

## **Photofold**

### **Tips for keeping safe**

Our photo outings and trips are opportunities for us to all enjoy our photography. We do therefore want you to return home from your trips at least as healthy as when you left.

Ultimately, each of us is responsible for our own safety and accidents can always happen, but with a bit of planning we can reduce the risks. A large part of keeping safe is in the planning, so to help, we've put together a few tips. The list is not in any way intended to be a risk assessment but hopefully helps cover most of the riskier situations a landscape photographer might find themselves in.

#### **Before you go:**

- Club members are encouraged to provide the 'next of kin' details before undertaking any outings or trips. Please make sure these are documented in the Members Register held by the Club Secretary.
- Trip organisers should ensure that they know how to obtain 'next of kin' details held on the Members Register in advance of going on the outing or trip.
- Do your own research on the destination and make sure you are comfortable that photo locations you want to visit are suitable for your current level of fitness. Google /YouTube is a useful resource to check out as most places have been visited / documented these days.
- Make a checklist of safety items that you should take with you (see a sample list below).
- Review your clothing and footwear to ensure they are appropriate for the location and time of year.
- If you are travelling in the countryside / off the beaten track, ensure you have a method of working out where you are so that you can inform others if you get into difficulties (i.e. What3Words app / GPS).
- Also, check your gear insurance to ensure your equipment is covered for loss or damage. It's a relief if you survive an accident, but it can still be painful if your equipment doesn't.

#### **During outings:**

- Check the weather before you set out and ensure you are comfortable with the conditions.
- Always travel in a group, but if you do go off on your own, let one of the party know where you are going and when you are expected back.
- On arrival at a location, check for hazards (slips & trips) and think about whether the location is safe for you to proceed. If in doubt don't, as there's always another (possibly better) safer location in the area to take a photo.
- Continually be aware of your surroundings. It's all too easy to concentrate on the shot and not check what's happening around you. Whether that's a change in:
  - The tide cutting off your return path,
  - The weather affecting visibility or the route you are following becoming treacherous.

- Surrounding wildlife or domestic livestock becoming a risk.
- Ensure you are comfortable with the weight of the equipment in your backpack. Don't carry too much!
- Be aware of the risk of your camera strap, backpack or tripod snagging, which may cause you to trip / fall.
- Do make sure that your backpack is stable and won't cause you to unbalance when walking.
- Keep your hands free and don't use your camera when you are moving about, as this increases your risk of stumbling over something.
- In built-up locations, don't be a victim of crime. Watch out for anyone watching you.
- Look out for your fellow club members during the outing.

### **Safety Pack list**

- Smart phone (fully charged) with offline map using GPS / or 'what3words' app
- First Aid kit
- Whistle
- Torch
- Large foil blanket
- Insect repellent
- Sun screen
- Water bottle

To sum up, a photo is never worth the risk of injury.