



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

Held in the William Buckland meeting room, The Geological Society, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London. 1.30pm, 3 December 2013.

Present: Chris King, Chairman (Earth Science Education Unit)
David Bailey (British Geological Survey)
Martyn Bradley (Geology Trusts)
David Brook (London Geodiversity Partnership)
Susan Brown (Geologists' Association and Rockwatch)
Nikki Edwards (OCR)
Tom Hose (GeoConservationUK & University of Bristol)
Pete Loader (ESTA)
Isabel Markham (U3A)
Joanna Mears (GSL)
Hannah Pritchard (NHM Learning Team/Real World Science)
John Stevenson (British Geological Survey)
Peter Warren

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from: Diane Aston (IOM3), Nic Bilham (GSL), Steve Brace (RGS & IBG), Cynthia Burek, Anjana Ford (Jurassic Coast), Hazel Gibson (Plymouth University), Duncan Hawley (Geographical Association), Jacqui Malpas, Cally Oldershaw, Hazel Rymer (OU), Annette Shelford (NHM Learning Team/Real World Science) and Matthew Shepherd (Natural England). Jacqui Malpas had now retired from Clwydian Range AONB and asked for her regards to be passed on to everyone at the meeting.

2 Minutes of the 48th meeting, 15 October 2013

The minutes of the 48th meeting were accepted as a true record. A copy will be placed on the ESEF website.

Action: D Bailey

3 Matters arising

- 3.1 *[Agenda item 3.1] National Curriculum consultation (KS4):* There still had been no announcement of a formal consultation on the proposed changes to the KS4 curriculum.¹
- 3.2 *[Agenda item 3.4] Training for secondary geology teachers:* CK reminded the Forum that a summer school would be run at Keele University from 19 to 25 July 2014 with 12 bursaried places for geology and geography graduates. The course would be worth 15 Masters level credits. It is the first time in the UK that Geography teachers have been offered the opportunity to train as Geology teachers. The course would overlap with the dates of the GSL Academy but was aimed at a different cohort.
- 3.3 *[Agenda items 3.6] Geology for Non-Geologists training:* It was understood that the Geologists' Association Council would meet soon to discuss the proposed training course. A two-day course had been proposed but it was likely to be reduced to one-day (half-day 'classroom' and half-day 'field' activities). JM said that the GSL's Regional Group network might be able to provide support. DB said he had discussed the proposal with the BGS's head of training; there

¹ On 5 December 2014, NE reported that OCR had been advised that DfE will be consulting on science at Key Stage 4 early in the spring of 2014.

was already in-house training in place for non-geological BGS staff at Keyworth, but staff in other offices might be interested in taking the course, and BGS might be able to host courses and contribute to training.

- 3.4 [Agenda items 3.9] *Destination survey for A-level Geology students*: CK and DBa had raised this matter with ESTA Council and circulated a questionnaire asking Geology A-level teachers how many of their students had gone on to study geoscience courses at university. Responses so far indicate that 49.5% of students had done so. It was suggested that the GSL might hold information on the qualifications of its Fellows. TH suggested that an online survey could be carried out using SurveyMonkey. JS said that BGS could help set this up. PW asked if there was a sufficient sample size; it would be useful to know whether students with A-level Geology ultimately performed better in their studies or careers, but it may be impossible or very difficult to analyse the data and a very well-structured survey would be needed. There was a discussion about obtaining information on the names and numbers of schools teaching geology at KS4 and KS5.
- 3.5 [Agenda item 3.10] *National Geology Database*: The BGS's GeoBritain map was discussed as the basis for an alternative to a National Geology Database. There was discussion about the potential content and how this could be sourced and maintained, including automated removal of out-of-date material. JS said he was happy to take this forward. It was agreed that the initiative needed advertising and it was suggested that an article could be written for publication in *Geoscientist*, the GCUK newsletter and elsewhere. JS volunteered to write a short article
Action: J Stevenson
- 3.6 [Agenda item 3.10] *MOU between GeoConservation UK and BGS*: TH reported that negotiations concerning the MOU were in progress; there may be news following the GeoConservation UK meeting on 12 December.
- 3.7 [Agenda item 3.11] *International Conference on Geotourism 22/23 October 2012*: TH reported that a quarter of the chapters had been received. Appropriate reviewers are still being sought.
- 3.8 [Agenda item 3.11] *'Bus Pass Geology'*: TH would post materials to IM over the Christmas period.
Action: T Hose
- 3.9 [Agenda item 3.13] *Earth Science Week*: JM had sent some material for the ESTA journal, *Teaching Earth Sciences* and had also spoken to Duncan Hawley concerning the Geographical Association magazine. She would resend the text to TH for the GCUK newsletter as this seemed to have gone astray. Earth Science Week would be held from 13 to 19 October in 2014 and would coincide with the event in the USA. The UK theme would be "Our Geoheritage". HP said she would help promote ESW via the Real World Science partnership of 10 museums, and also more widely. IM reported that she had been contacted by 15 new U3A Geology groups following Earth Science Week 2013 though it was not clear if there was a direct link.
- 3.10 [Agenda item 3.15] *Geological poster map of the British Isles*: DBa had held helpful meetings with Duncan Hawley and was expecting further input from teachers via the Geographical Association. It was hoped the map would be a useful resource for geography teachers as physical geography had been strengthened in the curriculum for 2014.
- 3.11 [Agenda item 8.1] *Public engagement*: DBr alerted members to the Geo-Fun initiative run by Sophy Crosby and Roy Gill. He would circulate their flyer to members. **Action: D Brook**
- 3.12 [Agenda item 8.3] *Speaker for October 2014 meeting*: TH said the Geological Curators' Group would confirm the speaker once their new committee had been elected.

4 Finance report

No significant changes to report.

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

The minutes had been added to the Meetings page. The domain (www.esef.org.uk) was due for renewal in mid January. The Forum agreed to the modest expenditure. **Action: D Bailey**

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

There was no news concerning the activities of the All-Party Group. TH mentioned the ‘Nature Check’ meeting held at the Houses of Parliament and would send a pdf to DBa for circulation to Forum members. This may be an avenue for geologists to hold parliamentarians to account, though there are membership costs.

7 Potential collaborative projects

7.1 CK asked how U3A Geology Groups are established. IM said that she initially suggests where groups can find further reference sources and resources such as rock samples. Further information has to be tailored to each group taking into account their location, willingness to do fieldwork etc. Many groups are keen to follow geological trails, and visit local museums, and individuals may like to investigate the history of geology and make presentations to their fellow members. Summer schools and day courses (e.g. at the National Stone Centre) had been organised and IM supported groups with visits in the London area, particularly building stones walks based on materials produced by Eric Robinson and the BGS. TH and SB suggested that the GCUK and Geologists’ Association websites were good sources for speakers and excursion leaders. U3A groups would visit the Geologists’ Association Open Day and staff at the GA would help U3A members contact local GA groups. IM said that the County Trusts were also very helpful.

7.2 NE advised that the OCR would be holding a conference for A-level teachers of sciences at the Royal Society between 30 June and 2 July; geology would be covered on 1 July. The speakers would not be teachers or examiners. There would be opportunities for organisations such as ESTA, GSL etc to take a stand.

8 AOB

8.1 NE advised that the ongoing reorganisation at OCR might affect staffing.

8.2 PL reported that a new Volcanoes Top Trumps card game had been launched at Plymouth University at the end of November. The cost was £5 per pack and there will be an app. Profits from the sale of the cards will help people affected by volcanic activity. The project has been supported by the Universities of Plymouth and East Anglia and Oxford Sparks (University of Oxford). JM said the game might be featured in the GSL 24 Days of Christmas blog.

9 Dates of future meetings

4 March 2014 Hayden Bailey, President Designate of the Geologists’ Association to speak on links between education and industry (**NE to confirm**)

13 May 2014 Dr Anjana K Ford, Jurassic Coast Team, to speak on ‘The Big Jurassic Classroom gets Creative with Earth Science’

14 October 2014 Geological Curators’ Group (tbc)

The business meeting closed at 3.00pm.

There followed a presentation by **David Bailey** on ‘**Education and the BGS**’

The meeting closed at 4.45pm.