

## Code of Conduct for Field Work

### INTRODUCTION

All who participate in an Oxford Geology Group field meeting must be properly equipped, with outdoor clothing as appropriate. Warm/waterproof clothing should be carried, if not worn. Boots or other suitable footwear are essential.

Participants should ensure that they are fit for the tasks required and have notified the field trip leader of any medical condition which may affect them whilst in the field, are aware of the route to be taken, and are well aware of the potential hazards as listed in the advance detail of the particular trip.

All field group members must take great care at all times, and be conversant with the safety instructions contained in the OGG Field Work Code. All participants must take note of any safety directives issued by the field meeting leader. Failure to obey such safety directives will render the participant excluded from the field meeting. This exclusion will extend to those not properly equipped to the satisfaction of the leader. It is imperative that all accidents are reported immediately to the field meeting leader.

The Oxford Geology Group provides public liability insurance and personal accident insurance for participants in its field meeting programme. Personal liability insurance is the responsibility of the individual member.

### GENERAL OUTDOOR SAFETY

- Take care, watch where you are walking, and above all be vigilant at all times.
- Keep to footpaths whenever possible.
- Be very careful on rocky terrain.
- Take great care on slippery rocks and paths, especially algae- or seaweed- covered rocks on foreshores.
- Walk in a steady, rhythmic manner, and don't rush.
- On difficult terrain choose your own route; don't necessarily follow others.
- Take care when stepping back to look at features.
- Do not get separated from the main party.
- Keep a close eye on the weather, and be prepared for it to change: remember the effect of altitude on weather; in general, weather severity will increase with altitude. Temperature drops with altitude (about  $1^{\circ}\text{C } 100\text{ m}^{-1}$ ), and there is usually an increase in wind speed, cloud and rain are more frequent on the hills; at altitude, rain may be falling as sleet/snow. These effects are enhanced by open unsheltered terrain, and wind chill becomes a significant factor; what may feel like a pleasant breeze in the car park can become a bone-chilling and potentially lethal gale on an exposed fell at altitude.
- Make sure that the equipment you take with you can cope with both expected and unexpected weather conditions.
- To maintain your reserves of energy, especially on long upland fell trips, the consumption of high energy snacks is to be recommended.

## EQUIPMENT

- Clothing should keep you warm, reduce heat loss from wind chill, and keep you dry.
- Several thin layers of warm insulating clothing are more effective than one thick one.
- The outer layer ideally should be made of tightly woven windproof material.
- Wet clothing leads to a rapid loss of body heat; a waterproof jacket and over trousers should thus always be part of your equipment, and carried in an accessible place if not actually worn.
- A large quantity of heat is lost from the head: warm headwear is thus advisable, as too are gloves.
- Denim jeans are not recommended for upland excursions. They do not insulate well, and rapidly chill the legs when wet. They also take a long time to dry.
- Spare warm clothing should always be carried on lengthy upland excursions.
- Footwear should be adequate for the task. Comfort, ankle support and protection, grip, water resistance and foot protection are all factors to consider.
- Stout walking shoes do not usually offer much ankle protection but have good grip, are reasonably waterproof, and offer some protection to the feet from falling rocks.
- Wellingtons are fully waterproof and offer some ankle protection, but do not offer much protection from falling rocks. They can be very slippery on wet rocks.
- They are useful in very wet or muddy places, and can be useful on beaches and foreshores.
- Walking boots provide good ankle protection, good grip, weather proofness, and good protection to the feet from falling rocks. Boots are mandatory footwear in working quarries and upland excursions.
- Specialist lightweight fell boots/fell running shoes offer varying degrees of ankle protection, and varying degrees of foot protection. They are reasonably weather-proof, have good grip, and are light and comfortable and perfectly adequate for summer use on the fells.
- Whatever footwear you choose, be aware its limitations, and adjust your activities accordingly.
- The sensible fell walker always carries basic emergency equipment, especially a whistle, first aid kit, and torch.

## SPECIALIST EQUIPMENT

- Hard hats: when working in quarries, or close to cliff sections, a hard hat is necessary to offer protection from falling debris.
- High visibility jacket is essential when working in quarries
- Goggles: eye protection is necessary when hammering rocks.
- Thick gloves: used to protect hands when considerable handling of rocks is undertaken.

### SAFETY AT EXPOSURES

- When visiting quarries, regulations require the use of stout footwear, hard hats, and (in operational quarries) high visibility clothing.
- Hard hats should be worn when studying cliff sections close up. When examining any exposures close up, ensure the material above is stable. Working under overhanging faces is unwise; if you have to, check very carefully the condition of the overhang; if in doubt, don't!
- On any inclined face, remember that landslips and cliff falls are a constant threat.
- It is not recommended that you climb up geological sections; if you do, check carefully the stability of the section, and the condition of any hand and footholds.
- Watch out for other people; they may dislodge rocks in your vicinity; watch for people working above (and below) you.
- Hammering at faces is very rarely necessary, if you do need to hammer, eye protection must be worn; watch for flying splinters, and warn people in your vicinity.
- If you are hammering, make sure it is safe to do so; be careful what you hammer, and watch that your actions do not dislodge a whole face.
- Never hammer under overhangs.
- Watch out for other people hammering and watch for flying splinters.
- Take care when picking up rock specimens for examination or collection.
- Hammering may leave very sharp edges. Ideally protective gloves should be worn.
- When collecting specimens do not carry more than you can comfortably handle.
- Specimens should be carried in a rucksack, and care should be taken when putting on a heavy rucksack. Remember that an overloaded rucksack is likely to affect your balance as well as increasing the risk of fatigue.