

GUIDELINES FOR FIELD TRIP REPORTS FOR THE RUSSELL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER 2026

Background

Each year the Russell Society aims to run a full program of field events for the benefit of its members and to meet its stated charitable objectives. Field Trip Reports are a key product of the Society's activities and contribute to demonstrating our responsible behaviour and recording activities. The reports have several uses, in particular they are:

- A key way in which the Society meets its objects to study, record and conserve mineralogical sites, material and minerals.
- Reported by the Society's members as being one of the most popular elements of the Russell Society Newsletter and the Society itself.
- Used by Field Trip Officers (FTOs) and Field Trip Coordinators (FTCs) to assess the latest reported state of a site when considering or preparing for future visits.
- Referenced by members to help decide which field trips they wish to attend and to get an understanding of what they can expect.
- Valued by external bodies to whom we give copies e.g. landowners, quarry and mine managers, Natural England & Wales, National Trust, NatureScot etc. The provision of the report to these bodies demonstrates the value of our activities, but also importantly gives them back something that they tell us is of interest to them.

To meet these ends, it is therefore important to ensure that reports meet a reasonable standard of completeness and factual accuracy and that there is a consistency of format.

It is also important that reports are submitted as soon as reasonably possible, both to ensure the information is disseminated in a timely manner and also to assist the Newsletter Editor. This may well mean that important findings are not known at the time of the report and in these circumstances the FTC should consider and arrange for a follow up report as per the last section of this guide.

Who Should Prepare the Report?

Field trip reports should be prepared for **ALL** RS field trips that take place. Occasionally a field trip does not find anything of note. This in itself should be reported in a brief report, as it indicates the state of the mineralogy of a site at that point in time. This is valuable information in itself and serves the above purposes.

Although a FTC can write the report, it is valuable to have other attendees (as part of their volunteer role whilst on a field trip) to produce it on behalf of the FTC. This shares the burden of the FTO/FTC role in making the arrangements and co-ordinating all the activities to make the day a success. Importantly, it also provides a variation of reporting style to give a fresh feel to the nature of the event on the day. Of course, the FTC will provide assistance and review of the draft report as required.

There is a need for 'horses for courses' and some very complex mineral sites require a more experienced person to produce the report when the overall audience is considered. E.g. for SSSI visits. However, for less complex sites some of the most readable and interesting reports have been from people relatively new to mineralogy and the society.

The Reporter needs to seek and receive information from other attendees in terms of what species were found (together with analytical data to support the identification of unusual minerals) and any novel geology noted; as well as assistance in the provision of suitable photographs to illustrate the report. It is normal practice for visit reports to be submitted in the first instance to the trip FTC who will be in a position to assess its completeness and accuracy. In addition, they may be able to provide or suggest useful additions or amendments before a final version is sent to the Newsletter Editor.

What a Report Should Include

The optimum size of a report is something which varies from case to case. They should be as long as required to include all relevant and important information. However, visit reports are not intended to provide a full historical and mineralogical review of the site. The typical report requires no more than about 700 words and many visits can be satisfactorily reported in less than this. The Essential Elements of a Field Trip Report include:

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- **A Heading:** This must contain the day and date of the trip, the locality visited including a county or administrative area, a six-figure National Grid reference the names of the Field Trip Coordinator and the Reporter. For example:

**Wednesday 18th May 2022. Boulby Mine, Loftus, Cleveland. [NZ 761 183].
Field Trip Co-ordinator: Ian Dossett. Reporter: Jim Robinson.**

- Mine and quarry site names should be capitalised, e.g. Whatley Quarry, Boulby Mine.
- National Grid References (NGR) should, ideally, be a minimum of six-figure and centre on the site area. Eight-figure should be used for more precise location of particular features. The format SX 3748 7133 should be used with spaces between the eastings and northings. Please check that the NGR is correct UK Grid Reference Finder is useful for this: <https://gridreferencefinder.com>.
- **An account of the visit:** This could include descriptions of the group, the site (possibly including comments on geological features and the mineralogical and historical context), the collecting conditions (for example, changes observed since the last visit), the types and amounts of mineralisation observed and the degree of access that was possible to it.
- **A summary of the mineral species:** those observed along with any interesting or important specimens collected. Unidentified minerals should be recorded as such and, in the event of any particularly rare mineral or a species new to the locality being reported, the basis of the identification should be stated. Please remember that, except at the beginning of a sentence, mineral species are not given an initial capital letter.
- **Pictures:** Good photographs of the general locality, of group members collecting, of individual specimens collected or of interesting geological features can greatly enhance a report and are encouraged. Owing to space restrictions however it is unlikely that a large number of illustrations can be incorporated in any one report in the Newsletter. Each photo should be accompanied by a brief, informative caption. Remember that pictures may need to be cropped or re-sized to fit the available space. Note that, if pictures or diagrams are provided, placeholders can be embedded in the document to show a preferred position, but they must also be provided to the Newsletter Editor as separate JPEG (.jpg) files. These files should be saved at reasonable quality of a maximum 1000 pixels in the largest dimension and a maximum of 150 pixels per inch. **Importantly the picture should for mineral specimens or geological features, provide a scale or define the field of View (FOV) in the text or photograph.**
- **Picture files:** The file names for the JPEG files should include the provider's initials, the locality, and a description of what it is about. The size of the file should be limited to enable email transmission. Details of how to reduce an Microsoft file size can be found at [Reduce the file size of a picture in Microsoft Office Microsoft Support](#)
- **Acknowledgements.** Appropriate thanks should be given to land owners, quarry companies and managers and other bodies (i.e. National Park Authorities, Natural England etc.) who gave permission for the visit. For example: *"Our thanks go to [A.N. Other 1] of Natural England for consent to collect representative samples from the SSSI. We also thank [A.N. Other 2] (National Trust Countryside Manager for West Cornwall) and [A.N. Other 3] (Estates Manager, Heart of Cornwall Lizard and Penrose, West Cornwall) acting on behalf of the landowner"*.

In addition to the above, optionally depending on the specific report, the report may also include one or more of the following:-

- **References:** Any references to the literature should be presented in the format set out in the Guidelines for Authors of the Journal of the Russell Society which can be found on the Society's website in the "Publications" section.
 - For books: Author, A.N. (year of publication). Title of book in italic font with major words capitalised. Publisher, publication city, country (unless the city is a capital, New York or Amsterdam, in which case only the city is required) [any further useful information in square brackets].
 - For journals: Author, A.N. (year of publication). Title of article in sentence case. Full name of journal in italic with major words capitalised, volume number in bold, page range separated by a dash (-).

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How to be Delivered

The report should be submitted to the Newsletter Editor via e-mail to newslettereditor@russellsoc.org.

- A Microsoft Word document (.doc, .docx) or OpenOffice, OpenDocument ext document (.odt).
- If the total size of the files and photographs is large then a link to a file sharing site would be acceptable rather than attaching them to an email.

Style Guidelines

When submitting field trip reports, please try to observe the following broad guidelines:

- **Font:** Calibri as it gives an 18 % less file size when converted to PDF, is easily readable on most devices and it supports 3622 characters so can be used for scientific notation and chemical formulae.
- **Font sizes:** Headings **12 point bold**, main text 12 point regular. Figure legends *12 point italic*.
- **Layout:** Text single-spaced with no line break after the paragraph. Fully justified throughout. Margins symmetrical at 1.0 cm. **Do not use double spaces between sentences.**

These are not essential prerequisites for submitting a report but it does help the Editor immensely when compiling the Newsletter. RTF or text files can be converted, if required. Please **do not send PDF files** as these cannot be copied and pasted into the Newsletter without considerable effort and lots of editing time.

Post Report Reporting

The specimens collected on some field trips may not be identified in time for the Newsletter report. To ensure that important findings are recorded, the FTC may arrange for a follow up report to be produced using the above guidelines as appropriate, but focused on the additionally identified minerals themselves.

For example, the report on the dig at Benallt Mine provided a list of the minerals identified at the time of the report. However, it was always expected that a considerable amount of subsequent work with specialist analysis would be necessary to identify the complex unidentified material found. A separate follow up report to address this will be provided.