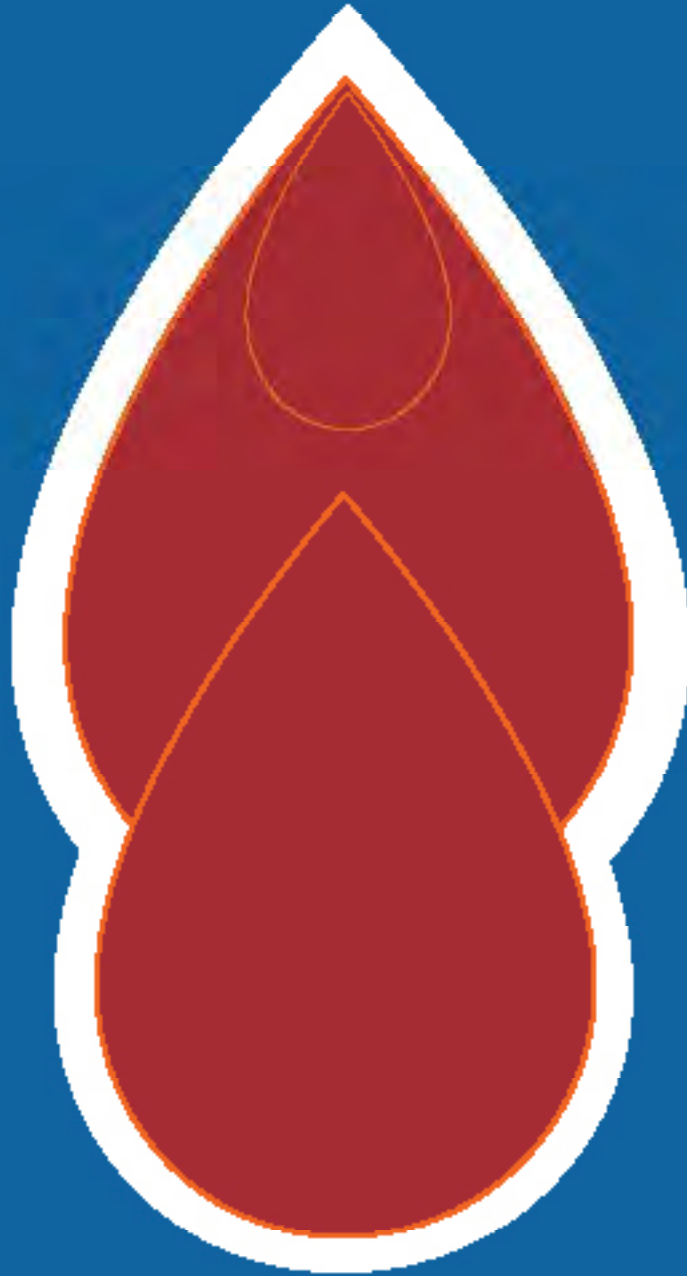


# Seeing RED



Inclusive Menstrual Hygiene and Period  
Positive Guide for Archaeology  
& Heritage



# Introduction to Seeing Red

Seeing Red came about through discussions within the Mentoring for Womxn (inclusive) Archaeology and Heritage group (MWAH!) with individuals coming forward with experiences regarding menstruation in commercial and consulting archaeology and heritage. The following are examples which illustrate why this initiative is needed.

"I know plenty of people who came on a period early and had to leave site due to lack of supplies as well as many cases of tampons being thrown into hedges. Those who couldn't practically use tampons suffered the most!" - LB

"Having to go on the pill even though it made me poorly, as I was terrified of having periods on sites."  
- Cat

"The baton of friendship! Everyone on the site gets to know who's on a period because we always need emergency supplies!" - EE

"Nowhere to get changed on site during a period disaster, as the portaloos are always rank!" - AC

"During a buildings recording job I had to change a tampon behind a tree. Looking back it was unhygienic and degrading" - Ruth

"I chose to get the injection contraception, primarily because of my experience on sites with inadequate facilities. 20+ people shared a welfare van on one site, and it was horrendous!" - KS

"Having to wash accommodation sheets out in the sink, as they were always white, and I was scared of being charged! Plus, the cramps on site made physical work so much harder, which was not ideal when things needed to get sorted!" - Lucy

"The UTI's from working on hot sweaty sites in summer with no local facilities. Including that one time we had to wear heavy duty boiler suits which just made the UTI's worse! Fortunately, we had a PO who was happy to drive us whenever we needed to go."- Anonymous

"There was a watching brief where we were all based out of cars, so I couldn't go to the loo for 8-9 hours. It was ok for the men as they could just wander off!" - Rebecca

"I had to change a tampon behind a farmyard wall in sleet, standing in sheep poo, due to there being no accessible toilet on my watching brief. I was still wearing gloves as it was literally too cold to remove them. I had to carry the used tampon in my pocket for the rest of the day as I couldn't discard it anywhere."

- Amy

"Having portaloos but no handwashing facilities is fairly standard. Or no bin."

- MS

"I had to change a tampon in a derelict building that was in the process of being demolished because there was no accessible toilet on site. There was no door and I had to do it as quick as possible before the builders came back in. Then I had to carry the tampon around all F-ng day because there was no bin!"- Clare

"My coping strategies generally wear the heaviest tampons and a thick pad, then cross your fingers! I hope things have improved....!"

- Tess

"My period was overflowing, and we were too far away from a public toilet, with no on site facilities. I was saved from disaster by another group of archaeologists who let me use the portaloos on their site!"

- Rosie



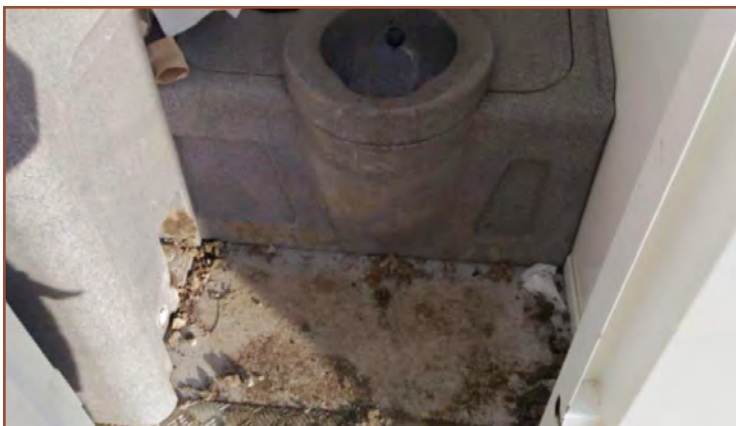
Seeing Red aims to:

- Promote safer menstrual hygiene across commercial, consulting and public archaeology as well as the wider construction industry;
- Create a safe platform for individuals to raise issues to their project managers;
- Raise the profile for menstruating archaeologists and heritage workers across the industry.

This is being done through this Guide, which has been adopted by the following organisations: The Council for British Archaeology (CBA), the Federation for Archaeological Managers and Employers (FAME), the British Archaeological Jobs and Resources (BAJR) and its subsequent RESPECT group, the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA), Prospect Union, Archaeology Scotland and Historic England.

Seeing Red is also working on a collaboration with Brilliant Bins to ensure all sites have access to sanitary bins ([www.Brilliantbins.co.uk](http://www.Brilliantbins.co.uk)).

It should be noted that current facilities on archaeological sites are starting to improve, however there are still issues with facilities available for hygiene needs. Better hygiene across facilities can reduce staff having to potentially take time off work due to menstruation, as well as the avoidance of thrush, cysts and UTIs (urinary tract infections). These ailments can have detrimental affects to employee mental health as well as long-term physical health issues. However, through the experience of individuals on archaeological sites, the following issues are commonplace; there is often no toilet roll, waste bins, running water or soap available, toilets are being kept locked on site which leads to embarrassment of employees having to specifically ask for keys from Construction Management, and poor in-toilet facilities including lack of regular cleaning. These issues are also commonly noted in instances where unisex toilets and portaloos/ chemical toilets are available.



Example of poor welfare facilities



Organisations who  
have adopted  
Seeing Red include:

AC Archaeology  
Albion Archaeology  
AOC Archaeology  
Archaeological Research Services (ARS)  
Archaeological Services at the University of Durham  
Archaeology South-East (ASE)  
Archaeology Wales  
Archaeology Warwickshire  
Brython Archaeology  
Cambridge Archaeological Unit  
Canterbury Archaeological Trust  
Centre of Applied Archaeology at the University of  
Salford  
CFA Archaeology  
Cornwall Archaeology  
Dyfed Archaeological Trust  
Headland-RSK Archaeology  
Historic England  
Historic Environment Scotland  
Magnitude Surveys  
Museum of London Archaeology (MoLA)  
Oxford Archaeology  
PCA Archaeology  
Rathmell Archaeology  
Red River Archaeology  
Rubicon Archaeology  
The Heritage Network  
University of Edinburgh Archaeology Society  
Wardell-Armstrong Archaeology  
Wessex Archaeology  
West Yorkshire Archaeology Service (WYAS)  
Worcestershire Archaeology  
York Archaeology (incorporating Trent and Peak)  
and many individual archaeologists whom Seeing  
Red would like to thank for all their support



# A note on the use of terminology

The menstrual cycle is defined by the Oxford English Dictionary (2022) as:

*“The process in a woman of discharging blood and other material from the lining of the uterus at intervals of about one lunar month from puberty until the menopause, except during pregnancy”* This process is known as a Period.

Seeing Red notes that: ‘Not all cis-women menstruate, and not only cis-women experience menstruation’. As such all language moving forward will use gender-neutral language. In this context ‘cis’ is defined as ‘referring or relating to people whose sense of personal identity and gender corresponds with their birth sex’ (Oxford English Dictionary 2022). The exception to this language is where official Health and Safety legislation (below) has been directly quoted. The prevalent use of male pronouns in the below legislation indicates how legislation has been created specifically for cis-men, with other individuals discussed at later revisions.

Regarding the legislation, this Guide focuses on the United Kingdom (UK). The devolved states (England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, as well as other countries within the British Isles such as the Republic of Ireland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man ) may have additional changes to guidance. Always refer to the guidance set out for specific countries and locations.



Examples of period packs  
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# Current legislation for Health and Safety in the Workplace

The relevant legislation for menstruation, specifically within the construction industry is summarised below with further information and guidance available from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) website (<https://www.hse.gov.uk/>).

## Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974

### Section 2. General duties of employers to their employees.

(1) It shall be the duty of every **employer** to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all his employees.

(2) Without prejudice to the generality of an employer's duty under the preceding subsection, the matters to which that duty extends include in particular:

(d) so far as is reasonably practicable as regards any place of work under the employer's control, **the maintenance of it in a condition that is safe and without risks to health** and the provision and maintenance of means of access to and egress from it that are safe and without such risks;

(e) the provision and maintenance of a working environment for his employees that is, so far as is reasonably practicable, safe, **without risks to health, and adequate as regards facilities and arrangements for their welfare at work.**

(3) Except in such cases as may be prescribed, it shall be the duty of every employer to prepare and as often as may be appropriate revise a **written statement of his general policy** with respect to the health and safety at work of his employees and the organisation and arrangements for the time being in force for carrying out that policy, and to bring the statement and any revision of it to the notice of all of his employees.

### Section 7. General duties of employees at work.

It shall be the duty of every **employee** while at work:

(a) to take **reasonable care for the health and safety of himself and of other persons** who may be affected by his acts or omissions at work; and

(b) as regards any duty or requirement imposed on his employer or any other person by or under any of the relevant statutory provisions, **to co-operate with him so far as is necessary** to enable that duty or requirement to be performed or complied with.

# The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992

## Section 5. Maintenance of workplace, and of equipment, devices and systems

(1) The workplace and the equipment, devices and systems to which this regulation applies shall be maintained (**including cleaned as appropriate**) in an efficient state, in efficient working order and in good repair.

(2) Where appropriate, the equipment, devices and systems to which this regulation applies shall be subject to a suitable system of maintenance.

## Section 9. Cleanliness and waste materials

(1) Every workplace and the furniture, furnishings and fittings therein shall be kept **sufficiently clean**.

(2) **The surfaces of the floors, walls and ceilings of all workplaces inside buildings** shall be capable of being kept sufficiently clean.

(3) So far as is reasonably practicable, **waste materials shall not be allowed to accumulate in a workplace except in suitable receptacles**.

## Section 20. Sanitary conveniences

(1) **Suitable and sufficient sanitary conveniences shall be provided at readily accessible places**.

(2) Without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (1), sanitary conveniences shall not be suitable unless:

(a) **the rooms containing them are adequately ventilated and lit;**

(b) **they and the rooms containing them are kept in a clean and orderly condition;**  
and

(c) **separate rooms containing conveniences are provided for men and women except where and so far as each convenience is in a separate room the door of which is capable of being secured from inside.**

(3) It shall be sufficient compliance with the requirement in paragraph (1) to provide sufficient sanitary conveniences in a workplace which is not a new workplace, a modification, an extension or a conversion and which, immediately before this regulation came into force in respect of it, was subject to the provisions of the Factories Act 1961, if sanitary conveniences are provided in accordance with the provisions of Part II of Schedule 1.

## Section 21. Washing facilities

(1) Suitable and sufficient washing facilities, including showers if required by the nature of the work or for health reasons, shall be provided at **readily accessible places**.

(2) Without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (1), washing facilities shall not be suitable unless:

(a) they are provided in the immediate vicinity of **every sanitary convenience**, whether or not provided elsewhere as well;

(c) they include a supply of **clean hot and cold, or warm, water** (which shall be running water so far as is practicable);

(d) they include soap or other suitable means of cleaning;

(e) they include towels or other suitable means of drying;

(f) the rooms containing them are sufficiently ventilated and lit;

(g) they and the rooms containing them are kept in a **clean and orderly condition**;  
and

(h) separate facilities are provided for men and women, except where and so far as they are provided in a room the door of which is capable of being secured from inside and the facilities in each such room are intended to be used by only one person at a time.



(3) Paragraph (2)(h) shall not apply to facilities which are provided for washing hands, forearms and face only.

### **Section 24. Facilities for changing clothing**

(1) Suitable and sufficient facilities shall be provided for any person at work in the workplace to change clothing in all cases where:

- (a) the person has to wear special clothing for the purpose of work; and
- (b) **the person can not, for reasons of health or propriety, be expected to change in another room.**

(2) Without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (1), the facilities mentioned in that paragraph shall not be suitable unless they include separate facilities for, or separate use of facilities by, men and women where necessary for reasons of propriety.

## **The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015**

### **Schedule 2. Minimum welfare facilities required for construction sites**

#### **Sanitary conveniences**

**(1) Suitable and sufficient sanitary conveniences must be provided or made available at readily accessible places.**

(2) So far as is reasonably practicable, rooms containing sanitary conveniences must be adequately ventilated and lit.

(3) So far as is reasonably practicable, sanitary conveniences and the rooms containing them must be kept in a clean and orderly condition.

(4) Separate rooms containing sanitary conveniences must be provided for men and women, except where and so far as each convenience is in a separate room, the door of which is capable of being secured from the inside.

#### **Washing facilities**

(1) Suitable and sufficient washing facilities, including showers if required by the nature of the work or for health reasons, must, so far as is reasonably practicable, be provided or made available at readily accessible places.

(2) Washing facilities must be provided:

- (a) in the immediate vicinity of every sanitary convenience, whether or not also provided elsewhere; and
- (b) in the vicinity of any changing rooms required by paragraph 4, whether or not provided elsewhere.

(3) Washing facilities must include:

- (a) a supply of clean hot and cold, or warm, water (which must be running water so far as is reasonably practicable);
- (b) soap or other suitable means of cleaning; and
- (c) towels or other suitable means of drying.

(4) Rooms containing washing facilities must be sufficiently ventilated and lit.

(5) Washing facilities and the rooms containing them must be kept in a clean and orderly condition.

(6) Subject to sub-paragraph (7), separate washing facilities must be provided for men and women, except where they are provided in a room the door of which is capable of being secured from inside and the facilities in each room are intended to be used by only one person at a time.

(7) Sub-paragraph (6) does not apply to facilities which are provided for washing hands, forearms and the face only.



# Seeing Red: what employers can do to support menstruating staff

- Ensure reasonable on-site facilities, with sanitary waste disposal to be available on every site. Should these facilities require a key, ensure that this is kept on site where it is easily accessible.
- If an employee raises concerns regarding the cleanliness of welfare facilities, that the on-site supervising staff member can raise issues to the Construction Management team.
- Ensure that emergency sanitary care is always available. Seeing Red Recommends creating a sanitary first aid kit or “period pack” as described below. A designated member of staff in the unit should be assigned to ensure that packs are kept clean, refilled as necessary and sent out to **every** site.
- Ensure menstruating employees are working within their current abilities. It may be that menstruating employees are unable to work fast, or have high energy levels.
- Ensure that the employee feels confident and without stigma to say if they are unable to attend work that day due to menstruation complications. They should not be unduly penalised for this time off and if that employee needs to take regular toilet or facility breaks, this should be facilitated.
- Ensure that if an employee does not feel comfortable speaking to their site manager/ project officer that they are still accommodated for and given reasonable allowance to privately deal with their menstruation.
- Employees may have separate needs, such as a pre-existing medical condition, like Poly-cystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) or Endometriosis which may require additional support and needs on site. These needs should reasonably be accommodated for.
- Ensure that for any away accommodation, that there is good access to sanitary conditions while away. Taking time to check booking reviews in this instance can be useful in prioritising safety.



# Seeing Red: what employees can do to support employers

- Keep on-site management updated, regarding any health and safety concerns, including the state of the sanitary facilities
- Ensure that they are responsible for their own personal hygiene.
- Ensure that if reasonable support is needed for a medical or menstrual condition, that the on-site supervising team are aware with as much notice as possible. If the employee wishes to keep this information private, that is acceptable to do so if it will not compromise the running of the site.
- To ensure where, for example the affected employee is a site driver, or has supervising duties on site, that reasonable adjustments can be made that do not compromise the duties or abilities of other staff on site. For example, ensure that another driver can take over duties.
- That employees will take responsibility for their extra duties, and avoid taking on extra duties, if they know they may not be able to undertake them.
- That employees will be responsible for their own pain management within reason. If an employee needs to take medication that could prevent them from working and carrying out their duties, it is up to the employee to inform their site manager/ project officer and to request reasonable time off. This is especially important if the employee is a designated driver or has machine monitoring duties.



# Creating a Period Pack

A period pack is designed like a first-aid kit, where it should be in a convenient location (preferably the toilet) for easy access to any individual who requires it. Please note these packs should not be used for any situation beyond emergencies. Menstruating individuals are still required to be responsible for their own hygiene.

These packs will include the following basic supplies:

- 1 x Plastic case, preferably with a zip and see-through material, so that items can be easily visible and the pack can be kept clean.
- 1 x Hand sanitiser gel for instances where soap is limited or further hygiene is required
- 1 x Pack of wet wipes. If the plastic case is too small for both gel and wet-wipes, wet wipes should be prioritised.
- 1 x Pack of tissues.
- A rough handful of sanitary bags/ nappy bags/ any other bag that can be used to dispose of used items.
- A selection of mixed-size, individually wrapped applicator tampons. These tampons offer the best hygienic protection for individual use.
- A selection of mixed-size, individually wrapped pads. These pads offer the best hygienic protection for individual use.

All of these items can be bought cheaply from stores. Seeing Red recommends products from Superdrug or any other basic supermarket or convenience store, as their basic ranges are cheap, while named brands such as 'Cheeky Panda' are eco-friendly and bio-degradable while 'fab little bag' are bio-degradable sanitary bags.

Seeing Red also recommends there is at least one pack per site, or more depending on the number of individual toilets/ cubicles on site.



Example of a period pack  
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This guide was put together by Amy Talbot with valuable help and assistance from the grassroots organisation Mentoring Womxn in Archaeology and Heritage (MWAH!) whose members reflect the diversity across Archaeology and Heritage based careers. This guide would not have existed if not for the support of the amazing teams at RESEPCT and PROSPECT.

Special thanks for Aisling Nash for her help in the design.

Dedicated to Theresa O'Mahoney. A tireless and fearsome trailblazer for those in enabled and feminist archaeology. Her work will not be forgotten

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