



of your actions endanger either yourself, other people, property or equipment on site, or the reputation of the Russell Society; sign the Field Leader Indemnity Form; follow the instructions of leader and any site management. You could volunteer to do a write up for the Russell Society Newsletter.

### Assessing risk

One of the major benefits to be derived from membership of a recognised society is the opportunity of attending organised field excursions to geological exposures and collecting sites, often to what are normally restricted places working quarries and pits, or sites on private land for which special permission is necessary. Risk assessments demonstrate a responsible attitude to H&S, such that the Society has been able to obtain insurance for field visits. By assessing risk we can show to all involved in the visit what the risks are, who is at risk, and what precautions each attendee should take to reduce risk, they are for our safety. Under current H&S legislation all members of an organised society have a duty to do all that is reasonably possible to ensure activities are carried out such that any risks to the members of the society, personnel in other organisations, and members of the public are properly managed. The generalised risk assessments below should not be used as a definitive guide, a truly effective risk assessment takes place on site with an experienced individual undertaking the assessment, but members are advised to read these prior to a visit. Leaders of Russell Society Field Trips are sufficiently experienced to recognise risks involved and make individual risk assessments for each visit. For those trips to mountains, rough country, mines and caves, it is essential that the field leader present is experienced in this type of environment.

### Active quarries and pits

Do not enter an active quarry or pit without permission of the owner/operator. Follow the advice/instructions given by the site management.

#### Risks

|                |                      |   |              |
|----------------|----------------------|---|--------------|
| Conveyors      | Excavations or rakes | Drainage sumps of unknown depth         | Frozen water |
| Vertical faces | Hypo/hyperthermia    | Moving machinery and equipment          | Blasting     |
| Polluted water | Unstable stock piles | Slippery ground (especially after rain) |              |

#### Actions

PPE to be worn. Do not approach a vertical face or go beyond the boulder or guard rail protection without express permission. The stability of vertical faces can be affected by heavy rainfall or icy conditions. Do not clamber on unstable boulder or scree slopes. Do not work directly above/below people collecting. Do not approach any sludge pit, lagoon or sump hole, their depth is often deceptive. Do not walk on areas covered with ice or mud, it may conceal a pit or lagoon. Many flooded pits have a bloom of blue-green algae this can produce toxins which may cause rashes following skin contact and serious illnesses if accidentally swallowed. Avoid exposure, both from heat and cold. Vehicles are be given priority of movement, make the driver aware you are there. Stand well clear of any conveyors, crushing and screening equipment; cables must be avoided. Ensure the party enters the 'safe area' before any blasting takes place, do not re-enter the quarry until given permission to do so. The active area in quarries and pits may have moved over time, be aware of old workings and shafts.

### Disused or abandoned quarries or open pits

Many of the risks associated with active quarries are also associated with disused ones.

### Risks may also include

Other users - shooting/bike scrambling Hidden drainage channels Dumped hazardous waste  
Undergrowth may disguise hazards Flooded pits – drowning, pollution, exposure

#### Actions

Never attempt to enter disused pits and quarries without permission. Follow the same principles for a visit to any working quarry. Respect the rights of other authorised users, such as fishing clubs.

### Landfill sites

Many worked out quarries and pits are used as landfill sites and these present their own particular hazards. Landfill sites are high risk areas and should be avoided unless a visit there is absolutely essential. Do not enter an active landfill site without permission of the owner/operator. Follow the advice/instructions given by site management.

#### Risks

|                     |                   |                                       |
|---------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Toxic waste         | Tipping areas     | Clinical waste, needles, other sharps |
| Contaminated ground | Landfill leachate | Landfill gases                        |

#### Actions

Never walk across material that has just been tipped. Stay clear of vehicles and mobile plant operating in the area. Landfill leachate is the by-product of water entering the waste mass, it is often corrosive and skin contact must be avoided. Do not touch any dead animals. Wear appropriate PPE. Consider other risks including Weil's disease and tetanus (see appendix).

### Coastal exposures and tidal rivers

#### Risks

|                             |                            |                                    |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Tides                       | Access to and from shore   | Deep pools, fissures in the ground |
| Sea walls (not fenced)      | Exposure to cold/sun/heat  | Slippery rocks                     |
| Marine life -painful stings | Unpredictable weather      | Quicksands and soft ground         |
| Falling rocks/debris        | Mudflows and land slipping | Strong on/off-shore winds          |
| Pollution-sewage outfalls   | Beach debris-broken glass  |                                    |

#### Actions

Check tide-tables. Be aware of tidal systems, spring and neap tides, weather systems. Check weather forecast. Have the telephone number of coastguard, doctor, hospital. Allow plenty of time for a safe return around headlands that could be cut off by an incoming tide.

### Mountains and rough country

#### Risks

|                       |                        |                                      |
|-----------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Steep edges           | Boggy ground           | Deteriorating weather - fog or snow  |
| Weak/dangerous cliffs | Falling rocks          | Scree avalanche                      |
| Getting lost          | Trackway condition     | Crossing river/stream, stiles fences |
| Hypo/hyper-thermia    | Fissures in the ground | Snow cornice                         |

#### Actions

Have whistle, map and compass, and the skills to use them. Tell a responsible person where you intend to go and what time you plan to be back, and inform them of your safe return. Check the weather forecast and cancel visit if necessary. Mobile phones are useful but only if there is reception. GPS may be useful but this is no substitute for a map, compass and the skills to use them. Take warm and brightly coloured waterproof clothing, a change of socks and a survival blanket. A bar of chocolate can boost energy if caught out. Take open country gear as necessary; walking stick; but the Russell Society insurance does not cover members for the use of any ropes. Keep together, the leader may slow the pace accordingly. Have an experienced member of the group at the rear, who knows the route and skills for the use of map, compass, and whistle.

### Mines, caves and mine dumps

Underground trips to abandoned mines are not permitted as part of Society activities. Remember – entering a mine or a cave alone is foolhardy and should never be attempted.