



Middle Nene Archaeological Group

Nassington Excavation 2024

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The Middle Nene Archaeological Group (MidNAG) is conducting a research and training excavation on a Roman site in Nassington. Excavation is only part of the project, which aims to put the site in its local and regional context using a variety of techniques, including geophysical survey and soil sampling. This year, we will be returning to the Nassington farmstead. Geophysical survey and previous years' excavations have shown that this is only one element in a wider landscape of Roman and Iron Age activity.

Below is a range of questions and answers that should help you decide how you want to be involved. The aim of the FAQs is not to put you off but to ensure that you are well prepared to take the next step and join us in this exciting opportunity. However, if you have further queries after reading this, please contact Gill Johnston by phone (01832 273798, mob. 07913 149011) or email agjohnston1941@hotmail.com

1. When and where is the excavation taking place? The excavation is taking place from Saturday 17th August until Saturday 31st August 2024 on a site within the parish of Nassington. Once we have received your completed application, we will provide directions.

2. Who can volunteer? Anyone can take part who is enthusiastic and keen to learn new skills. No previous experience is necessary. For insurance purposes, volunteers will need to be members of MidNAG.

3. What are the Membership fees? Annual subscription is £10 for an individual of any age, and £15 for a family. If you come to dig as part of an official Young Archaeologists' Club activity then there is no need to pay MidNAG's membership fees.

4. Is there a lower age limit? Yes. You must be at least 8 years old to volunteer with us. Anyone under 16 must have a parent or guardian with them at all times. If you are 16 or 17, you are able to attend the excavation without parental supervision. However, a parent or guardian must always be available to collect you at an earlier time as there are occasions when the finish time may be brought forward due to circumstances beyond our control, such as bad weather. There is no upper age limit. However, please be aware that our insurance only covers volunteers aged 16-79. Anyone outside this age range may wish to consider taking out their own insurance.

5. How do I get a volunteering application form? You can download and print an application form from our website www.midnag.org.uk/events.html or contact Chris Stanley on 01733 266992 or email castanley888@gmail.com who will email one to you.

6. How can I apply to volunteer? Please first read all the FAQs, then complete the Volunteer Application Form indicating the days you would like to attend in the appropriate section. It is not advisable to work every day of the excavation so please ensure you allow some rest days. The completed form should be sent by post to Chris Stanley, 26 Ringwood, South Bretton, Peterborough PE3 9SH or email to castanley888@gmail.com. If you are not an existing member of MidNAG, please also send a membership application form, which can be found on our website www.midnag.org.uk/about.html

It is essential that you pre-book, and pay your excavation and membership fees in advance. We recommend you book as early as possible as the excavation is very popular. We always try to accommodate volunteers for all the days requested, but may have to restrict days if demand is high. Unfortunately, you cannot just turn up. Please note that the first and last day of the excavation may involve an element of setting up and closing down the site.

7. Can I come for just one day? Unfortunately not. All volunteers are required to undergo a short induction on their first day, so you really need to attend for at least two days to get the most from the experience.

8. What sort of volunteering opportunities are there? There is a range of opportunities. You will be able to excavate and will be shown how to recognise features, record what you do and draw sections. You can help with processing finds, sieving and other tasks. Other opportunities may include taking photographs, field-walking, geophysical surveying, or stewarding on the Open Day.

9. How much will it cost for me to attend? There is a charge of £7.50 per person per day, which helps towards the cost of providing equipment, refreshments and toilet facilities on the dig, and conservation and specialist reports post-excavation. **Payment is only due once we have confirmed your place on the excavation**, either by cheque, payable to “Middle Nene Archaeological Group”, or by bank transfer (details will be available on request once you have booked).

10. What more can you tell me about the format of the excavation? A short induction will be given to all volunteers on their first day. You can expect to work in small teams, excavating a range of archaeological features, supported by experienced archaeologists. The work times will be from 9.30am to 4.30pm each day with a morning tea break (11 – 11.30am) and a break for lunch (1–1.30pm). There will also be a short afternoon break. If the weather is very hot, or wet, then the Site Director may change the times and length of breaks. All volunteers will be expected to stay for the whole day if possible.

The site will have tea and coffee making facilities, toilets and hand washing area, a meeting tent and first-aid point. There are no crèche facilities. During the excavation there will be a range of lunchtime toolbox talks on a variety of archaeological and related subjects.

11. What should I bring with me to the excavation? You are advised to wear old casual clothes and walking boots or stout shoes. Equipment will be supplied but we ask volunteers to bring their own gloves and trowel. A few trowels will be available to borrow for a small deposit but it is recommended that you buy your own. The type needed are those with a 4-inch blade, cast as one piece with a tang which goes into the handle. Other useful items to bring include gardener’s mat or knee pads, waterproofs, sunglasses, sunhat, sun protection cream, notebook, pencil and camera, plus any medication needed. Tea/coffee/water, biscuits and cake will be provided (please bring your own mug) but you will need to bring your own food for the day.

12. What happens if I cannot come one day or no longer wish to continue being a volunteer? If you are unable to work on a day that you have booked, or no longer wish to continue volunteering, please let us know as soon as possible by contacting Gill Johnston by phone on **01832 273798** or **mob. 07913 149011**.

13. What happens if MidNAG feels a volunteer is not suited to the work? If a senior archaeologist feels that a volunteer is not suited to their current task, they will talk in the first instance to the volunteer. The volunteer may be asked to carry out a different type of task, or, as a last resort, to leave the excavation.

14. Is there parking on site? Yes, you will be able to park in a field close to the excavation site. Details will be provided after your booking is confirmed.

15. Can you provide accommodation? Unfortunately, we cannot offer any accommodation.

16. I have additional needs, am I still able to come to the excavation? Everyone is welcome on the excavation and we will try to make reasonable adjustments to help anyone with additional needs to participate. However, the site is in a field so may be harder to access for those with additional physical needs. Excavating can be hard physical work, that may be too demanding for some volunteers but there are other jobs on site which may be more suitable. Many tasks also need high levels of concentration and perseverance to complete. Please be aware that MidNAG cannot take the place of carers. Please contact us to discuss your needs in more detail before you apply, so you can be sure that you would be able participate.