

BELFAST GEOLOGISTS' SOCIETY

SAFETY ON FIELD TRIPS

INSURANCE AND PROTOCOL

1. The Society carries Public Liability Insurance but if you require Personal Accident Insurance you are expected to arrange this for yourself.
2. You must sign the attendance book. This is a requirement of the insurers. This applies to guests as well as to paid-up members.

HAMMERING. The Society does not encourage unnecessary hammering but if you need to sample hard rocks:

1. Use a proper geological hammer. If the shaft is wood, check that the head is secure.
2. Do not strike a hammer with another hammer. Use a chisel.
3. Wear eye protection.
4. Take care that bystanders are not at risk from flying chips.

HILLS, ROUGH GROUND, CAVES

1. Wear suitable footwear and clothing.
2. When moving through vegetation if you have to push the vegetation aside, be careful not to hit any person following you in the face when you release it.
3. Leaders shall ensure that no member becomes isolated from the group.
4. Leaders shall ensure that all members are accounted for, especially in caves, in mist or in heavily vegetated areas.
5. If you wish to break off from the group you must get the leader's permission and inform the leader of your exact intentions.
6. Nettles are not a major hazard to most people but Greater Hogweed is.

RIVERS AND STREAMS

1. River banks are often ill-defined and unstable. Approach with caution.
2. Boulders in streams can be slippery and the holes between them are often deeper than they appear.
3. Be aware of strong currents in streams. It can be difficult to estimate the depth and nature of the bottom in turbulent water.
4. When crossing streams it is better to make a long detour than to risk a fall in deep or fast-moving water.

CLIFF FACES AND STEEP GROUND

1. In general do not approach rock faces.
2. If you do need to approach a rock face you must wear a hard hat.
3. If you are ascending a rock face or steep ground take care that persons lower down are not endangered by loosened rocks.

DISUSED QUARRIES

1. The cautions for cliff faces apply.
2. Vegetation in overgrown quarries often conceals holes and dangerous materials such as broken glass, wire and sharp metal.
3. Screens in quarries are more unstable than screes in natural environments and blocks can roll away unexpectedly if you stand on them.
4. Ponds in quarries can be deep, have unstable edges, are often turbid and can contain dangerous materials.
5. Do not pick up unidentified objects – they could be explosive.

SEA COAST

1. The cautions for cliff faces apply.
2. Leaders shall ensure that a party is not endangered by a rising tide.
3. Rocks on sea-shores can be extremely slippery if covered by algae or wet lichen.
4. Particularly in stormy conditions exceptionally high waves can occur unexpectedly.
5. Be aware when traversing a cliff-top that it may make sudden unexpected changes of direction.

FARMLAND

1. The Countryside Code will apply.
2. When walking across fields which have been ploughed there is a risk of ankle injury.
3. Avoid fields containing bulls.
4. The Society does not encourage members to bring dogs onto farmland but if this is unavoidable the dog must be kept under appropriate control especially in the presence of livestock. If cattle become aggressive it is considered to be safer to release the dog from its lead.
5. Particularly on land which has been grazed by livestock there is a risk of tick bites. If you develop flu-like symptoms after an excursion seek medical advice.

WORKING QUARRIES, MINES AND OTHER INDUSTRIAL SITES

1. The operator's Health and Safety rules will apply.
2. The operator may require you to sign an indemnity document.
3. Most operators will give a safety briefing. You should comply with this and with any other instructions given by an employee of the operator.
4. Most operators will require the group to be accompanied by an employee of the operator at all times. In this case especially do not wander off from the group.
5. Use any protective equipment provided by the operator (hard hats, safety glasses, high-visibility clothing, footwear, lamps, as appropriate). You may use your own safety equipment only with the agreement of the operator.

ROADS AND ROADSIDE EXPOSURES

1. It may be necessary to file along a road which does not have a footpath. In this situation it is highly desirable that at least one person at each end of the group wears high-visibility clothing.
2. When examining a roadside exposure close to traffic all persons in the group shall wear high-visibility clothing. It may also be desirable to post a lookout or place some suitable advance warning sign for traffic.