DRT 2017 field excursions
SAFETY NOTES

These notes are provided to participants on field excursions associated with the DRT 2017 conference. General comments are followed by some specific notes concerning each locality.

You are each responsible for your own safety and that of others on the field excursions. The field leaders are not expected to provide first aid – ensure you have adequate supplies for your own needs.

No safety advice or hazard assessment can be comprehensive. All participants should remain vigilant. Please follow instructions from the trip leaders. If you are not content with any safety issues please raise them either to the leaders or to the group as a whole straight away. If you have any personal health issues that may affect your participation then please advise the trip leaders (in confidence) – no activities are compulsory! Please read the daily notes before departure.

General medical issues
Once away from Inverness, we will be a long way (several hours) from 24 hour medical facilities and prescription chemists etc. Please bring any medicines you need with you.

Transport
We will be travelling in self-drive vehicles and coaches. Please do not distract the drivers. The wearing of seat belts by all vehicle occupants is a legal requirement in the UK. All vehicles are non-smoking. Please take care not to leave rolling objects on the floors – which might impede vehicle controls. Take special care when exiting vehicles, watching for other road traffic. Each self-drive vehicle has a first aid kit stored in the driver area.

Wildlife
There are few hazardous fauna or flora in the NW Highlands and Islands. There are occasional vipers (very rarely seen) which are weakly venomous. Ticks are more of an issue because of Lyme disease: http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Lyme-disease/Pages/Introduction.aspx
Evening inspection and careful removal is strongly advised: http://www.lymediseaseaction.org.uk/about-ticks/tick-removal/

Road sections
Although there is relatively light traffic, vehicles can be very fast-moving. High visibility clothing and vigilance is recommended, especially when exiting vehicles and crossing roads. Avoid loitering in the carriageway. If we need to follow roads on foot please walk single-file on the right (facing oncoming traffic).

Working below cliffs
Most of the outcrops we visit are compact and stable but there is rock fall potential. Hard hats are recommended. However, please avoid areas of unstable rock and beware objects being dislodged from above by other people and livestock.

Working above cliffs
We will be visiting several cliff-top localities. Beware slipping and give each other plenty of room. Take special care in high wind.

Coastal
We will be working on various coast sections. All are tidally affected and can be serious if big seas are running. Take care not to become stranded on incoming tides. Beware the occasional out-sized wave. Rocky shorelines can be slippery.

Moorland
Various locations require crossing open moorland, sometimes without paths. Take care on rough ground to avoid tripping and twisting injuries.

Weather
In early May the temperature in NW Scotland can vary between c 2C to 25C. Although rarely a hazard on its own, conditions can contribute to other issues and inhibit decision-making. Stay warm and dry – wind-chill can be a factor. In sunny weather beware sunburn.

**Outcrop notes: Pre-conference - Clashach**
Outcrops are separated by short (~10-15 minute bus rides). All outcrops are coastal/tidal, and may involve walking over wet rocks, many of which are greasy with organic matter at this time of year. Some moderately high cliff exposures with risk of rock fall.

**Outcrop notes: Pre-conference – Torridon**
Walks of 1 km or less, but the terrain is lumpy on all scales and boggy, with areas at 300m exposed to possibly lively Atlantic weather.

**Outcrop notes: Pre-conference - Kinlochewe**
A day’s hiking on a rough but maintained trail into high country (c 500m above sea-level). Take appropriate clothing and nourishment.

**Outcrop notes: Pre-conference – Loch Monar**
Outcrops are exclusively around the edge of a reservoir. Beware tripping and slipping.

**Outcrop notes: mid conference excursion**

STOP A: Loch Stack viewpoint.
Beware traffic. Cross the road with care and walk c 100m to gain views from open moorland.

STOP B: Loch na Fiacail aka the “multi-coloured rock stop”.
Road cuts. Take great care with traffic. This road has very fast traffic. Work on either side but don’t loiter in the carriageway. Remain in the low ditch area when at the outcrop. Some minor rock fall danger.

STOP C: Scouriemore
The outcrops lie on the coast about 1 km walk from the parking. Take care walking along the lane to the moorland. The path is indistinct but the terrain not too rough. At the outcrop beware slipping off the cliff sections, especially when high seas are running. No need to venture below high water mark.

STOP Da: Glencoul: above Kylestrome
Park in layby. A viewpoint. Beware reversing vehicles etc.

STOP Db: Glencoul: Unapool
Park in layby. A viewpoint. Beware reversing vehicles etc.

STOP E: Sronchrubie

STOP F: Knockan Crag
Park in car-park. The nature trail is simple if steep in places up to the Moine Thrust. Access to the upper viewpoint is by a steep path with rocky steps that can be slippery when wet.

Outcrop notes: post conference fieldtrip

Day 1:
Location 1.1. Sango Bay
Approach 300m walk on cliff-top path followed by descent on indistinct path into cove. This access is never cut off by tide. Outcrop simply accessible all along flank of cove. Outcrop consists of various sea cliffs and stacks. If working above cliffs beware wet grass as slipping hazard. Beware rock fall and rising tide.

Location 1.2 Traigh Allt Chailgeag
Park in the big lay-by (GR NC443653) and walk onto the beach. Cliff section (minor rock fall hazard). Beware rising tide.

Location 1.3. Kempie
Park at layby, take care moving along the road. The locality involves ascending for c 200m above the road on steep ground. Take care with slippery slopes and tussocks. There is no need to work beneath cliff sections.

Location 1.4 (optional) Above Hope
Road-sections. Take care of traffic on the road.

Day 2:
Location 2.1 Conamheall and Strath Beag
Park at Polla at the head of Loch Eriboll. This is a vigorous 2/3 day outing (c 10 km walking with c 600m ascent) into wilderness walking on rough ground
with boggy sections. It is especially important for all participants to remain with
the group and to be adequately equipped and nourished. Beware slipping on
loose and slippery rock. Beware cliff edges and rock fall.

**Location 2.2 The Arnabol transect**
Park at the layby overlooking the Ard Neckie peninsula and Eriboll (GR
NC453599). Approach outcrop by c 1 km walk across moorland and ascent
up steep escarpment. Beware slipping and rough ground. Minor rock fall at
outcrop. Beware road traffic at parking place.

**Day 3:**
**Location 3.1 Portvasgo**
Park at the crossroads and walk down the lane 700m to Portvasgo. Beware
traffic. The outcrops here lie on the coast. Beware slippery rocks. Take
special care if big sea running and stranding on incoming tide. Access to far
outcrops is a further 300m walk on slippery path. Outcrops access via gentle
descent onto large ledge. Beware cliff edges and slipping. We will be here on
a rising tide.

**Location 3.2 Achnahauigh**
Hike across the moors passing low outcrops. Rough ground, not steep.

**Location 3.3 Strathan**
Descend to the low outcrops at the back of the beach. No stranding hazard.

**Location 3.4 Torrisdale Bay (Druim Chuibhe)**
Park above the bay (NC682612), take the path to the Borgie river, crossing
the bridge and continuing around to low-lying outcrops beyond the dunes
(NC689618, c 1 km walk). Beware rockfall and slipping.

**Recommended equipment**
Full waterproofs
Gloves, wooly hat
Hard hat (although the we visit outcrops have generally low rock-fall risk)
High viz bib (for road sections)
Sun hat and other sun protection.
Warm clothing (fleeces are useful).
Small rucksack to carry the above on walks! Weather can change in
minutes....
Good water-resistant boots (or willingness to get wet feet!), plus walking
socks
Water bottle
An umbrella can be useful (when it’s not too windy).
Small first aid kit (plasters etc) for any running repairs.

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