

UKRIGS NEWSLETTER



Summer 2006, Vol. 4, No. 2

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

IN THIS ISSUE:

P1 – Editorial, Geoparks Conference, ESTA Conference

P2 – Education Project Update, DERFA Local Sites Guidance

*P3 – Gloucestershire, Virtual Quarry, Shetland, Lothian & Borders,
Scottish Natural Heritage, Wales Environment, Dorset & East Devon, Natural England*

P4 – Publications, Diary Dates

Editorial

Hi Everyone, Summer is with us at last and fieldwork is calling. Geodiversity is springing up everywhere! This year I visited the Chelsea Flower Show for the first time. Imagine my surprise when I saw a garden inspired by Geodiversity: the Jurassic Coast Garden. It was shaped as an ammonite, which swirled into a pond. It was a lovely garden even in the rain and a good example of the flexibility and adaptability needed to raise public awareness on a large scale.

Geodiversity and Geoconservation are entering an exciting new strategical phase, involving widespread, increased Local Authority planning guidance. As a result, new LGAPs are springing up all over the place. We need to be aware of the new changes, and use these opportunities well to further the cause of bringing Geology and Geomorphology to the public,

Happy Rigging,
Cynthia ■



Geoparks 2006 Conference

17th – 21st September 2006

This four-day event, The Second International Conference of Geoparks, is held in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

Delegates will learn how to promote geological heritage and sustain local communities through the development of quality tourism. The conference will highlight development of Geoparks, the application process for membership of the UNESCO-endorsed European and Global Geoparks Networks, and the benefits Geoparks can bring to your local and national economy. Excursions to historical and cultural sites of Northern Ireland are organised, with pre- and post-conference field trips to Geoparks, and attractions across Ireland, Britain and mainland Europe.

This conference is for senior officials in local, national and international government, professional geologists and practitioners in the field of tourism, education and cultural heritage associations. ■

ESTA Conference

15th – 17th September 2006

Martin Whiteley

This year's Earth Science Teachers Association Course and Conference will be held at the University of Bristol.

Briefly, Friday 15th concentrates on Earth Science in the National Curriculum, Saturday 16th is for climate change, volcanic geohazards and the Conference Dinner and Sunday 17th follows the footsteps of William Smith around Bath and Burrington Combe. The Keynote lecture on Friday evening is free, but there are modest fees for other aspects of the conference.

Accommodation is at Clifton Hill House, just a short walk from the Earth Science Department in the Wills Memorial Building of the University.

Attendance is open to all with an interest in Earth science education, as a day visitor or resident. All details and booking forms can be downloaded from the ESTA website: www.esta-uk.org, look in Bristol 2006. ■

UKRIGS Education Project Update

John R. Reynolds

Work on the Project continues, with the help of local RIGS Groups and ESTA members. We always need people willing to look over the finished products and drafts as the work progresses. Any volunteers? We also need people to spread the word to non-specialist teachers, pointing them to the UKRIGS website: www.ukrigs.org.uk, or passing on the CD from the Derby Conference, copies are still available.

Progress on 2005-06 Sites.

All Teaching material for these sites has progressed at least one stage further. As promised, new teaching materials are now available on the UKRIGS website for

South Elmsall Quarry: KS4, and

Dryhill Picnic Site RIGS, Kent: KS4 and KS3.

Teaching material will soon be available for **Dryhill Picnic Site RIGS**, Kent: KS2 materials are currently being uploaded onto the website.

Ercall Quarries SSSI, Shropshire: KS 3 & 4 materials are currently being uploaded onto the website. KS2 materials have been written and are now being trialled, and **Barrow Hill RIGS**, West Midlands. Materials for KS3 have now been written and are being trialled. KS2 materials are currently being written

Sites planned for 2006-07

Tedbury Camp Quarry RIGS and Vallis Vale SSSI, Somerset. Teaching materials are anticipated to be ready for the visit by delegates from the ESTA Conference this September.

Wood Farm Quarry RIGS, by Ryton Pools Country Park RIGS, Warwickshire. The best section is in the active Wood Farm Quarry, which will not have open public access for about a year. The Ryton Pools site needs some clearance work – an important teaching point on weathering!

Teaching materials and levels are still to be decided for **Wood Farm Quarry RIGS**, Warwickshire, **Mosedale Quarry (MQ) RIGS** and **School House Quarry (SHQ)**, Mungrisedale, Cumbria, and **Meldon Aplite Quarries SSSI**, Devon.

(KS2 is upper primary, KS3 is lower secondary, KS4 is GCSE)

To be involved in any way, please let us know! Thanks to all who have helped so far!

jr.reynolds@virgin.net / acutler@btconnect.com
education@ukrigs.org.uk

The UKRIGS Education Project is funded by Defra's Aggregate Levy Sustainability Fund, administered by English Nature. ■

Defra Local Sites Guidance Published at last!

Colin Prosser – English Nature

Download the full document for England from www.defra.gov.uk, Scotland's document is available from pub@snh.gov.uk. Wales' document is currently being written. Full details and developments at www.ukrigs.org.uk

England

The original brief of the Review Group left out geological/geomorphological sites (RIGS). Thanks to pressure from English Nature, later briefs included them, with help from Mick Stanley (then Earth Sciences manager at RSNC) and John Reynolds (UKRIGS).

Site selection criteria based on Ratcliffe's Wildlife ones have prevailed, and reference is made to all the UKRIGS site selection criteria and use of the GeoConservation database. According to the document, site selection can be delegated to an appointed panel, which is where the local RIGS Group fits in!

Scotland

The Scottish process and resulting document are somewhat different. "Guidance on Establishing and Managing Local Nature Conservation Site Systems in Scotland" took just eighteen months to complete. It was published by a partnership, including UKRIGS and BGS, led by Scottish Natural Heritage. Mike Browne (UKRIGS and BGS) and John Reynolds (UKRIGS) were key players.

The Challenge For Rigs Groups

in all parts of the UK is to **seize the opportunity** to implement this Guidance. With PPS9 – Biodiversity and Geological Conservation - and the Local Sites Guidance, local authorities, wildlife trusts and others involved in nature conservation will now see that geological conservation is on the government agenda, up in lights, right there alongside wildlife conservation. So step up your contacts with local authority planning departments and conservation colleagues and Go For It! ■

Gloucestershire

Gloucestershire Geology Trust have prepared a new interpretation board for Tintern Quarry in the Forest of Dean, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Tintern Quarry's face is over 130m high, overlooks the gorge of the River Wye and has the most complete sequence of Carboniferous Limestone in the area. The rock sequence, from Lower Dolomite to Drybrook Sandstone, follows the changing environments from open marine conditions to intertidal / terrestrial conditions. The greatest value of interpretation on this site, is in being able to see the relative thicknesses of the beds and differences in rock types all in one place, making it much easier for the public to picture the sequence of events, geological history and heritage of their local area. Stone from the quarry are most likely included in the Severn Bridge and its associated road network. This project was funded through Defra's Aggregate Levy Sustainability Fund Grants Scheme. It is a partnership between English Nature and the Landscape, Access and Recreation arm of the Countryside Agency. For further information on Tintern Quarry, E-mail info@qlosgeotrust.org.uk ■

Virtual Quarry

The Quarry Products Association's flagship educational website, the "Virtual Quarry" won a Most Imaginative Design" award in the 2006 Communicators in Business awards held in May in Bournemouth. The site aims to raise the profile of the quarrying industry through helping young people make the link between their local quarry and the built environment and it is well worth a visit. (www.virtualquarry.co.uk) ■

Shetland

Shetlanders have submitted an application for the Shetland Isles to join the European Geopark Network become a Geopark. The Isles have a rich geological heritage to share and Geopark status may bring considerable benefits through increased nature-based tourism and increased funding for conservation. ■

Dorset and East Devon

Together with the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Team, Dorset and Devon County Councils sponsored a Jurassic garden for Chelsea Flower Show in May 2006. www.rhs.org.uk ■

Natural England

Natural England will be a new public body, uniting the Countryside Agency's landscape, access and recreation functions with the activities of English Nature and the larger part of Rural Development Service in a single organisation. It will be responsible for biodiversity and landscapes in rural, urban and coastal areas, while promoting access, recreation and public well-being. Its headquarters will be in Sheffield. Thirteen members have already been appointed to the Board of Natural England, which will take up its full functions on 1 October 2006. As yet there are no fully trained Earth Scientists appointed. It is suggested that some apply! This new public body creates an excellent opportunity for local RIGS groups to step up their lobbying of local directors to keep a geological focus in their minds, and make it available to us all. Find out more at www.defra.gov.uk/news ■

Lothian and Borders

The Scottish Borders James Hutton Trail, has been established, following the life and times of our founder of modern geology. ■

Scottish Natural Heritage

SNH move into their new National Headquarters in Inverness in July 2006. Moving from their two locations in Edinburgh, to the newly designed and constructed, sustainable building in Inverness, will place them right in the heart of the Highland's natural heritage. ■

Wales Environment

On 17th May 2006 the Welsh Assembly Government produced its Wales Environment Strategic Plan. The Wildlife related action includes "bringing together standardised guidance to the development of local wildlife site systems by 2007" Geodiversity is, at present, missing from the plan. The wildlife trusts in Wales are leading on this action and are due to bring a progress report to the Wales Biodiversity Partnership meeting on 13th July 2006. Local RIGS groups are on the case to include Geodiversity in the plans. ■

Publications

Geology of Middleton Date

Peak District National Park Authority and English Nature Map, plan and trail guide to the deep limestone gorge of Stoney Middleton. Trail includes mines, quarries, cliffs, caverns and fossils. The site is designated a SSSI.

Email customer.service@peakdistrict.gov.uk

Secrets of the Bathgate Hills

Almond Valley Heritage Trust and Scottish Natural Heritage

This leaflet folds out to be a board game for up to four players! Visit all of your own sites (Habitat, minerals, history or landscape) before your opponents visit all of theirs. My family really enjoyed this and learned a lot about West Lothian. www.almondvalley.co.uk/secrets

Your Dales Rocks, Draft LGAP

North Yorkshire Geodiversity Partnership

This plan charts the way ahead for geology and geological conservation over the next 5 years in the Yorkshire Dales, Nidderdale and parts of Craven. It is open for consultation for 3 months. Download from www.yourdalesrocks.org.uk

Barrow Hill: The Dudley Volcano

The Black Country Geological Society

Discover the ancient past of Pensnett at the Barrow Hill Local Nature Reserve, and learn about the volcano which produced Barrow Hill. 01384 812780.

Wirral Parks & Countryside Events and Activities

Wirral Parks and Countryside Section

A 26 page magazine jam-packed with walks, talks, visits, and activities, kids events and more! Email wirralcountryside@wirral.gov.uk for a copy.

Working to Record and Protect

Geology and Landscape

Hereford and Worcestershire Earth Heritage Trust

Booklet about the Trust, achievements and future developments. www.earthheritagetrust.org

Principles and Practice of Soils Science

Robert E. White

The soil as a natural resource. A current and comprehensive introduction to soil science for students and professionals.

Diary Dates

June 24th and 25th

Berley Festival Rock and Fossil Roadshow, and walks of Berkley Castle grounds. 01452 864438

Too many local Summer activities to mention! Good work RIGS groups!

September 17th – 21st

Geoparks Conference
www.geoparks2006.com

September 15th – 17th

ESTA Conference
www.esta-uk.org

UKRIGS Geoconservation Association
National Stone Centre. Porter Lane,
Middleton by Wirksworth,
Derbyshire, DE4 4LS, Tel 01629-824833

ukrigs@nationalstonecentre.org.uk
UKRIGS@yahoo.co.uk
www.ukrigs.org.uk

Executive Committee

Chair: Mike Browne – Lothian & Borders
Treasurer: Alan Cutler – Black Country GS
Editor: Prof Cynthia Burek – NEWRIGS
Dr Ken Addison – Gwynedd & Mon RIGS
John Reynolds – Staffordshire RIGS
Peter Jones – Derbyshire RIGS
Dr Tom Hose – Bucks RIGS

Co-opted

Webmaster: Craig Slawson

Acting Secretary: Dr Cheryl Jones
Education Officer Rick Ramsdale



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 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.