

1. Introduction

Field trips are an essential activity of the Russell Society, both for the enjoyment of our members and for the recording of British topographic mineralogy, in line with our charitable objectives. Any activity carries an inherent degree of risk. To help mitigate risks to an acceptable level the Society has developed a risk assessment and field trip management process. This process has been developed over a period of 40 years and represents the cumulative knowledge and experience of our members gained on both field trips and in their numerous professional careers (including members who have managed quarries, underground mines and construction sites). In addition, our risk assessments have been considered by active quarry and mine managers and their comments integrated where appropriate.

In terms of health and safety in active quarry and mine settings our guidance complies with industry best practice, including type and use of personal protective equipment.

The risk assessment and field trip management process adopted by the Society is set out in a suite of documents held at <http://russellsoc.org/safety/>

It is not possible to eliminate all risks associated with field trips. The Society considers, however, that the raft of field trip guidance that has been developed provides reasonable and proportionate mitigation of the potential risks faced by our members.

Our field trip risk assessment and management process will continue to be reviewed and improved, in line with continuing experience and emerging best practice.

2. Competent Leaders

The Society does not operate a formal training process for Field Trip Leaders and does not consider it proportionate or practical to do this, given our membership size and experience to date. Many of our members hold, or have held, professional positions and are familiar with risk assessment processes and controlling groups of people.

To develop competent Field Trip Leaders the Society prefers to use an approach that gradually builds up the experience of new leaders to a point where they are comfortable to safely lead trips. This is achieved by:

- New leaders must have attended a minimum of five field trips before leading their own trip;
- New leaders will be made aware of the field trip risk assessment and management documentation process by their local Field Trip Organiser or Branch Organiser before leading their own trip;
- Personal guidance can be provided to new leaders to help them complete the risk assessment process;
- New leaders will be accompanied by an experienced Field Trip Leader when leading their first trip.

Branch Field Trip Organisers or Branch Organisers will be responsible for ensuring the above measures are put in place for new Field Trip Leaders. Existing Field Trip Leaders are deemed to have met the requirements to lead field trips without the need for further checks.

3. Special Circumstances

Special guidance may be issued by Council where required, for example on the use of excavators for larger digs. This guidance will normally be prepared by members who have prior experience of the activity at hand, typically those with construction, mining or quarrying experience.