



Earth Science Education Forum (England and Wales) Minutes of the forty-fifth meeting

Held in the Arthur Holmes meeting room, The Geological Society, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London. 1.30pm, 16 October 2012.

Present: Chris King, Chairman (Earth Science Education Unit)
David Bailey (British Geological Survey)
Martyn Bradley
David Brook (London Geodiversity Partnership)
Nikki Edwards (OCR)
Duncan Hawley (Geographical Association)
Tom Hose (GeoConservationUK & University of Bristol)
Isabel Markham (U3A)
Cally Oldershaw
John Reynolds (GeoConservationUK)
Peter Warren
Maggie Williams (Earth Science Teachers' Association)
Peter Williams (University of Liverpool)

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from: Hilary Arrowsmith (MPA), Diane Aston (IOM3), Nic Bilham (GSL), Steve Brace (RGS & IBG), Susan Brown (Geologists' Association and Rockwatch), Sally Collins (NHM), Hazel Gibson (Plymouth University), Jacqui Malpas (Clwydian Range AONB), David Waltham (CHUGD).

2 Minutes of the 44th meeting, 1 May 2012

The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting. A copy will be placed on the ESEF website.

Action: David Bailey

3 Matters arising

3.1 [*Agenda item 3.1*] *National Curriculum consultation*: C King reminded members that the remit for the new secondary science curriculum refers only to Physics, Biology and Chemistry. He planned to respond to the consultation, which closes in December, pointing out that many jurisdictions that lead the UK in educational attainment have earth science as a quarter of their science curriculum. The draft primary curriculum has been published and includes quite a lot of earth science. However, it still contains errors and is intended to be taught to 8-year-olds, which is too young an age group. **Action: C King to draft a response**

3.2 D Hawley said that discussions about the National Curriculum are still in progress. There is also discussion about the geography curriculum within the Geographical Association membership. It appears the DfE are relying on subject associations to carry out consultations. The Chief Executive of the GA has requested the views of the science community on the balance of earth science between geography and science in the curriculum. There is an impression that the DfE would prefer earth science should not be split between geography and science, but appear in only one or the other curriculum.

3.3 C King reported the good news that A2 Geology entries had increased by more than 9% this year. AS Geology entries had also increased, by about 2.5%. GCSE Geology entries were stable.

- 3.4 C King confirmed that the six places for training secondary geology teachers at Keele University would be funded for the foreseeable future. However, only two students had been recruited last year. He had written to heads of university earth science departments reminding them of training and career opportunities in secondary education for geology graduates.
- 3.5 ESEU funding: C King said it was hoped shortly to confirm that funding will continue and be reviewed annually.
- 3.6 *[Agenda item 3.2] National Geology Database:* T Hose said he had not had time to draft an article on the National Geology Database. D Bailey reported on the BGS's GeoBritain Map <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/geoBritainMap/> This database has a map-based interface that provides links to web-pages about events, local groups, geotrails and other resources useful for supporting people learning about geology. It was hoped that the database would develop in response to user input and feedback. T Hose said he would report this to the National Geology Database project staff at the next meeting in early November.
Action: T Hose
- 3.7 C King said he would write to C Darmon to thank him for his efforts to establish a database and update him on recent developments. He also offered to write to BGS to thank them for this initiative to meet a need which had been much discussed by ESEF.
Action: C King
- 3.8 *[Agenda item 3.4] International Conference on Geotourism 22/23 October 2012:* T Hose reported that more than 50 delegates had registered to date. There would be a wide range of international contributions.
- 3.9 *[Agenda item 3.6] Potential Collaborative Projects:* T Hose would be holding a meeting about the SUSTRANS project soon. I Markham said that she had some volunteers to assist with the 'bus pass geology trails'. Arriva buses in North Wales had been very helpful in providing information on all their routes. It was hoped that the U3A would publish the trails as a series of leaflets. There was some discussion about the opportunities to link geological trails with public transport. Schools and the Field Studies Council might be potential users of trails along the north coast of Wales. D Brook suggested that I Markham should contact Natural England to discuss the project.
- 3.10 *[Agenda item 3.8] Proposals for Heritage Lottery Funded projects:* D Brook reported that both projects had been successful in applying to the HLF. One of the projects, 'Go Wild on Hampstead Heath' would include aspects of geology and geodiversity. The other, 'London's Foundations: the West London Brickfield' will include opportunities for members of the public to make their own bricks. Nikki Edwards said that she was on the Geo-East Committee which had a project to link sites of chalk geology. Sites were being identified and local champions will then be sought to develop and look after the sites.
- 3.11 *[Agenda item 7.1] Your Heritage Projects:* Action still outstanding. Susan Brown to forward information about Your Heritage to D Bailey for circulation to members.
Action: S Brown
- 3.12 *[Agenda item 7.2] Local Nature Partnership Projects:* J Reynolds reported that all projects were funded and proceeding.
- 3.13 *[Agenda item 8] Nuffield Bursaries:* D Hawley described the GA's internships for students and recommended that other organisations consider developing similar schemes.

4 Finance report

No significant change to financial position.

5 ESEF website (www.esef.org.uk)

There had been no additions to the ESEF web pages apart from the minutes of recent meetings, but the All-Party Parliamentary Group web pages had been updated with information about the new officers and programme.

6 All-Party Parliamentary Group for Earth and Environmental Sciences update

C Oldershaw said that the Group had held their AGM in July and reminded members that there would be a meeting of the All-Party Group later that evening. The speaker would be Professor Herbert Huppert (University of Cambridge) and the discussion would be on the subject of Carbon Capture and Climate Change.

7 Potential collaborative projects

Members did not table any projects for discussions.

8 AOB

There was no other business.

9 Date of future meetings

The dates of future meetings:

- 4 Dec 2012 M Williams to convene a discussion on the Earth Science Teachers' Association.
- 5 Mar 2013 Date and discussion to be confirmed.
- 14 May 2013 Date and discussion to be confirmed.
- 15 Oct 2013 Date and discussion to be confirmed.

Meetings to be at Geological Society apartments if available.

Action: D Bailey to confirm availability with Nic Bilham

The topics for discussion at future meetings was discussed. D Hawley said he would speak to colleagues about the possibility of a presentation on the Geographical Association.

Action: D Hawley

Other topics suggested included:

- The role of local groups in geoconservation.
- Geoparks (and, specifically, the financial challenges they face).
- Earth sciences in the media and, specifically, the strategy of the BBC for commissioning science programmes.
- Soils and soil sites.

The business meeting closed at 3.00pm and was followed by a discussion on fieldwork convened by Tom Hose, including presentations John Reynolds on Earth Science On-Site and by Maggie and Peter Williams on the development of an online field safety open education resource.