

Just A Few Words from the Editor . . .

Welcome to the second GCUK newsletter of 2023. As always, I'm grateful to those stalwarts who sent in their news by the due copy date. Equally, my thanks to those who regularly send me updates of their group's activities; whilst these usually report their sterling efforts in geoconservation, their other such as outreach - activities tend to be neglected.

This year's generally unseasonable (that is, very inclement!) weather has been braved by GCUK group members to keep those exposures - so useful to students, and of interest with the proper interpretive provision to the public - accessible and viewable. From my own recent experience of co-leading a Geologists' Association Field Meeting (I don't recall the driving rain/drizzle ceasing) at Hunstanton, I can say that on some days outreach activities are very challenging! Likewise, recording and condition monitoring of geosites cannot have been easy in such weather. So, given all that has been achieved so far this year, our member groups' volunteers deserve to be better acknowledged than is usually the case; let's not be shy in putting them forward for local and national recognition - after all, if short-inoffice PM's can put forward for national honours their ... !!

Meanwhile, the Geologists' Association is to be congratulated for rewarding, with 'Certificates of Excellence', several Curry Fund supported geoconservation and interpretive projects. With few sources of financial support, although parish councils sometimes help, generally available for small-scale projects the Curry Fund can really help member groups to get their one off the ground.

Anyway, do distribute this **GEONEWS** to your colleagues, friends and even families - they might actually enjoy the read and suggest you join (along



Much DIGS activity this year.

We continued with our programme of conservation at a number of sites during the spring

^{Preserving Our} Geological Heritage months. The Rodwell Cutting, on the route of the old railway from Weymouth to Portland, had some clearance of ivy and other overhanging vegetation. As this is a footpath and cycle-way our work catches the attention of many people going past. The site exposes Jurassic Corallian Group strata ('Trigonia Clavellata Beds') and has many fossils, such as the bivalve *Myophorella sp. (next column, top left*). There is also a natural spring which 'fossil-

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ses' some of the vegetation as the water flows and drips over the rock face *(above right)*.

Conservation continued at our Poxwell site where the boundary between the Portland and Purbeck Beds is exposed. This involves keeping the rock face clear and the ground vegetation allowing access. When the site was originally designated, Vodafone put in a path allowing disabled access but this is no longer possible - especially across the pasture between the site and the public footpath from the A353. If you have not visited the site before there is a field trip being organised through DGAG / Wessex OUGS on Saturday, 23rd September around the Poxwell Pericline. We will probably need to carry out another conservation session in



the Poxwell quarry before the field trip!

A nearby site exposes *(left)* more of the Purbeck Beds. This was excavated in 2012 to acquire stone (Cypris Freestone) for conservation at the Wolfeton Riding House *(left)*, Charminster. We were asked to find suitable stone for the conservation work on this grade II listed build-

ing; this survey work was carried out in collaboration with the Poxwell landowner.



More recently we have carried out some work at Crack Lane, Langton Matravers where Broken Shell Limestone (Burr) is exposed in a former quarry *(left)*. This in-

volved cleaning up the rock face and clearing vegetation (brambles particularly) that was blocking access.

We were pleased to find a significant number of Common Spotted Orchids (*right*) where we had cleared vegetation in the past.

At the end of May we were due to work at our Red Lane site at Abbots-

bury, but swarming bees made this impossible. So, instead, we undertook clearance work at Portesham Rocket Quarry (*right*). We went back to Red Lane in June when the bee problem had been fixed!

In early July we worked on vegetation clearance at the West Hill chalk pit at Corfe Castle (*right*). We now have an information board prepared for this site and are awaiting discussions with the National Trust about its location.

Later in July, we had another clearance session at out Wanderwell site (*right*) at Bridport; this was to make the Forest Marble exposure there ac-

cessible. So, all in all, we have been as busy as ever! *Alan Holiday*



Suffolk's Coralline Crag Rock-Bed

GeoSuffolk's latest leaflet, published this June, celebrates a deposit unique to Suffolk. This is the Rock-Bed and it is well seen in the quarry face at Sudbourne *(below)*; blocks from that quarry have been used to repair



Chillesford Church and the Greyfriars Priory wall in Dunwich.

Rather than the abundant fossil molluscs, for which it is well known, we wanted to focus on the Rock-Bed, an indurated









layer of the Coralline Crag which has been used as a building stone in the county for hundreds of years.

The Rock-Bed is a creamy-yellow limestone with fossils of marine shells. Those made of aragonite have been dissolved by acidic ground water and their calcium carbonate precipitated to harden part of the Coralline Crag into the Rock-Bed. Fossils made of less soluble calcite – scallops, sea urchins, and bryozoans – remain.

Many of the Coralline Crag exposures are SSSIs and almost all are on privately-owned land which makes it a challenging subject for a public leaflet. Buildings with Rock-Bed in their construction provide an opportunity for public access – we used Chillesford Church (tower),

Wantisden Church (*right*), Greyfriars wall at Dunwich and the interior of Orford Castle. The rock is quite soft when dug out but hardens after a few days as its contained moisture evaporates – ideal for Medieval stone masons! The entire outcrop is criss-crossed by a series of fissures at right angles to one another. These facilitated quarry-working, with



many of the old quarry faces aligned along them.

The Coralline Crag is a marine deposit formed some 3.5-4 million years ago. It extends across the Orford/Aldeburgh area of Suffolk, reaching the coast at Thorpeness. Here it extends for about 3km as undersea rocky ridges which obstruct southwards-moving beach material. This has accumulated at the 'ness' (a large shingle mass projecting seawards) and helps to protect the Sizewell power stations immediately to the north from erosion by the sea. Small blocks of Rock-Bed *(below right)* can be found on Thorpeness beach; these

have been thrown ashore, from the submarine outcrop, during storms. If you want to hold a piece of this Coralline Crag, Thorpeness



beach really is the place to go!

We would like to thank Coast and Heaths AONB for supporting this leaflet through their Community and Conservation Fund. The leaflet, *Suffolk's Coralline Crag Rock-Bed*, is available from various outlets around Aldeburgh and Orford; it and can also be downloaded from our Archive at: www.geosuffolk.co.uk

We hope you enjoy the read!

Caroline Markham



"As tin mining in Cornwall endured troubled times in the twentieth century - boom and bust, and bitter industrial disputes - Cornish 'tinners' continued to seek work abroad. 'For the Cornish, it's almost as if the world is their workplace and they go and mine there." Wilson & Richardson (2009, p. 107)



Summer and Autumn Programme

Saturday, 17th June (Field Visit):- North Malvern (Tank Quarry and North Quarry) - led by Peter Bridges (EHT Champion for Tank and North Quarries).

Saturday, 22nd July (Field Visit):- Glacial Boulder Trail 8 (The Illey Valley Wilderness Trail) - led by Julie Schroder.

Wednesday, 16th August (Field Visit):- Saltwells NNR - led by Graham Worton; meet at the car-park [SJ934868] on Saltwells Lane for a 6.30pm start, finishing at 8.00pm.

Monday, 18th September (Indoor Meeting):- 'The life and work of Sir Arthur Russell' - Speaker: Roy Starkey.

Monday, 16th October (Indoor Meeting):- 'Conclusion of the Erratics Project' - Speaker: Ian Fairchild.

Monday, 20th November (Indoor Meeting):- 'Origins of Starfish and their relatives' - Speaker: Aaron Hunter.

Monday 11th December (Indoor Meeting):- Members Meeting.

Indoor meetings are normally held in the Abbey Room at the Dudley Archives, Tipton Road, Dudley, DY1 4SQ, 7.30pm for 8.00pm start unless stated otherwise. Visitors are welcome to attend but there will be a charge of £1.00.

"Until a generation ago geologists frequently assured (or twitted) that they had made extremely valuable contributions to all formations except ... the Coal Measures, This is not perhaps a true picture..." Arthur Elijah Trueman (1954, p,vii)

The Society offers a most varied and inter-- (1) (% esting programme of activities. An idea of Cambridgeshire that programme, and the quality of its promotional materials, can be gleaned from some of its recent posters:







Our Future Plans

We had further discussion on our future at our get-together last October, with partners at the 'LGS Steering Group' meeting in February, and more recently, in April, at

a Somerset Geology Group (SG) co-ordinating group meeting. We have agreed to continue our working arrangements with the Somerset Environmental Records Centre (SERC) for LGS, so that we can still have a small team of SGG-sourced SERC volunteers for any ongoing LGS-related activity, including any survey and monitoring required, and to continue the 'LGS Steering Group and Panel'.

Two main over-arching themes have emerged from our discussions to focus activity over the next few years:

• **Building relationships with owners of LGS** to help with them understand the interest of their LGS and to advise on any conservation management desirable; and

• Working with partners, owners and others to encourage good quality interpretation on the geology of Somerset, in a wide range of different ways, including town trails and where appropriate for LGS.

Plus, of course, we also want to encourage a wide range of related activity via our network, including geoeducation and field visits.

Completing some outstanding tasks

Meanwhile we are still completing some outstanding tasks from our review of Somerset and Exmoor Local Geology Sites (LGS). In February the 'LGS Steering Group' approved the working version of the LGS review area report for the Taunton area. The final report will be added to our web-page on SERC's web-site over the summer. The 'LGS Steering Group' also advised on a simple list of LGS, indicating conservation category and this is also in final preparation.

These, together with the other LGS review area reports already available on our web-page (for the Exmoor, Quantock, Mendip and South Somerset areas), will give complete coverage for the new Somerset Council and the Exmoor National Park Authority (ENPA). The 'LGS Steering Group' also agreed a new proforma, so that any updating information for a LGS can be added to SERC's files. Several notes we hold from the last year still need to be transferred into this format.

We were able to hold the February 'LGS Steering Group' meeting at SERC's office for the first time since 2020. Keith Moore agreed to chair the LGS Panel in future and we were joined by Andrew Gunn, from the Planning Department of the then Somerset County Council, Julie Layzell, Future Landscapes Officer for ENPA and Dave Evans, recently retired from Natural England. In the autumn Garry produced report for GEONEWS and a paper on our LGS review for the

Somerset Archaeological & Natural History Society.

Building relationships with owners

We anticipate that this will become a main theme of our LGS partnership working in the coming years; we have clarified with SERC that follow-up visits to meet with owners (to help with an understanding of the interest) can be carried out under the SERC volunteer role. In practice this is likely to be progressed only very gradually, as owners will need to be contacted in advance of any site visits, and presently SERC has no in-house capacity dedicated to LGS activity.

At our recent SGG co-ordinating meeting, Dee Edwards also showed us a leaflet, produced by our equivalent group in Cornwall a few years ago, specifically to assist owners in understanding the value of LGS in Cornwall in an accessible way. We will explore if we can produce something similar for Somerset.

In September, Wendy met Julie Layzell from ENPA to discuss on-going opportunities within the ENP (with the ENPA itself owning some LGS) and in April she met the National Trust's (NT) Nature Conservation Adviser, Hannah Gibbons, to discuss NT-owned LGS in Somerset and the Devon part of Exmoor. We are currently making sure that the NT has all the relevant LGS review information and hope this may pave the way in the future, for members of our volunteer team to meet with NT rangers, to help explain the interest of individual LGS and discuss any practical conservation needed or interpretation potential. Similarly, Sheila Alderman has offered a training session for rangers and volunteers at Ham Hill. There may be other opportunities too, where our SGG-sourced SERC volunteers developed a good relationship with an individual owner during the initial review.

Practical conservation work

There is, of course, no requirement under LGS designation for an owner to carry out practical conservation work and it is not always needed. However, where any management is agreed with an owner and a practical conservation group is involved, Garry will lead on liaison, maintaining an e-group to let our SGG network know about any opportunities to join such practical working parties.

Further review, monitoring and new LGS

Review is a high priority for a few remaining LGS where time pressure limited our ability to progress contacting the owners during the main review. There are several LGS where review needed to be carried out as a desk study, but if further enquiries enable us to identify ownership, then we hope in the future to make site visits and monitor condition. We envisage new LGS will be a relatively low priority in the coming years, with just a few coming forward to the LGS Panel.



Encouraging good-quality interpretation

Our discussions and LGS review indicate that there is considerable scope for interpretive material to tell the story of Somerset's

rich and varied geology, more widely than simply in relation to LGS. Feedback has Conference fee includes coffee/tea, lunch, morning and afternoon emphasised the particular scope to tell that story in an accessible way through the local individual buildings open to the public, such affiliated members as might be achieved, for example, in town £50 Non-Members trail leaflets. Dee Edwards has drawn our £10 Students

attention to some 'good practice' example leaflets, written by John Macadam and often Please email any questions to Conference@geologistsassociation.org.uk

others, produced in Cornwall in the past. Further information will be sent out by email. Our discussions also suggest that recent advances in IT, such as QR codes, can provide new opportunities for the way in which such information can be provided (not necessarily on site or printed).

Bibliography

Andy Gordon, joined our volunteer team this winter, and we are delighted that he has taken on updating Hugh Prudden's Bibliography on the Geology of Somerset (completed to 1997, and available as a PDF on our web-page). This is a major project, which will take some time to complete, with numerous more recent articles in journals such as that of the Ussher Society. Andy has already noticed that several new books, guides and leaflets have been published in recent years. As he says "There is a lot of information out there on Somerset's geology already, but no easy way for anyone interested to find it."

Also, at our 'LGS Steering Group' meeting in February, we learnt from Leon DeBell, SERC's manager, that SERC will be updating its web-site. We hope that this might provide an opportunity to improve our web presence and that in the coming years we can explore how information on Somerset's geology can be better sign-posted, both for the interested public (local resident or visitor) and those with a more serious interest.

Wendy Lutley & Garry Dawson (SGG Co-ordinators)

Nothing about your group's activities in this newsletter? Then why not get writing and submit something for the next issue?!!



Geologists' Association ANNUAL CONFERENCE



2023 - KENDAL

Saturday, 23rd September - at The Brewery Arts Centre

tea/coffee, and abstracts booklet. The fee is:

building stones used in towns, villages and £45 GA, and Westmorland & Cumberland Geological Societies GS and

produced in partnership with owners and Book on the GA web-site or contact Sarah Stafford (020 7434 9298)

The Geologists' Association

Festival of Geology 2023

University College London, Gower Street, London WC1E 6BT 10:30 - 16:30

Entrance Free

No pre-registration necessary, just turn up on the day

Provisional Programme

Saturday 4th Novenber 2023

Exhibitors from around the World - including Fossil & Mineral displays from Local Groups and Affiliated Societies, books, maps, Photo competition, Mary Anning Maguette and much more!

Special Exhibit:

"The Maps: Smith & Greenough - in the same room once again!"

Sunday 5th November 2023

A range of local and accessible Field Trips including The Albert Memorial, Crystal Palace Dinosaurs and The Westbourne

For Further information:

Contact Details: Tel: 0207 434 9298 www.https://geologistsassociation.org.uk

www.rockwatch.org.uk















Celebrating Geoheritage - Promoting Geoconservation

www.progeo2023.com #Progco2023

YOU'RE INVITED TO CHARNWOOD FOREST

On behalf of the Organising Committee, and the International Association for the Conservation of Geological Hentage (ProGEO), we are pleased to invite you to take part in the XIth International ProCEO Symposium. The meeting is being organised by the Charnwood Forest Geopark, and will take place in Loughborough, UK from 9th to 11th October 2023. Time to put it in your diary!

Charnwood Forest is an Aspiring UNESCO Global Geopark, and is home to some of the oldest animal fossils in the world. Among our crag-topped hills and forest-filled valleys, you can find communities shaped by their geology, and geology shaped by two thousand years of industry.

A SYMPOSIUM FOR EVERYONE

As always, the symposium is an international event open to scientists, students, educators, professionals, decision makers, and anyone involved in geoheritage and geoconservation. The meeting will promote communication and collaboration amongst attendees from all over the world, and provide a space to discuss new challenges and threats in geological conservation. The symposium will feature a special session on the Conservation of Palaeontology, including a keynote on this topic, but we encourage attendance and presentations by all those interested in the varied topics of geoheritage, geoconservation, and geodiversity.





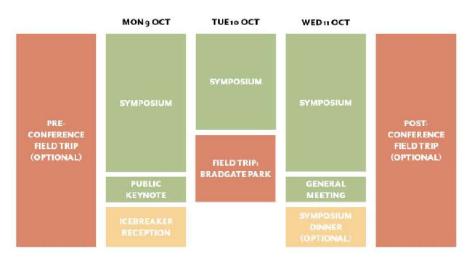






THE MEETING

A simple outline of the meeting, including the three full days of Symposium events, can be found below. We recommend delegates arrive in Loughborough on Sunday 8th October, as we expect to begin the meeting at around 9am on Monday 9th October.



The Symposium includes an intra-meeting field trip to Bradgate Park that is included in the registration of all delegates. The field trip is an opportunity to see a selection of the many lithologies within the Geopark, and the complex challenges for geoconservation these present. The field trip will include discussion on new innovative conservation management strategies, and also interpretation. We recommend delegates bring sturdy footwear, waterproof coats, and warm clothes as the weather can be unpredictable.

REGISTRATION

The Organising Group have been working hard to deliver a meeting of high quality that provides value for money. For ProGEO members the cost will be as low as £85. This low price has been possible due to the direct financial assistance of ProGEO. Registration includes:

- Icebreaker reception
- Three days of scientific sessions, including talks and poster sessions
- Keynote Lecturer
- An afternoon mid-Symposium field trip to Bradgate Park
- Lunch for the three days of the Symposium
- Tea & Coffee refreshments throughout the Symposium
- Special delegate discounts at selected local businesses

The registration rate for non-ProGEO members is higher. It is always cheaper to join ProGEO and secure the discount rate, than pay the non-member rate. Students can join ProGEO for as little as 10 EUR. You can join ProGEO here: <u>http://www.progeo.ngo/get-involved.html</u>

ProGEO members will be issued a discount code via email enabling them to secure the membership registration rate.

Registration is via the website at <u>www.progeo2023.com</u>. Payments are via the Paypal system, though a Paypal account is not required, and all major credit and debit cards are accepted.



Late Registration (June 9th to Sept 18th)	£150	£195
Early Bird (until June 9th)	£85	£130
	ProGEO Member	Non-Member



GEONEWS

"True the billiard tables were of the old Silurian period and the cues and balls of post Pliocene; but there was in discomfort; refreshment this, not f or there are rest and healing in the contemplation of antiquities." Mark Twain (1883, p. 215)



The topic is 'Aspects of the history and progress of geology in Ireland'. It is a one-day conference at Trinity College Dublin, followed by three days Field/Archive visits around Dublin. Convened by Dr Patrick Wyse Jackson and Dr Bettie Higgs. For programme outline, etc. see: https://shorturl.at/fCNO0



Group

Geology walk, Boscastle.

Join us for a walk around Boscastle to find out about the fascinating geology that formed the famous harbour and surrounding countryside on Wednesday, 13th September, 2023 at 10.00am, and finishing at 1.00pm.



We will first sit down for an informative chat, and then take the Coast path towards Tintagel to look at the geology in the field. Please do wear sturdy footwear/walking boots because we will be walking up (and down!) some steep and uneven paths. Do dress appropriately for the weather(s)!

Meet at the NT café; parking is available in the main pay-and-display car-park (parking charges apply), Boscastle. The cost is £5 per person. John Macadam

Copy for the next, A&W, issue of GEONEWS, must be with the by Monday, 13th November, 2023 at the very latest.



This newsletter is published by GeoConservationUK and is sponsored by **Rockhounds Welcome!**

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FFDS Your COPY for the next issue!

"The line between geography, geology, diet and national character still holds true. Britain - an island built of coal, surrounded by fish - can never get really cold or starve... Our lives and deaths - and characters - are, to a great extent, produced by our surroundings" Harry Mount (2012, p. xxi)



HOGG Meetings - Autumn 2023

HOGG meetings and conferences are held online, unless stated otherwise. Admission to all on-line meetings is free and other events are offered at a discounted registration fee. Associates and guests are welcome to attend meetings for a small admission charge. Registration is via Eventbrite where an outline of each event can be found. For associates and guest registration please search on Eventbrite using the event title:

Thursday, 21st September (lunchtime):- '200 years (a history) of identifying and understanding former glacial lakes in Britain' with Dr Laura Eddey.

Thursday, 19th October (lunchtime):- 'On hogs, vultures, vineyards, ores, volcanoes and quarries in the Northern Carpathians: Robert Townson (1762-1827) and his geological peregrinations in Tatra Mts. and surroundings' with Dr Piotr Krzywiec and Prof Krzysztof Marchlewicz. Tuesday, 21st November (13.00-14.30):- HOGG AGM, followed by 'The Sir Arthur Russell Collection of British minerals: a collection of collections' with Roy Starkey.