

Relative Hills Society  
Revised 02/04/2020 **Guidance for Trip and Event Coordinators**

**Participation Statement: The Relative Hills Society (RHSoc) endorses the Mountaineering Scotland Participation statement which states that climbing and mountaineering are activities with a danger of personal injury or death. Participants in these activities should be aware of and accept these risks and be responsible for their own actions and involvement.**

Thanks for agreeing to be the Trip Coordinator for an RHSoc trip / event. RHSoc works because members volunteer to arrange trips or events.

Although RHSoc trips and events do require some effort, the rewards are great:

- You can reduce costs e.g. for boat charters or for accommodation
- You can meet other like-minded individuals and have fun
- You get to design a trip around your own bagging goals!
- Others might do the same for you; arranging trips can be reciprocal
- All participants will be covered by MS or similar liability insurance
- You can advertise your trip through the Relative Mutters all members' e mail and through the RHSoc website
- You may be able to get financial help with paying a deposit
- You can get help and advice on trip / event arrangement
- Trips that carry a higher level of risk have the additional support of a risk assessment process, participation forms and good practice advice

All trips are arranged within the ethos of the Participation Statement above.

The minimum requirement for a trip to be RHSoc supported is for the Trip Coordinator to tell a committee member the date, venue and purpose of the trip in advance and complete a brief trip report afterwards. The trip report includes names of the participants and their membership status and any feedback from the event that the committee can use to inform future trips. Trips that involve a higher level of risk need to be evaluated appropriately (see below).

**The Committee can advise further on any of these steps – direct any queries via the [rhsoc@rhsoc.uk](mailto:rhsoc@rhsoc.uk) email address.**

The Committee has compiled the following guidance:

**Before the event/ trip-**

- Test out with others ( e.g. via the Relative Hills & Island Bagging Facebook pages) that others are potentially interested in the trip you are planning; suggest options as appropriate and/ or use a Doodle Poll to determine the best date.
- Inform the RHSoc Committee of the planned date, purpose and venue of the trip (mandatory; form available - [rhsoc@rhsoc.uk](mailto:rhsoc@rhsoc.uk))
- Send out an invitation with date, venue and purpose either via e mail and/or include in the RHSoc Facebook page. Include relevant information about any special skills, experience or equipment required. If a specific route is planned, then give facts about this. It's worth adding here that all trips are arranged within the ethos of the Participation Statement above and inserting this within the invitation.

- Arrange with the Committee via [rhsoc@rhsoc.uk](mailto:rhsoc@rhsoc.uk) for your trip to be promoted in the Relative Muttters all members' email and on the website.
- It can be a good idea to set up a WhatsApp/ email group for potential participants to facilitate sharing of information
- If there is any issue with access, obtain consent from the landowner. Boat Skippers may be able to assist with this.
- Consider the financial aspects of the trip- see appendix 1 below. If you would like a loan from the Society to support payment of a deposit, talk to Barry Smith, Treasurer as the Society supports a limited number of trips each year in this way.
- If this could be a trip with a relatively high level of risk which is hard to control, you are advised to undertake a risk assessment. The RHSoc Committee Trip / Event coordinator can help you decide if a risk assessment is needed. Such 'riskier' trips include those where any of the following apply, but there is no requirement to undertake a risk assessment in these circumstances:
  - The trip is more than 2 miles offshore or >1hour round trip from a major Hospital (i.e. one with a Trauma Centre)
  - It's a boat trip with a third-party operator
  - The island is uninhabited
  - There is no proper landing jetty/point
  - There is a plan to use tenders to aid landing
  - Rock climbing/scrambling/abseils are necessary
  - Weather /swell / tides / landing / terrain conditions make the trip challenging
  - There is a large number in the party (more is harder to control)
  - The skills/competence of those involved is uncertain
  - The time of year (e.g. winter) / lack of daylight mean conditions are less predictable
  - Any other circumstance which may be considered unusual or of higher risk
- A sample risk assessment is available here: <https://www.mountaineering.scot/assets/contentfiles/pdf/Risk-Assessment-summer-activities-for-clubs.pdf>
- There is an optional RHSoc Trip Participant's Risk Awareness Form you can use if the trip is judged more risky and a risk assessment is advised. This will enable you to confirm that trip participants understand the risks involved and to advise you of any special training needs/competence/equipment needs as well as any disabilities and emergency contacts. You can edit the Trip record spreadsheet to help you manage this process, if you wish.
- Ask participants to review any risk assessment and sign the Trip Participation Risk Awareness Form (if to be used). You should be willing to answer factual questions, so they can make their own decision as to whether the trip is suitable for them
- Be clear with all participants that you are coordinating trip arrangements, not leading or guiding the party. If participants want or need guiding, they need to book a professional Guide.

- Check all trip participants are either RHSoc Members -by asking them- we rely on honesty- or Prospective Members. (Prospective members are potential members and can attend up to two trips before joining). This will ensure that all have appropriate liability insurance. For details of the liability insurance provided see: <https://www.mountaineering.scot/clubs/advice-and-resources/club-insurance>. The insurance cover provided by the BMC or MI is similar.
- Note that RHSoc does not accept those under 18 as members or prospective members and has not developed the required safeguarding policies. Young people interested in the outdoors can be directed via the Management Committee or MS to other clubs which have full youth programmes.
- The following MS webpage gives additional helpful guidance on safety and liability on trips and is worth reading: <https://www.mountaineering.scot/clubs/advice-and-resources/safety-and-liability-guidance>
- Monitor the weather and be prepared to cancel / modify your objectives accordingly and communicate via the Whatsapp group or similar- bearing in mind likely phone reception in the area.

#### **During the Event/ Trip**

- At the start, welcome everyone, especially prospective members, and briefly remind everyone of the plan: times, locations, risks and mitigations – e.g. as highlighted in the risk assessment.
- Keep a register of all who attended including their membership status (trip report proforma available) and send this to [rhsoc@rhsoc.uk](mailto:rhsoc@rhsoc.uk) after the trip with any learning or feedback (mandatory) plus scanned and signed trip participation forms (if you have them).
- MS recommends dividing large groups into smaller buddy groups not exceeding 6 people where members can look out for each other.
- Be prepared to instigate the relevant chant for the specific Hall of Fame entry, etc. For example, the Marilyn chant goes:

Hall of Fame, Hall of Fame,

All in all, glad we came.

<name of hill shouted out>

- If any incident occurs on the trip, complete the MS form ([http://mountaineering-scot-insurance.co.uk/uploads/documents/mountaineering-scot-insurance//MS\\_Combined\\_Liability\\_Claim\\_Report\\_Form\\_2018.pdf](http://mountaineering-scot-insurance.co.uk/uploads/documents/mountaineering-scot-insurance//MS_Combined_Liability_Claim_Report_Form_2018.pdf))
- Send any completed incident forms to [rhsoc@rhsoc.uk](mailto:rhsoc@rhsoc.uk) (not MS) immediately after the trip. The definition of an incident is broad but includes any injury requiring medical attention above basic first aid, any unplanned immersion in water, any interface with landowners where trespass or damage or similar is alleged, or anything untoward that the trip

coordinator thinks might either lead to a future claim or constitutes a 'near miss' from which others might learn. Where the trip coordinator, exceptionally, considers the matter particularly serious, telephone contact should be made with a Committee Member as soon as practical.

- The Committee (Trip and Event Secretary) will retain the trip report (with attendees' names), any risk assessments, signed trip participation forms and incident forms for 2-7 years (depending on whether any claim is likely). To the extent that these contain personal data, they will be held in line with the RHSoc Privacy Notice.
- Identify a participant to write up the trip for subsequent publication in the Relative Matters Journal or Relative Mutters newsletter.
- Have fun!

### **Appendix 1 Financial Guidelines for Trips/Events**

These guidelines seek to help organisers in managing the finances of a trip or event. They are not rigid. Organisers should feel they have the flexibility to make decisions as and when they arise, having regard to the fact that the objective of the Society is not to lose money on any trip/event and on most occasions to make a modest surplus. Any surplus helps the Society to develop its offering and provide benefits to members. Equivalent Societies ie The Munro Society, regularly make surpluses on trips/events.

The guidelines below give more detail on how the Society would like trips and events organised from a financial perspective.

- 1 Please ask for deposits and final payments from participants as early as possible. The Society cannot make payments to providers for trips and events until sufficient money has been received from the participants to cover the deposit and/or final payment.
- 2 All participants should be informed that the Society does not give refunds unless the circumstances are exceptional.
- 3 In the event that more people attend a trip or event than anticipated, a surplus can result. The Society's policy is that the surplus should be retained by the Society, not distributed to participants.
- 4 Each trip or event organiser should consider whether it is appropriate to charge more than the base cost of the trip to participants. This will normally be appropriate as most trips and events operate at a substantial discount from what members would expect to pay. Charging a margin above the base cost of a trip also gives a margin for error if there are additional, unbudgeted costs. Organisers should consider what margin would be reasonable but, if in doubt, a 10% margin may be appropriate.
- 5 If the organiser has any queries about any aspect of the financing of a trip, he/she should consult the Treasurer for guidance.

**Appendix 2 : What is the difference between a RHSoc supported trip/ event and any other trip /event?**

This does not depend on venue or arranger and both can be equally fun!

<b>RHSoc Supported Trip/ Event</b>	<b>Any other Trip or Event</b>
All participants covered by MS/ similar liability cover, including prospective members	Liability cover will be limited to those attendees who happen to hold liability insurance, potentially leaving all members of the trip exposed to claims, even if they are baseless.
Can be promoted/ advertised in Relative Mutters, regular all member e mail communication and RHSoc website	Cannot be promoted here-but can be promoted on an individual's Facebook page, RHB, email, etc
May receive a loan from RHSoc to pay a deposit	No financial support from RHSoc available
Advice and support available on risk assessment etc from RHSoc committee members and ensuring party are fully briefed and prepared	Advice / preparation not so readily available
If it is agreed with the RHSoc Committee that this is to be a RHSoc trip, in advance, then the simple Trip/Event Record form is completed both before and after the trip and sent to the RHSoc committee.	No advance or retrospective discussion with RHSoc Committee.