

Update No 8: Autumn (Sept) 2019



Working in partnership with Somerset Environmental Records Centre (SERC) and Somerset Wildlife Trust to encourage appreciation, conservation and promotion of the geology of Somerset <http://wp.somerc.co.uk/specialist-groups/somerset-geology-group/>

Dear all

Please find, attached, the agenda for the meeting of our **Somerset Geology Group (SGG) on Mon 30 Sept 2019, 10 am to 4 pm**. The morning meeting will be at **Broomfield Village Hall**, a few yards along the road **from the National Trust's (NT's) Fyne Court property in the Quantocks**.

We will be joined by Leanne Butt, SERC's manager and team (see below) and by Richard Snelling, the NT's Countryside Manager for the western part of Somerset. The NT will host our first site visit in the afternoon, where we will be able to look at the Local Geological Site (LGS) at Fyne Court. Don't expect spectacular geology, but it will be an opportunity to discuss the range of practical issues that need to be thought about for geo-conservation and geo-interpretation. We are hoping to arrange a second site visit to a Forestry England-owned site, with Devonian Limestone, but our date may clash with forestry work there, so we may need to amend plans on the day.

Review of Somerset's LGSs

We are steadily progressing our joint project with SERC. In May we were delighted to hear that Wesley Harris has been appointed as SERC's LGS Project Officer (a new two-day a week post for a year to help with additional core work that the LGS project is generating). Wes was a graduate volunteer on the project in summer 2018 and continued to help over winter 2018/19.

We have also recruited two SERC-based volunteers to assist with the project this summer: Megan Trunks, a BSc graduate from Cardiff, and Jon Hicks, an MSc graduate from Southampton. Both joined the team in July. Our third field season for the project is therefore well underway, with a focus on the Mendips.

We held a third meeting of SERC's LGS Panel in early April. Wes, Wendy and Garry have been working since then through the remaining Year 1

site forms, where additional desk work was needed. So we hope that all the remaining forms for LGS in the Somerset part of Exmoor and the Quantocks will be ready for the November Panel meeting.

Leanne will be leaving SERC in October to become Conservation Officer at Dorset Wildlife Trust. Our congratulations and thanks to her for her input to the project over the last 18 months. It has been invaluable.

Practical conservation work

Our thanks to members of Dorset Important Geological Sites (DIGS) for practical conservation work at Vallis Vale in May. NB DIGS would welcome SGG members from Somerset to help with any future sessions: contact Alan Holiday at alanholiday@btinternet.com if you would like to be on his list for future activity.

Garry Dawson is organising a second practical conservation session at **Clatworthy Reservoir**, near Wiveliscombe, for South West Region group of the Open University Geological Society on **Sat 28 Sept 2019**. See <https://ougs.org/events/popup/2122/local-geology-site-lgs-conservation/>.

Events

Mendip Rocks Festival 2019 is currently underway as a series of events from July into Oct, see <http://www.mendiphillsaonb.org.uk/events/>. This includes talks and tea at **Somerset Earth Science Centre (SESC)** on Sat 12 Oct 2019 as part of SESC's tenth anniversary.

Earth Science Week 2019 runs this autumn from 12 to 20 October 2019 and is co-ordinated nationally by the Geological Society. See <https://www.geolsoc.org.uk/earthscienceweek/>.

GeoWeek 2020 – will take place 9 to 17 May 2020 (organised by the Earth Science Education Forum (see www.geoweek.org.uk).

A few other advance dates

- Sat 7 Sept 2019: visit to Cloford Quarry SSSI in the Mendips organised by Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society (see <http://www.sanhs.org/>).
- Thurs 12 Sept : visit to *Torr Works Quarry* - part of the Mendip Rocks Festival (see above)
- Mon 16 Oct: *How Cheddar gets its Water* - part of the Mendip Rocks Festival (see above)

NB The above list is not intended to be comprehensive! For further possibilities, including all the Mendips Rocks Festival events, see the events calendar organised by Graeme Churchard on <http://westcountrygeology.com/> .

Please think about submitting events in Somerset to Graeme. See his blog too for advertising them: <http://geologywestcountry.blogspot.co.uk/> .

Interpretation and inspiration

Two recent items provide potential inspiration for future geo-conservation activity in Somerset:

Jurassic Coast: geoscience and education is a special issue of the **Proceedings of the Geologists' Association** (June 2019) with a final article by Sam Scriven on geo-heritage interpretation on the Jurassic Coast World Heritage site. It illustrates the experience there is to draw on from elsewhere in the South West.

William Smith's fossils reunited - a reprint of two of William Smith's publications: *strata identified by organized fossils* (1816-19) and *a stratigraphical system of organized fossils* (1817) was published by Halsgrove earlier this year, compiled and edited by Peter Wigley, with Jill Darrell, Diana Clements and Hugh Torrens.

It follows www.strata-smith.com , established in 2015 for the bicentenary of the first geological map of England and Wales, produced by William Smith in 1815. Smith's more detailed county map for *Somerset* was never fully printed, but through comparison with other Smith maps the team has been able to recreate it. His geological section from Taunton through Yeovil and into Dorset was published by Cary in 1819.

The history of earth sciences is one of the criteria for LGS designation, so we do need to ensure we have an understanding of the work of early geologists in Somerset.

With the usual appreciation for everyone's activity to encourage geo-conservation.

Wendy Lutley, Coordinator

Next Update - please let me have any information on geo-conservation and related earth-science education activity in Somerset by **Friday 27 March 2020** for inclusion in the next *Update*.

Data protection – our SGG Co-ordinating group will try to ensure that SGG *Updates* are sent blind and that we only send 'non-blind' emails to you, where you have indicated that you are happy for us to do, eg where a small number of people need to liaise on a particular topic. Our full list of SGG contacts will be held only by myself, with Garry Dawson holding a back-up list, as my co-coordinator. Let me know if you would no longer like to receive SGG *Updates*. **Please refer any potential new network members to our web page – see above - and the email address given there.**

SGG is a member of **GeoConservationUK**, which encourages the appreciation, conservation & promotion of local/regional geological sites for education & public benefit. See http://wiki.geoconservationuk.org.uk/index.php5?title=Main_Page .

We also aim to encourage delivery in Somerset of the UK Geodiversity Action Plan www.ukgap.org.uk and England Geodiversity Charter www.englishgeodiversityforum.org .