

**Specialist Group and Regional Group field trip safety information**

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| 1.0 | Live document | Aidan Ramsden, Head of Facilities | 12/01/23 |
| 1.1 | Annual review | Aidan Ramsden, Head of Facilities | 10/04/24 |

The Geological Society (the Society) takes the safety of its Fellows seriously and has overall responsibility for health and safety on field trips. However, field trip participants must also take responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others. The Society reserves the right to limit or refuse attendance on field trips for safety reasons.

All field trips must have a designated Field Trip Safety Leader, who is responsible for all aspects of safety both prior to and during the trip.

The Society’s public/products liability insurance provides third-party cover (which includes field trip participants) for Specialist Group and Regional Group field trips in the UK. For example, if a field trip participant harmed themselves or their property as a result of the negligence of the Field Trip Safety Leader, the Society’s insurance would cover any subsequent claim.

The Society’s insurance does not cover any activity involving boats or any other off-shore activity, so these must be avoided on field trips.

If the Field Trip Safety Leader is aware of any particular activity planned for a field trip that may pose a significant risk, the insurers must be consulted via the Society’s Head of Facilities to ensure that the appropriate level of cover is in place. This must be done well in advance of the date of the field trip.

Specialist Groups and Regional Groups should:

* Ensure that a Field Trip Safety Leader is nominated and issued with this document well in advance of the field trip.
* Ensure that the Field Trip Safety Leader completes *Appendix A - Field trip safety information* and *Appendix C - Field trip risk assessment template* and returns these to the relevant Society department well before the trip start date. The documents will then be forwarded to the Society’s Head of Facilities for review.

**Appendix A - Field trip safety information form**

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| **Field trip title *(e.g. Specialist Group X’s visit to Snowdonia)*:** |  |
| **Field trip organiser (name and contact details):** |  |
| **Field Trip Safety Leader (name and contact details):** |  |
| **Start date & time:** |  |
| **Finish date & time:** |  |
| **Start location (provide** [**https://what3words.com/**](https://what3words.com/) **reference and/or map):** |  |
| **Finish location (provide** [**https://what3words.com/**](https://what3words.com/) **reference and/or map):** |  |
| **Transport arrangements:** |  |
| **Field/safety equipment provided by Specialist/Regional Group:** |  |
| **Field/safety equipment to be supplied by participants:** |  |
| **Type of footwear and clothing to be worn by participants:** |  |
| **Type of terrain:** |  |
| **Length of walks:** |  |

**Appendix B – Field Trip Safety Leader’s responsibilities**

The Field Trip Safety Leader must:

* Complete *Appendix A - Field trip safety information* and *Appendix C - Field trip risk assessment template*.
* Complete *Appendix C - Field trip risk assessment template* so that is relevant for the specific field trip in question. This involves: (a) identifying which hazards are relevant to the field trip; (b) determining the risk scores; (c) outlining further control measures, if required.
* Give a health and safety briefing at the start of the field trip.
* Issue completed copies of *Appendix A - Field trip safety information* and *Appendix C - Field trip risk assessment template* to all participants before the field trip starts.
* Have a list of appropriate local emergency numbers with them.
* Be first aid trained and have necessary first aid supplies with them.
* Provide instructions to participants on appropriate clothing and footwear for the locality, time of year, etc. and anticipate potential changes in weather conditions.
* Not permit any children or animals on field trips.
* Be alert to unforeseen risks that may develop whilst on the field trip.

The Field Safety Leader has the final say on any safety matters.

**Appendix C - Field trip risk assessment template**

Definitions:

* Hazard - something with the potential to cause harm.
* Risk - the likelihood that a hazard will cause harm in combination with the severity of injury, damage or loss that might foreseeably occur.
* Risk score - an assignment of High, Medium, Low as determined by the risk assessor.

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| **Field trip title *(e.g. Specialist Group X’s visit to Snowdonia)*:** |  |
| **Field trip location:** |  |
| **Field trip date:** |  |
| **Field Trip Safety Leader:** |  |
| **Date Field Trip Safety Leader last visited location:** |  |
| **Date risk assessment completed:** |  |

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| **Hazard category & hazard** | **Hazard relevant to the field trip (Y/N)** | **Who might be harmed and how** | **Existing control measures** | **Initial risk score**  **(H, M, L)** | **Further control measures (if required)** | **Revised risk score (H, M, L)** |
| **Weather**  Extreme and/or unpredictable weather. |  | Field trip participants.  Hypothermia, sunstroke, dehydration. | In winter, wear layers of warm clothing and good quality waterproofs.  In summer, wear light clothing, waterproofs, sunhat, sunglasses and sun block.  Always carry spare food and plenty of liquids. |  |  |  |
| **Tides**  Access cut off. |  | Field trip participants.  Hypothermia, drowning. | Consult tide tables.  Visit coastal sections on falling tide if possible. |  |  |  |
| **Terrain**  Walking across rough or slippery terrain. |  | Field trip participants.  Sprains, strains, bruises, cuts. | Field Trip Leader will advise whether boots, trainers or wellies are suitable for the specific trip.  Wear suitable stout footwear with good grip to protect feet and ankles, as advised by the Field Trip Leader. |  |  |  |
| **Terrain**  Proximity to high escarpment/ridge/cliff where a slip/trip could lead to falling off the edge. |  | Field trip participants.  Fractures, concussion, death. | Avoid escarpment/ridge/cliff edges. |  |  |  |
| **Rock falls**  Injury caused by rocks/debris falling from cliffs, quarry faces or road cuttings. |  | Field trip participants.  Bruises, cuts, concussion. | Wear a hard hat when close to base of cliffs, quarry faces or road cuttings.  Take care not to dislodge rocks when moving on terrain above other people. |  |  |  |
| **Working quarries, mines and industrial sites**  Injury caused by working machinery, toxic substances, blasting, falling into sludge ponds or deep standing water. |  | Field trip participants.  Cuts, bruises, fractures, concussion, drowning, injury from contact/inhalation of toxic substance. | Follow safety instructions issued by the site.  Wear safety equipment provided.  Avoid moving equipment/ vehicles. |  |  |  |
| **Hammering**  Injury caused by flying rock fragments. |  | Field trip participants.  Cuts, eye damage. | Wear safety goggles/glasses.  Warn those close by before hammering for samples. |  |  |  |

**Appendix D – Field trip participants’ responsibilities**

Field trip participants must:

* Follow the guidance of the Field Trip Safety Leader and read the risk assessment and safety information provided.
* Take responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others.
* Wear the recommended footwear, clothing and/or other protective equipment (e.g. safety goggles). Failure to do so may lead to exclusion from the trip.
* Not bring children or animals on the field trip.
* Inform the Field Trip Safety Leader if they leave the trip early.
* Be alert to unforeseen risks that may develop whilst on the field trip.

The Field Safety Leader has the final say on any safety matters.