

WESTMORLAND GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

FIELDTRIP GUIDELINES

At the start of each fieldtrip, the Leader (or Responsible Officer) will describe the itinerary and any potential hazards. Visitors are welcome on payment of a £2 fee. Please note: guide dogs only.

Fieldtrips may be graded gentle (mainly on paths with no very steep or rocky areas), medium (5-6 miles/8-9 kms with some rough ground and moderate slopes), or hard (more than 6 miles / 10 kms and with steep slopes).

Suitable outdoor clothing and packed lunches should be carried on full day excursions, which usually end around 4 pm. Travel is by members' cars and car sharing is strongly encouraged.

All participants are required to sign formally that they have read these guidelines and the 'Safety in the Field' instructions (see below) and that they agree to abide by them. A copy will be available to read at the start of each fieldtrip. This will only be needed once each field season. However, at each fieldtrip attended, ALL participants should sign the register so that the insurance is valid.

The Society records its fieldtrips and lectures annually in its journal (Proceedings), issued free to members. Copies can be purchased at £5 each from the Secretary (back issues available on disc).

SAFETY IN THE FIELD

Although geological fieldwork is a pleasurable activity, by its nature it may involve some risks. These can be minimised by observing sensible precautions. It is important that everyone undertaking fieldwork is alert to both the general and specific risks and can take responsibility for their own safety and for the impact this may have on the safety of others.

Fieldtrips organised by the Society are conducted on the understanding that members and guests are aware of their general responsibilities. For its part, the Society, through fieldtrip leaders, will issue specific warnings where conditions differ from those likely to be encountered by an active person of normal health during a weekend ramble in the hills. Participants are specifically asked to:

- (a) Inform the party leader in advance of the fieldtrip, in confidence, of any medical condition which may have a bearing on their own safety or on that of other party members.
- (b) Observe all safety instructions given by the party leader. Inform the leader if they wish to leave the party and inform him/her immediately of any illness or injury.
- (c) Provide themselves with warm & waterproof clothing (brightly coloured if possible), strong waterproof boots that provide some grip, and carry a small personal first-aid kit.
- (d) Carry a survival bag, whistle, spare clothing, and survival rations when working in remote or mountainous regions.
- (e) Wear a hard hat whenever there is a risk from falling objects. This is obligatory when visiting quarries, mines, building sites or road sections under construction and, in the interests of safety, members may wish to obtain their own.
- (f) Take special care on steep slopes (e.g. scree slopes, cliffs and quarries); on muddy slopes and slippery shore-sections, and when working on roadside cuttings or exposures, particularly when construction is in progress. Be alert when crossing roads and railways, it is easy to get distracted.

Check the times of tides, remembering that high winds may make them higher than you expect, and ensure that you are familiar with the exit points from coastal sections.

(g) Avoid overhanging or unstable rock faces, especially during thaw conditions after a cold spell or after heavy rain. This is particularly important in quarries but also on some coastal cliffs where large sections may fall without warning.

(h) Obtain the permission of landowners or factors before entering property. Permission to collect samples may be required and special permits are necessary on Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

(i) Always wear Impact resistant safety goggles or spectacles when hammering tough or splintery rocks or using chisels. Never use a second hammer as a chisel. Beware of standing too close to others using either.

The Geologists' Association publish a **Geological Fieldwork Code** (available on the WGS website), which includes information on safety & guidance on appropriate ways of obtaining samples.