

Resources -

Tools and Equipment We Use

FSARG is largely a self-funding organisation. Although not averse to applying for funding for a specific purpose, e.g. a particular publication or item of equipment, we prefer to be independent as far as our research aims are concerned. Although the list of equipment used by us is long, much of it has been donated by local people or made by members. On the rare occasions when we need to use more specialised and expensive equipment, we borrow it from the Kent Archaeological Society. Training is paid for by ourselves and is our single biggest expense. Happily, our activities are insured under the Faversham Society's overall scheme - we pay this back by organising fundraising lectures and other events.

During Excavations

Almost everything required can be found around the house, shed or garage of the group members, or easily made. It's best to bulk buy the re-sealable plastic bags.

For safety

- First Aid Kit
- Emergency water (for drinking or wound cleaning)
- Suntan lotion
- Gardening gloves - for hand protection if desired
- Roll of Plastic Temporary Fencing - used to cordon-off excavated areas for over-night protection or for public areas during excavation
- Metal Support Poles for the above fencing
- Roll of Hazard Tape - for marking areas of hazard

For Earth Moving

- Turf cutter - for cutting turf into manageable sizes
- Plastic sheeting to cover the turf to prevent it from drying out
- Wheelbarrows (Optional)
- Mattocks (small and large)
- Pickaxe
- Large shovels - for quick removal of soil or for back-filling
- Spades - for turf removal
- Builders bags - to put all excavated soil into during excavation thereby keeping the area clean
- Tarpaulin Sheets - to keep grass and other areas free from mess

For Excavating

- Trowels (Preferably with the blade forged to the handle -riveted ones fall apart)
- Hard and soft hand brushes

- Small shovels - for removing soil from pit
- Leaf trowel - together with other dental tools and small brushes
- Seed Trays - for finds (large quantity used)
- Buckets - plastic with metal handles
- Sieves - for sieving the excavated soil
- Secateurs
- Kneeling pads - for comfort while excavating

For marking out the site

- 4" (10cm) Nails - used to peg out excavation area
- Nylon string - bright coloured used with the nails to mark out the excavation area
- Tape measures (2 x 25m or 50m)
- 1m grid with cords (to overlay excavation area for recording or setting out) - (home-made)

For Recording and Drawing

- Site Notebook (A4 or A5 Hardback)
- Record Sheets: Context, Small Finds and Photograph
- Pencil case containing pens, pencils, sharpeners, erasers small ruler
- Range of clear re-closable plastic bags with write-on panel - for bagging of small finds
- Plastic plant labels - large quantity used as identification for seed trays and for marking contexts during excavation
- Permanent Marker (Sharpie) For writing on plant labels and plastic bags
- Storage box to store documentation and stationery and photographic Equipment
- Small Drawing board (piece of 5mm plywood a bit bigger than A3 covered with an A3 sheet of graph paper attached)
- Drawing film (A3 or A4 size)
- Masking tape to attach drawing film to the drawing board
- Plumb line
- Retractable Tape measure (2m or 3m)

For Photography

- Camera (digital - cheap - dust will finish it off in a couple of seasons)
- Chalk Board - to identify contexts and features for photographs (home-made)
- Chalk - for the above
- Small Sponge - for cleaning the chalk board
- Compass

- North Indicator - to include in the photographs (home-made)
- Plastic Range Poles - 1m and 0.5m lengths (home-made)

For Comfort

- Gazebo - inexpensive type for rain cover or shade
- Fold-up Chairs
- Folding Table
- Flasks, Coffee, Tea, Biscuits

Miscellaneous

- Metal Detector - for detecting the spoil and checking for metal objects during excavation
- Reference books (other standard reference sheets laminated for durability)

For Surveying

Checking Levels

- Dumpy Level with Tripod
- Telescopic Measuring Staff 5m
- Chalk
- High Visibility Jackets
- Surveying Record Sheets

Resistivity Surveys

- Geo-Resistivity Meter
- Tape Measures (2 x 30m)
- Tape Measures (2 x 50m)
- Optical Square - to aid the setting out of right angles
- Bamboo canes - for corner marking / layout
- Four or more 20m Ropes (polypropylene) with high contrast markings (nylon cord sewn through rope) at 1 m intervals, rope ends made off into 1" key rings.
- Pegs (8 or more cheap market-stall screwdrivers with 20cm blades are best) - to peg out the ropes for grid
- Geo-Resistivity documentation including, clipboard record sheets, maps and stationery, pens, pencils
- Laptop PC with Geo-resistivity software - to input and view the results in the field

Field Walking

- Bamboo canes with coloured flags (or hazard tape) to aid visibility - they are amazingly hard to find otherwise.
- Tape Measures (2 x 50m)
- Optical Square to aid the setting out of right angles
- Plastic Bags for placing finds in (label these in advance for each line to be walked) and have plenty of spares just in case.
- Marker pen for bags
- Whistle - to indicate start and stop times
- Stopwatch
- Documentation record sheets, pens and pencils

Finds Processing and Archiving

- Buckets
- Washing up bowls - for cleaning finds
- Nylon kitchen sieve, for finding those bits that got lost in the washing water
- Range of Brushes including toothbrushes, nailbrushes, stiff paintbrushes
- Seed Trays lined with newspaper - for drying finds
- Scales - for weighing up to several kg
- Digital Precision Scales - for weighing small items down to 0.01g accuracy
- Pens, indelible marking ink (black and white) for marking finds
- Brunel BMX Stereoscopic Microscope with x20 / x40 magnification
- Magnifying Glass
- Record Sheets for each class of find
- Acid-free paper - for storage of certain items
- Range of clear re-closable plastic bags with write-on panel - for bagging of finds
- Permanent markers for plastic bags
- Storage containers - for archiving (large heavy duty cardboard fruit or tomato boxes are suitable)
- Reference books

Home-Made Bits and Pieces

Chalk Board

- Piece of wood, approximately 12cm * 25cm painted with blackboard paint

North Indicator

- 15cm long piece of wood or metal or old 6" ruler with an arrow in indelible marker and the letter N at one end.

Plastic Ranging Poles

- 15mm rigid, white, plastic water pipe cut into 0.5m, 1.0m (or 1.5m) lengths. paint alternate 10cm lengths red (use masking tape to get an accurate clean edge).

Grid Square

- Use four pieces of planed wood (30mm x 15mm) to make a square with an internal dimension of 1m x 1m.
- Reinforce the joints with metal corner pieces to keep the corners rigid.
- At accurately measured 20cm intervals drill holes vertically (use a pillar drill if you have access to one) through each side of the square
- Thread thin (1mm) nylon cord to make a square grid. The grid should be on both sides of the frame. Having the grid on both sides of the frame means that a person using the grid to create a sketch plan can line up the top and bottom cords to know they are looking vertically down, increasing the accuracy of the sketch.