

A Decade Later - Britain Learns UXO Dredging Lesson

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Leigh-on Sea, England Bomb disposal experts were called to Belfairs Park after receiving a report of a UXO along a path constructed for the recently built Woodland Center.

The recent find, identified by bomb disposal as a 40mm round, was not the first UXO call along the pathway. An earlier call identified a live fuze from an anti-aircraft shell along the pathway. The previous call resulted in a search of the area where investigators found additional ordnance items. The latest discovery is proof that ordnance sweeps are rarely 100% effective.

Investigators attribute the ordnance finds to the aggregate that was used in pathway construction which was made from crushed shells. Apparently, the dredge area where the shells were gathered from off shore was a former munitions sea disposal site.

The UXO issue facing the Woodland Center staff is very similar to the UXO issue that residents along the eastern shore of DE, MD, and VA experienced at the DELMARVA Eastern Shore UXO Site - ([see site inventory on UXOInfo.com](http://UXOInfo.com)) a decade ago. At the DELMARVA site, crushed oyster shells used for driveway aggregate deposited UXO and munitions debris in several hundred driveways. The UXO finds resulted in numerous 911 calls and a sizable investigation by the USACE Baltimore District where over 110 driveways were investigated. Officials also inspected operations and the oyster shell processing plant.

These latest UXO finds attributed to dredging activities is further evidence that a comprehensive inventory of munitions sea disposal sites is needed - not only for the U.S. but across the globe. Without an inventory and proper controls such as education, this issue is poised to repeat itself over and over again for many years to come. Hopefully when it does, no one gets injured or killed in the process.