

UKRIGS NEWSLETTER



Winter 2005, Vol. 3, No. 4

By RIGS for RIGS: Keeping you up to date with RIGS nationally and in your area.
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Editorial

Hello everyone, this will be a short editorial to wish you a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year. There is a lot of information around at the present time about the impact of PPS9 the new planning policy guidance. A very good short snappy article will appear in the next issue (Jan 2006) of Earth Heritage by Colin Prosser of English Nature. He explains how it can help us to put across the Geoconservation message to Local Authorities. If you do not see this and want to be put on the free mailing list contact me at c.burek@chester.ac.uk. At present I am involved in the last stages of the NE Wales geodiversity

audit for the Welsh Assembly. We are progressing well. I only hope we will be allowed to disseminate the information. This is often the part that is ignored by funding bodies. There is to be a change in the West Country with the retirement of Peter Oliver from Hereford and Worcester as director. We all wish Peter a happy, successful and healthy retirement. If you are interested in this position you need to apply quickly. See the ad in this newsletter. Once again Happy Christmas.

Cynthia



UKRIGS 8th Annual Conference Earth Sciences and the Countryside

Peter Jones

More than 150 delegates attended the eighth UKRIGS annual conference held at the University of Derby in September 2005. Derby's Vice-Chancellor gave a welcome address and the event was organised by lecturers Peter Jones and Heather Moore. For the first time ever, the three-day event was combined with the 38th Annual Conference of the Earth Science Teachers' Association (ESTA) and this innovation was deemed to be a great success.



The theme was 'Earth Sciences and the

Countryside', with special emphasis placed on Earth Science education. Highlights included keynote lectures by Professor Richard Fortey (Natural History Museum) on 'The Earth - an intimate history' and Professor Pat James (University of South Australia) on environmental sustainability. There were also excellent contributions from David Falvey (BGS) and Colin Prosser (English Nature) on the educational activities of their respective organisations. A full day was devoted to 'Conserving Geodiversity – opportunities and challenges' with twelve stimulating talks illustrating many examples of good practice. This was supported by a varied programme of workshops, field trips and other activities. Workshops of specific interest to UKRIGS delegates included: LGAPS - a national perspective (Jonathon Larwood); funding opportunities for Geoconservation (John Torlesse); the UKRIGS Earth Science On-Site project (John Reynolds); the work of Warwick Geological Conservation group (Martyn Bradley) and Geotourism (Tom Hose). Organisations providing support for the Conference included the British Geological Survey, English Nature and the Petroleum Exploration Society of Great Britain. ■

PPS9 Developments From the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister

The new policy messages in PPS9 mean that consideration of biodiversity will be integrated into all aspects of planning policy and planning decision making. Information about the statutory obligations for biodiversity and geological conservation are set out in the Circular.

PPS9 requires local planning authorities to:

- base policy and decision making on up-to-date information about environmental characteristics;
- aim to maintain, enhance, restore or add to biodiversity and geological conservation interests; and

- prevent harm to biodiversity and geological conservation interests.

There is also strengthened protection for ancient woodlands and other habitats of principal importance. There is evidence of PPS9's integration into new policies in a number of sectors across the UK. A Good Practice Guide to support PPS9 and the Circular will follow later in 2005.

PPS9 is available from The Stationery Office Tel: 0870 6005522, or Download from www.odpm.gsi.gov.uk (under planning/ planning policy / planning / policy statements / PPS9), and (under planning / planning policy / planning circulars / 06/2005). ■

UKRIGS Education Project Update Earth Science On-Site Conference

The ESTA/UKRIGS Conference at Derby in September provided an opportunity for members of both organisations to look closely at the teaching materials produced for the Pilot stage of the Project. All delegates received a draft CD of the materials then available on the UKRIGS website. The evaluation workshop was attended by about 30 delegates and the field visits to the National Stone Centre and Black Rock attracted about 20 hardy souls. As intended, the input from these evaluation sessions has now been included in the revision of the materials on www.ukrigs.org.uk [click on Education].

The next Four Sites.

1. South Elmsall Quarry, nr Doncaster, West Yorkshire, is in the Magnesian Limestone. Teaching materials for Key Stage 4 [Upper Secondary/GCSE] level are being trialled and expected to be on the website in January. No KS 2 or 3 materials are planned for this site.

2. Dryhill Picnic Site, nr Sevenoaks, Kent, is in the Hythe Beds. Materials for KS 3 and 4 are being trialled. KS 2 [Primary] - being written.
3. Ercall Quarries, Telford, Shropshire, include Precambrian and Cambrian. Materials for KS 3 and 4 are in draft. KS 2 - planned.
4. Barrow Hill, Dudley, is a dolerite intrusion in Coal Measures. Materials for KS 3 and 4 are planned. KS 2 - being written.

Finally

If you would like to become involved in any way, please let us know! We need feed-back on all our work. Copies of the draft CD of the first four sites are still available. Thanks to all who have helped so far! The Project is supported by Defra's Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund, administered by English Nature.

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The Geological Society Research Funds

Applications are invited for the Society's annual grants in support of geological research, to reach the Society no later than 1 February 2006. In the past the average award has been about £1000. A number of funds are available to apply for. Further details available at www.geolsoc.org.uk, click on Society News. ■

Herefordshire and Worcestershire Earth Heritage Trust Director

With the retirement of the present Director, the Executive Committee of the Trust is seeking someone with outstanding capabilities to continue the progress of the Trust. Applications by the end of December, interviews in January, start in April. Further details from 01905 855184, Email: eht@worc.ac.uk ■



Derbyshire

A crew from Korean TV stations (KBS) visited the Millennium Wall at the National Stone Centre at Wirksworth near Matlock, in August. Geotourism is big business around most of the Pacific countries of Asia and the Koreans came to see UK geotourism in action. The Millennium Wall, displaying different UK stones built in different local dry-stone-walling styles, gave the Koreans some new ideas to take back with them. ■

Somerset

UKRIGS members are in demand! Hugh Prudden of Somerset Geology Group, helped the Time Team's 'Big Roman Dig' with identification of stones eg a sarsen in a Roman debris layer, roofing material from the Devonian and Lower Lias. The Big Roman Dig studied 10 UK sites of Roman interest on Channel 4 this summer. The TV shows have finished but the Big Roman Dig still goes on. For more information and to be involved go to www.channel4.com/history/microsites/B/bigromandig/index.jsp ■



Lothian and Borders

The Lothian and Borders RIGS Group has continued to raise awareness of their work by holding displays at: the National Trust for Scotland at Newhailes, Vogrie Country Park, West Lothian Environmental Fair at Almondell and at the British Geological Survey Open Day in Murchison House. The group was also involved in a fourth Geology Action Day with Girl guiding East Lothian at Traprain Law. ■

Devon

Are estuaries suitable sites for RIGS? Devon RIGS would like your comments on how these coastal depositional features, and geomorphology sites are handled by other RIGS groups. Because estuaries are dynamic, and sediments are transported in complex ways before consolidating, it has been suggested that the whole estuaries should be listed as a site. Your views, experiences and practice in this area would be appreciated. Email mfennessy@coastres.co.uk ■

Leicestershire

Bradgate Park, a popular wooded park, with tremendous views and deer, has lost some of its precious Pre Cambrian fossils: *Charnia discus*, to vandals over the summer. These early fossils are unique and will be sadly missed. ■

Stirling and Clackmannan

This Scottish RIGS group have produced their first academic poster jointly with BGS and the Scottish Stone Liaison Group for a recent conference in Stirling on building stone. The poster features well-known buildings in and around Stirling linked with the local quarries from which the dimension stone came. ■

London

Geologists from across the UK gathered to discuss 'The Role of Women in the History of Geology' with the History of Geology Group in November. It was both an encouraging and enlightening day. For more information visit www.geolsoc.org.uk ■

Black Country

The Black Country Geological Society is drafting a Black Country Geodiversity Action Plan, ■

Ireland

"Portrush Rock" has won an award in this year's ENI Geological Challenge. Rosalie Grainger, guide leader said "The girls were really excited to hear this news and I am proud of them." Their award is to be presented early in 2006 when the editor of Down to Earth will be in N. Ireland. The RIGS logo features prominently on the leaflet. ■

Publications

Explore

Herefordshire and Worcestershire Earth Heritage Trust
A series of 24 trail guides, of geology, landscape and building stones around Herefordshire and Worcestershire. £1.95 each. Phone 01905 855184 for copies.

Ice Age Times

Warwickshire Geological Conservation Group
A5 flyer about Baginton's ice-age past, and advertising open studies geology classes at the Wildlife Trust's Brandon Marsh Nature Centre. Phone 024 7657 3739.

A Geology of Watchet Walls

Eric Robinson
A very clear and interesting trail booklet. www.swga.org.uk

Identification Guides

Field Studies Council

From introductory to specialist identification charts on a range of topics e.g. rocks, fossils, ferns. All about £2.50. Phone 0845 345 4072, www.field-studies-council.org.

Ice Age

National Ice Age Network

Leaflet on facts and finds from previous ice ages. Supported by the ALSF. Become an ice-age member (for free) at www.iceage.org.uk

Geological Walks in Wales

Geologists Association South Wales

A series of trails around different Welsh locations. Building stones of Cardiff is no. 14. Produced for the Cardiff Science Festival 2005. www.swga.org.uk

Cotswold Hills Geopark

Glos. Geological Trust

Leaflet on this Geopark; its geology, management and future. Phone 01452 864438 for further information.

Craigleith Quarry

Lothian and Borders RIGS group

Geological trail across the quarry top, origin of Edinburgh's historical building stone. Also available on the web: www.edinburghgeolsoc.org/r_sites_cra

RIGS Handbook

Tom Hose would like help updating this. Please contact him on those01@bcuc.ac.uk.

Diary Dates

9th January 2006 – Geological Society of London. Geosciences and the long term management of radioactive waste conference. London. Phone 020 7494 9944.

7th February 2006 – How to start your own geological collection, Scarborough. 01947 881000, www.neyorksgeologytrust.com

18th February 2006: Yorkshire Geological Society. New advances in Palaeobotany and Palynology. Sheffield. Email P.Boylan@city.ac.uk

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UKRIGS wishes to acknowledge the financial support of English Nature, and the practical support of the University of Chester's Centre for Science Communication and Print Unit.

It is always interesting and enjoyable to read about RIGS groups and their work. To share your news and events in this quarterly newsletter, please contact Prof Cynthia Burek, RIGS Newsletter Editor, c.burek@chester.ac.uk or Vic Page, Assistant RIGS Newsletter Editor, v.page@chester.ac.uk.