and experienced group.

Even if you decide not to purchase the book, it's worth taking a look at the VSCG website which is a mine of useful information and includes many of the case studies and case law featured in the book.