

Somerset Geology Group - mapping our membership, developing our network and looking for volunteers! May 2016

Further to our *Spring 2016 Update*, this is a follow-up email to try to **'map' what geological interest, expertise and links that we hold within our current e-group**. We want to develop the group as a network to encourage geological conservation and related activity in Somerset. We are a member of **GeoConservationUK**, the Association of UK 'RIGS' groups, whose mission is to: *'encourage the appreciation, conservation and promotion of local/regional geological sites for education and public benefit'*.

Our initial focus will be reviewing our Somerset local geological sites and we are starting to develop plans for this with our host organisation, Somerset Environmental Record Centre - and will need to identify volunteers to help. Several of you replied to our March update to introduce yourself (many thanks), and some of you, we know, are on our e-group for info only - but there are still some of you out there whose interest we don't know - and it looks as if we may have quite a lot of gaps that we might need to try to fill. **So if not already, please do let me know what your interest is and if you think you can offer any help with our project to review Somerset's local geological sites:**

- Are you able to offer any knowledge or expertise in any particular aspects of Somerset's geology?
- Are you involved in the conservation of any particular local sites in Somerset and/or with their use in education?
- Are you involved in teaching Earth sciences in Somerset?
- Can you provide a link for us to any local conservation societies, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, local museums, local geo-diversity projects, etc in Somerset?
- Can you provide a link for us to other geological organisations, eg Ussher Society, Geological Society, etc
- Are you interested in being active on our Working group to review Somerset's local geological sites (our autumn meeting will be a Working Group meeting)?
- Can you offer any organisational or other support, for example we might want to develop our own website, can you help with preparing newsletters, etc.

I hope also that, as our plans develop, we will be able to offer more specific opportunities for volunteer involvement, but we are at an early stage of planning at the moment.

Somerset was amongst the first group of counties to identify their local geological sites in the 1980s and 90s - so we want to make sure that we keep up the good work of earlier years. There is now more recent guidance from DEFRA on local sites (published in 2006) and in the last few years there have been several initiatives encouraging awareness of geo-diversity at a landscape scale. So there is now the wider context of our work contributing to the **UK Geodiversity Action Plan** (www.ukgap.org.uk) and the **England Geodiversity Charter**, published last autumn (www.englishgeodiversityforum.org). I'm still catching up on all this - and still have lots more learning to come about reviewing local sites!

All for now, Wendy

Wendy Lutley, Coordinator,
Somerset Geology Group