

# UKRIGS NEWSLETTER



Spring 2006, Vol. 4, No. 1

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

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## Editorial

Hello Everyone, I write this with snow on the ground. It strikes me that, as geologists, we brave all weathers to undertake fieldwork monitoring, analysing, evaluating assessing, but snow is the one weather condition we find hard to deal with. At present I have been working on the role of women in the history of geological work. I am coming to appreciate how these early pioneers worked and have two questions to ask all of you. Firstly, do you think women played a significant role in the history of geoconservation, and if so, can you think of examples? My second question is, what is the oldest example of geodiversity conserved in your area?

Do you have a 'Fossil Grove' or 'Hutton Rock' near you? Please let me know on [c.burek@chester.ac.uk](mailto:c.burek@chester.ac.uk). Perhaps we can find out the oldest example of geoconservation in a RIGS area. My idea would be to mount these on a poster for the following conference: see below. Are these areas you would like to see explored? Could you offer a paper or poster on an aspect of geoconservation with a historical slant? Do let me know. Other news: UKRIGS membership is now at 40. Good work!



Cynthia

## History of Geoconservation Conference: call for papers

The conference, including presentations and field visits, is on 24-25<sup>th</sup> November 2006 in Dudley; an area with a long history of conserving geological sites and specimens. Themes are:

- 1) The origin of geoconservation - sites, landscapes, specimens, documents, and art,
- 2) The history of formalised geoconservation in Britain - through government, academia, voluntary groups, societies and associations,
- 3) The history of international initiatives that have impacted Britain - World Heritage Sites and Geoparks etc,
- 4) The current and potential role of geoconservation in contributing to our social and economic well-being.

Conference proceedings are to be published by the Geological Society. The conference is held by: The Geological Society of London's GeoConservation Commission and History of Geology Group, English Nature, and the Black Country Geological Society.

To offer a paper contact Cynthia Burek [cburek@chester.ac.uk](mailto:cburek@chester.ac.uk) or Colin Prosser

[colin.prosser@english-nature.org.uk](mailto:colin.prosser@english-nature.org.uk). To offer a poster or register interest in receiving further details as they emerge please contact Hannah Townley on [hannah.townley@english-nature.org.uk](mailto:hannah.townley@english-nature.org.uk), or 01733 455304.

## PPS9

### Diana Franks

The Kent RIGS Group thanks UKRIGS and all those involved in writing the new PPS9. Planners and developers are now more aware of geoconservation issues, and PPS9 has added weight to our response to a local planning application. We look forward to working with the developer to preserve and promote awareness of geological features in an old quarry.

## Exec Help

### Mike Brown

The Executive Committee exists to help UKRIGS groups with your activities. Please email Mike: [maeb@bgs.ac.uk](mailto:maeb@bgs.ac.uk) with your successes and failures and write to us about how the exec could help. All comments will be valued and responded to, and can be used in our new Strategy Document, out soon.

## **New Defra guidance on Local Sites**

**Colin Prosser – English Nature**

The Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) have produced new guidance on the identification, selection and management of Local Sites (locally and regionally important wildlife sites, including RIGS) in England. Possible publication date is March 2006. This new guidance aims to

1) promote a transparent, consistent approach to operating Local Site systems, 2) create a consistent sense of the value and importance of these sites, by 3) securing broad awareness and support for the conservation of these sites.

Early thinking on this guidance excluded geological sites. This threatened to raise the profile of locally important wildlife sites whilst leaving RIGS in a potential 'backwater'. After lobbying from the geological community, an inclusive approach with the involvement of UKRIGS and others was agreed. Ensuing consultations resulted in RIGS selection criteria being fully recognised in the recent drafts,

but it is unlikely that all interested parties will be completely happy with the end result and therefore, implementing the guidance is likely to be a challenge as well as a big opportunity.

New guidance is likely to raise the profile of local sites within local authorities. This will require closer work between RIGS groups, geological and wildlife groups, and the local authorities, to develop systems and standards for local site selection and management. For some RIGS groups this may be a new and challenging way of working, for others it will provide new and exciting opportunities to increase the range of partners involved in local geological conservation.

The new Defra guidance is likely to be of great relevance to RIGS groups in England and could bring new and better ways of doing RIGS work. As it is likely to generate a number of questions and challenges for all involved, Defra are considering follow-up publications and seminars, where issues such as how best to implement the guidance can be considered.

## **UKRIGS Education Project Update**

**John R. Reynolds**

The UKRIGS Education Project is funded by Defra's Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund, administered by English Nature. Work on the Project continues apace, with help from RIGS Groups and ESTA members. We still need people with specific site knowledge to help with writing and to look over drafts as work progresses. Expenses are paid! To be involved in any way, please let us know!

[jr.reynolds@virgin.net](mailto:jr.reynolds@virgin.net) / [acutler@btconnect.com](mailto:acutler@btconnect.com)

Many thanks to all who have helped so far!

### **Progress on 2005-06 Sites.**

1. South Elmsall Quarry SSSI, West Yorkshire. In the Magnesian Limestone, Permian, showing reef structures in the dolomitic limestone.
2. Dryhill Picnic Site RIGS, Kent. In the Hythe Beds, Lower Greensand, Cretaceous, with gently folded hard limestones [Kentish rag] and soft sandstones [hassock].
3. Ercall Quarries SSSI, Shropshire. Features include unconformity between Precambrian igneous rocks and Cambrian marine sediments, with later intrusions and faults.
4. Barrow Hill RIGS, West Midlands. A dolerite intrusion into Coal Measures, columnar jointing and contact with overlying sedimentary rocks.

### **Sites planned for 2006-07**

5. Tedbury Camp Quarry RIGS and Vallis Vale SSSI, Somerset. Both show angular unconformity between Carboniferous Limestone and Inferior Oolite, with the eroded platform extensively burrowed by worms.

6. Wood Farm Quarry RIGS, by Ryton Pools Country Park RIGS, Warwickshire. A Quaternary channel fill in the Baginton gravels, Baginton sands, Thrussington Till sequence is conserved.

7. Mosedale Quarry (MQ) RIGS and School House Quarry (SHQ), Mungrisedale, Cumbria. MQ in the Carrock Fell Gabbro. SHQ in Loweswater Flags [Skiddaw Formation] with dolerite dykes.

8. Meldon Aplite Quarries SSSI, Devon. The 20m dyke of aplite metamorphosed the Carboniferous rocks. Find out more at [www.ukrigs.org.uk](http://www.ukrigs.org.uk)

### **Teaching Material**

		KS2	KS3	KS4
2005-06	1	not planned	not planned	due in March
	2	being trialled	due in March	due in March
	3	being written	due in April	due in April
	4	being written	being written	not planned
2006-07	5	being planned	being planned	being planned
	6	undecided	undecided	undecided
	7	undecided	undecided	undecided
	8	undecided	undecided	undecided



## Celebrating 25 years of Geoconservation in Avon Simon Carpenter

During 2005, the Avon RIGS Group celebrated 25 years of geoconservation work across Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire.

### A brief history of the group

**1799** - William Smith "The Father of English Geology" produced the world's first geological map, using sites around Bath. Some of our current RIG sites include buildings associated with early geological entrepreneurs and innovators such as Smith.

**1980** – The Geological Conservation Group, closely affiliated to the local Wildlife Trust, with staff from local museums, universities, societies, planning departments and the Nature Conservancy Council.

**1986** – Consultation draft of the most important sites. Total geological conservation sites now 234.

**1990** – Avon's work cited as 'best practice' in how it was established and operated, in "Earth Science in Great Britain - A Strategy" by the Nature Conservancy Council.

**April 1995** – First RIGS meeting. Chair Ron Smith.

**Now** - Our current and most ambitious project (with help from South Gloucestershire Council and the Aggregates Levy Sustainability Funds) is a complete review of South Gloucestershire RIGS sites. A number of these sites will have interpretation boards and an associated website.

We look forward to our next 25 years, with all our partners, to help conserve Avon's unique earth heritage.

## GA South Wales Trip

Saturday 11th – Sunday 12th March 2006  
Price £10. Led by Stephen Howe, National Museum of Wales, Cardiff.

An introduction to the varied geology of the South Wales Coalfield and adjacent coast. Saturday, we examine the Carboniferous succession and associated tectonics and landforms on the north crop of the Coalfield in the Pontneddfechan area. Sunday, we study the Carboniferous, Triassic and Jurassic successions and relationships in the coastal exposures between Ogmore-by-Sea and Nash Point, on the Vale of Glamorgan coast. Travel will be by car. Bring a packed lunch, warm waterproof clothing and strong footwear. If access is gained to a local opencast pit hard hats and high visibility jackets will be required. For a more detailed itinerary, and further GA events, contact Sarah Stafford at the GA Office on Tel: 020 7434 9298 or FAX: 020 7287 0280 Email: [Geol.Assoc.@btinternet.com](mailto:Geol.Assoc.@btinternet.com) or click on [fieldmeetings2006 details](#).

## Dorset

"Deep Time In Lyme" builds on the success of last year's Lyme Regis Fossil Festival, and features a range of events and activities, based on Charmouth & Lyme Regis' unparalleled geology, fossils and role in the birth of the earth sciences. The festival, running 28-30th April 2006, has been made possible by a grant of £49,400 from the Heritage Lottery Fund. It seeks to reach new audiences and deepen the learning experience through events including schools and museum video-conferencing, exhibitions, a dinosaur circus, fossil identification, trails, and a re-enactment of The Great Debate, which restages the heated discussions between the early evolutionists and the Church in the mid nineteenth century. The festival's partners are Lyme Regis Development Trust, Lyme Regis Museum, Charmouth Heritage Centre, Natural History Museum, Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site Team, Rockwatch, British Geological Survey, Lyme Regis Town Council and West Dorset District Council.

## Somerset

Tedbury camp has tremendous educational value, exposing the angular unconformity between Carboniferous Limestone and the overlying Jurassic Inferior Oolite. Earlier this year, conservationists from Frome College, with Dr Martin Whiteley, Chair of ESTA, and Dr Gill Odolphie from East Mendip Study Centre, cleared the site, as the quarry had become much overgrown. The group removed vegetation and litter, and found a well-preserved echinoid in the Inferior Oolite! See [www.ukrigs.org.uk/education](http://www.ukrigs.org.uk/education) for future planned activities. To be part of the new Friends of Tedbury Camp Quarry, please contact Hugh Prudden, [hugh@hughprudden.wanadoo.co.uk](mailto:hugh@hughprudden.wanadoo.co.uk).

## Publications

### Involving People in GeoDiversity

JNCC and English Nature

The booklet provides a summary of the discussions and conclusions of a two-day workshop held to mark the end of the 'Earth heritage: World heritage' conference, organised by English Nature, Dorset County Council and JNCC. Free copies from [GeoConference@jncc.gov.uk](mailto:GeoConference@jncc.gov.uk).

### Postcards of Britain in Flood

Energy Savings Trust

Thought-provoking images of exaggerated predicted climate change trends e.g. Brighton underwater. See [www.saveenergy.co.uk](http://www.saveenergy.co.uk)

### Earth Science in GCSEs

Peter Kennett

A useful comparison of the new GCSE specifications and how Earth Science content fits into them.

### Ravelston Park & Woods

Friends of Ravelston Park & Woods Association

History and geology of the area with local geology contacts. SAE plus £1 to FORPWA, Blackhall Nursery, Ravelston Park Pavillion, Craigcrook Road, Edinburgh, EH4 3RU.

### Walking Through The Past – Malpas

CrLGAP / Cheshire RIGS

Trail guide through Malpas, not often cited for its geological history, but with plenty of geology to interest and excite. Email [c.burek@chester.ac.uk](mailto:c.burek@chester.ac.uk) for copies.

### Secrets in the Landscape

NE Yorkshire Geology Trust

Series of 7 plush fold out trails around Burton Riggs, Cleveland Dyke, Highwood Brow, Love Lane Quarries, May Beck, Waitecliff End and Wykeham. £2 each from 01947 881000.

## Appointment

Geodiversity Action Plan (GAP) Manager wanted in Worcestershire to form GAP partnership, write consultation document and produce trails. 2 days per week. £19200 per year pro-rata from April 2006. Apply by 24th March 2006. E: [eht@worc.ac.uk](mailto:eht@worc.ac.uk). W: [www.EarthHeritageTrust.org](http://www.EarthHeritageTrust.org).

## Diary Dates

**Wrens Nest 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Events**  
01384 812785 for full programme.

**28<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> April 2006** – “Deep Time in Lyme” Festival in Dorset.  
[www.deeptimeinlyme.com](http://www.deeptimeinlyme.com)

**3<sup>rd</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> May 2006** – Barbados Trip with Prof. Stephen Donovan. For details: Sarah Stafford  
[geol.assoc@btinternet.com](mailto:geol.assoc@btinternet.com)

**15<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> June 2006** – Extractive Industry Geology Conference, Edinburgh. [www.eigconference.org](http://www.eigconference.org)

**UKRIGS Geoconservation Association**  
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### Executive Committee

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Education Officer Rick Ramsdale



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*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](mailto:c.burek@chester.ac.uk) or Vic Page, Assistant RIGS Newsletter Editor, [v.page@chester.ac.uk](mailto:v.page@chester.ac.uk) 250 words max, pictures if you can. The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual authors and unless stated, do not represent the opinions of UKRIGS.*