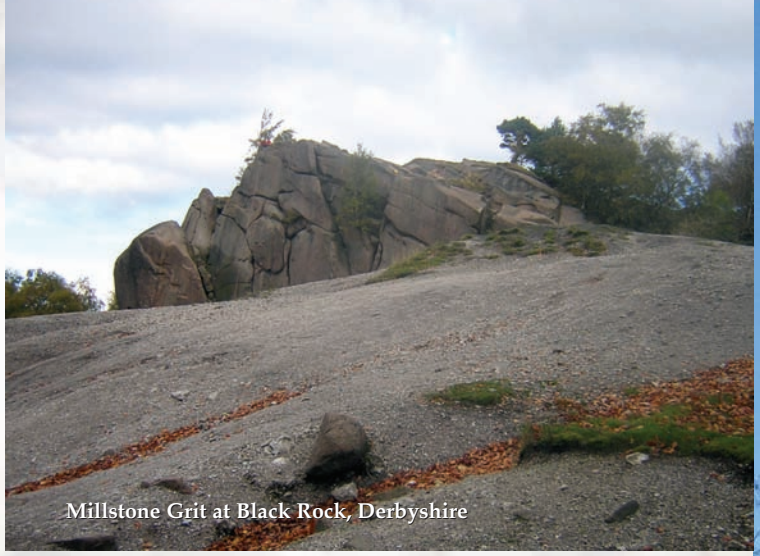
Finding the horizontal.
Park Hall Country Park, Stoke-on-Trent

Local Geological Sites for schools

Local Geological Sites are the basis for the national Earth Science On-Site (ESO-S) project, which provides downloadable information for non-specialist teachers delivering national curriculum science and geography at Key Stages 2, 3 and 4 (GCSE). Currently 16 Local Sites are featured to reflect geodiversity in different parts of the country. The information is purposely structured so that it may be adapted or form a template to suit other sites in general.

The Earth Science On-Site (ESO-S) education project may be accessed from the home page selecting education from the menu or direct at **www.gcuk.org.uk/html/esos.php**

Dolerite sill, Corstorphine Hill, Edinburgh



Millstone Grit at Black Rock, Derbyshire

Further information

The GCUK website **www.gcuk.org.uk** has a wealth of information about geological conservation and the UK network of Local Geoconservation Groups.

General enquiries should be directed to **info@gcuk.org.uk** or by telephone - **01384 443644**

GeoConservationUK

The Association of UK RIGS Groups was established in 1999 to encourage the appreciation, conservation and promotion of Local Geological Sites for education and public benefit.

Membership comprises county based geoconservation bodies - Geoconservation Groups, Geological Societies, Geology Trusts, Wildlife Trusts, Geoparks and other associate partners.

Cover photograph: Triassic sediments folded up against the coalfield boundary fault, Wordsley, near Stourbridge

GeoConservationUK

Conserving and promoting local geodiversity

Precambrian, Rhoscolyn, Anglesey

Geodiversity

Geodiversity is the variety of rocks, minerals, fossils and landscape, together with the natural processes which form them. Geodiversity is the basis of the natural environment and provides the framework for life on earth, underpinning biodiversity and soil is the link between them.

Local Sites

Local Geological Sites (England), Local Geodiversity Sites (Scotland) and Regionally Important Geodiversity Sites (Wales) are the most important non-statutory geoconservation sites which specifically highlight local geological diversity and earth heritage.

They are selected and recommended by Local Geoconservation groups or organisations, through the medium of Local Sites Partnerships, based on locally applied, nationally agreed criteria. Formal designation comes from the Local Authority via the planning system. For historical reasons some Local Authorities continue to use different terminology e.g. RIGS, SINC etc but all designated local geological sites are chosen using the same basic criteria.

Todber Freestone, Birds Quarry, Dorset

Jurassic/Carboniferous unconformity, Vallis Vale, Somerset

Local Geoconservation Network

There are over 50 mainly county based groups throughout the UK. Their membership is drawn from the local community and typically reflects a wide spectrum of interests including amateur and professional geologists, teachers, planners, nature conservation officers, museum curators, local historians etc. Some groups are completely independent, others are allied to societies, museums or wildlife trusts. Most groups operate on a mainly or totally voluntary basis.

The groups will survey, record, assess and monitor sites within their area. All groups and Local Authorities will have regard to government planning policy (PPS9) and Local Sites Guidance, (2006).

Many groups also manage sites, organise events and produce interpretative materials to promote local geological heritage to the wider community.

Local Geoconservation Groups are also playing a major role in the increasing development of Geodiversity Action Plans for their local region.

Choosing Local Geological Sites

Sites are selected by reference to one or more of four basic criteria,

- Education and lifelong learning
- Intrinsic Scientific Interest
- Aesthetic value
- Historical value and context

Local groups will usually adapt or weight these national parameters to suit local priorities or circumstances, such as industrial heritage connections, landscape features and local character and distinctiveness.

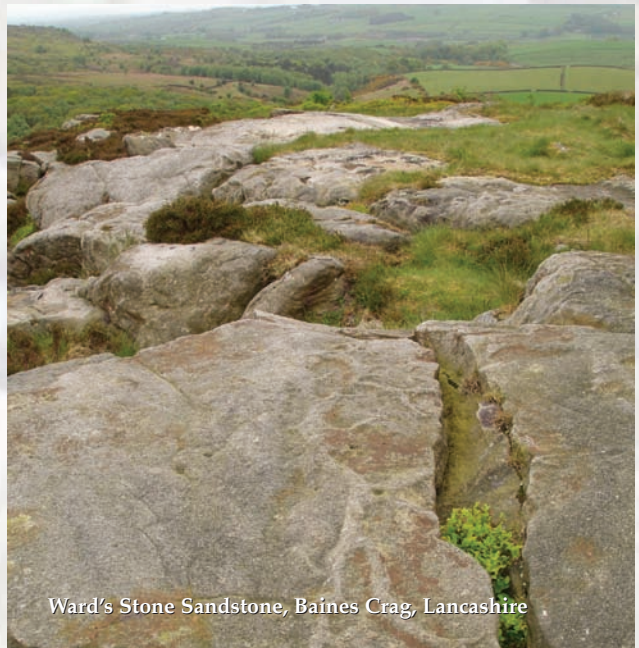
Chalk and children at Whiteleaf Quarry, Bucks

Geodiversity Action Planning

A Local Geodiversity Action Plan (LGAP) defines the guiding principles and priorities to ensure that the best use is made of local geological heritage for the benefit of all. It identifies, conserves, promotes and makes accessible the geological and related cultural heritage features of the region.

Getting involved

There are many opportunities to get involved in local geoconservation work. You don't need to be a geological expert - all you need is a keen interest in your local geological heritage and landscape.



Ward's Stone Sandstone, Baines Crag, Lancashire