



Core damage at the K-T boundary, Stevens Klint, Denmark
Photo. John Crocker



Inappropriate coring at Arthur's Seat, Edinburgh, Scotland - an SSSI
Photo. Colin MacFadyen, SNH



Cluster of corings in cross bedded sandstone, Late Devonian, Portishead, Somerset.
Photo. Dave Evans, Natural England.



Moel Hiraddug Quarries, Wales, highly visible coring damage
Photo. Raymond Roberts, Countryside Council for Wales



Core sampling damage Ardnamurchan, Scotland.
Photo. Jenny Rees, SNH

This leaflet has incorporated current "best practice" for coring. It has taken information from the original Geologists' Association leaflet "A Code of Conduct for Rock Coring", from the Scottish Natural Heritage "Scottish Core Code", from guidelines on outcrop core sampling from the Committee of Heads of University Geoscience Departments within the UK (CHUGD), and advice from Natural England.

Natural England, Scottish Natural Heritage, the GeoConservation Commission of the Geological Society, the British Geological Survey and CHUGD lend their support to the aims of this leaflet.

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....A Code.... of Conduct for Rock Coring



Highly visible coring near Stromness Orkney, Scotland
Photo. Colin MacFadyen, Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH)



www.geologistsassociation.org.uk www.snh.gov.uk

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••• A Code of Conduct for Rock Coring •••

In 1989, the Geologists' Association (GA), in conjunction with the GeoConservation Committee of the Geological Society of London, produced a code for responsible coring. During preceding years, concern had been felt by many people on seeing areas of highly visible rock exposures riddled with holes from thoughtless coring, and this was the driver for producing the code. Some twenty thousand copies were produced and distributed nationally and internationally and, for a time, unnecessary coring was greatly reduced.

However, it has recently become apparent that many geologists, be they researchers, students or those from industry, have forgotten, or are unaware of, the code. Thus, indiscriminate coring is once again being seen in outcrops all over the world.

During the 20 years or so since the GA produced the first internationally recognised code, much has changed. Once again, one can see many rock faces across the world despoiled by core holes as these photographs show and there is demand for the GA Code of Conduct to be re-issued to inform new generations of geologists about best practice, to offer guidance for minimising visual intrusion and damage to rock faces and to remind those who may have forgotten, of **best practice** in the field.

This leaflet highlights "best practice" and sets out **A Code of Conduct for Rock Coring. Its four main principles are aimed at geologists of all levels, including students, teachers, researchers and industry colleagues, with the aim of encouraging all to "think before you core" and to ask:**

is this core sample essential?

A Code of Conduct for Rock Coring

- **Always seek permission from the landowner before taking core samples;**
- **Take cores from the least exposed face(s). Always avoid those most obviously visible when entering a quarry or approaching a natural exposure;**
- **Take only the minimum number of cores necessary. Avoid making closely spaced patterns which will attract undue attention and avoid damage to structures and features important to geological interpretation; and**
- **Refill holes wherever possible. Holes should be plugged or refilled with rock taken from fallen or loose blocks of the same material. Use a cement appropriate to the site and coloured to match the surrounding rocks.**

In the early days of coring, samples were few, small in diameter and not clustered. Over time, rock sampling has become more visually intrusive with many more samples taken from a single rock face. Even Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), classic geological sites and environmentally sensitive areas have not escaped the serious visual damage of indiscriminate coring. The cumulative visual impacts of the changes in field behaviour are apparent at many geological outcrops, not only throughout the British Isles, but also in many parts of the world.



Inappropriate coring of Felsic Tuffs, Kromberg Formation in the Komati Gorge, Songimvelo Game Reserve, South Africa. Photo. Carl R Anhaeusser

Of course coring is important. It is necessary for palaeomagnetic, geochemical and geological research, but it needs to be done responsibly. If not, good working relationships with landowners, government agencies and others with a concern for the environment may soon evaporate and it may become difficult, if not impossible, to do essential coring in future. This new concern is the driving force for updating "*A Code of Conduct for Rock Coring*".