



Cambridgeshire Geological Society

Newsletter
Winter 2024

Cambridgeshire Geological Society



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Editorial : Reg Nicholls

Dear Member,

The Society wishes you a healthy and fruitful 2024—filled with all sorts of Geological wonders! The Society has not been hibernating over the mid-winter and many activities are continuing. Chris with some help from her team has been involved with a new

government “sponsored” initiative termed “ Local Nature Recovery Strategy”. This county wide work will serve to document and highlight the conversation needs of the natural world in Cambridgeshire: Geodiversity is an integral part of that, so we are

developing our support for the effort. Each county is charged with their equivalent—more on this later.

If there are any topics you feel we should cover in this forum, then please let me know through the normal e-mail channel

Message from the Chair - Penny Coggill

It is gratifying to see the number of people coming to meetings increasing. This also means we need to keep offering engaging talks and interesting outings. Over the warmer months we'll have some walks along the Fen Edge Trail, a fossil-hunting expedition to Bawdsey, an outing to an active quarry, probably a Lincolnshire limestone, a tour of the Building stones of Cambridge, and possibly a tour of several local churches looking at interesting pebbles/cobbles.

As you know we are continuing with publishing Walk Guides for walks around the Fen Edge Trail, guided roughly by the 5m contour; do get in touch with me if you would like to help by test walking some of the routes, by providing information on any interesting places or helping to take photos.

Equally, for those of you who want to learn more about our local geology, do let us know if you can help with investigations of sites suitable for Local Geological Site designation. You do not need to be an expert as training will be given

Equally, for those of you living on bedrock other than chalk, do let us know of any local rock exposures that need investigation for the Local Geosites project.

Don't forget to keep bringing your own finds to the table at meetings for identification or discussion as this benefits you as much as other members, old and new. Growing the group to become a coherent community of like-minded people with common interests able to discuss amongst themselves and offer new ideas is the aim of any society.

We are getting there slowly, and I would encourage you actively to welcome new members as you see them. We are a welcoming bunch, even if I have not yet managed to speak to everybody!

We have had the idea of a Social/Members meeting in April which will be as much the chance for people to talk and get to know each other as it is to hear some unusual talks or films. If you could bring a plate of tasty snacks or nibbles, that would be extremely welcome!

To see other Society Activities, visit

www.cambsgeology.org

www.fenedgetrail.org

info@cambsgeology.org



The Jurassic garden

Geology in Botanic Gardens

I am sure most of us have read the history of plant evolution on the rising boardwalk in the Cambridge Botanic Garden—I have come across another geological garden! In the Bristol University Botanic Garden, there is a section of living plants mimicking the evolution through the

geological ages. Each Age has an information board and some examples of the types of plants that would be growing in that period. The one that surprised me was the Ordovician—I had not really thought much about Ordovician plants, being more familiar with Graptolites and

Brachiopods! These gardens are to be found on the edge of Clifton Downs and a visit can be complimented with a look into the Avon gorge at the magnificent Carboniferous Limestone cliffs with the stunning Brunel Suspension bridge spanning the gorge.

Volunteers Needed!

As a voluntary organization, CGS does need the support of our members to keep the level of information flowing to you though our various media outlets. In order to place less strain on the current officials, it would be most helpful if we could have more support!

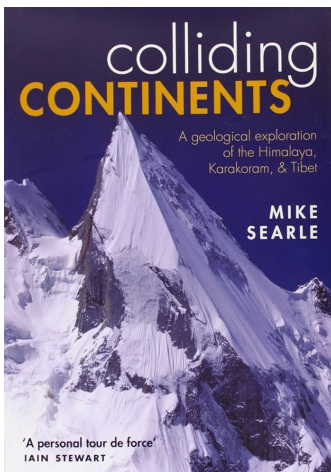
Are you able to use Word or other software to put a poster together? We need someone to occasionally produce various info sheets, please let us know if you can help

Would you like to learn how to make changes on a website using Wordpress?

We need occasional back-up for our website updating. If you have basic IT skills and would like to help, please get in touch

Contact us through our e-mail address,

info@cambsgeology.org



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Oxford University Press

Book review by
Penny Coggill

Book Review: Colliding Continents – A geological exploration of the Himalaya, Karakoram, & Tibet by Mike Searle

This is a very brief book recommendation, as I haven't finished reading it yet:

This book will appeal particularly to those of you who are climbers, skiers, mountaineers or explorers. The author set out to study first the mountains of Oman: which were a preliminary ophiolite in the closing of the great Tethys

ocean and this compelled him to follow what happened when India finally hit the Asian plate and the sea closed up completely. In Oman there is an entire ocean laid out on land, and he collected samples of all the rocks he could see and find. In The Himalaya, he skied, climbed and collected rocks from everywhere he went and describes his

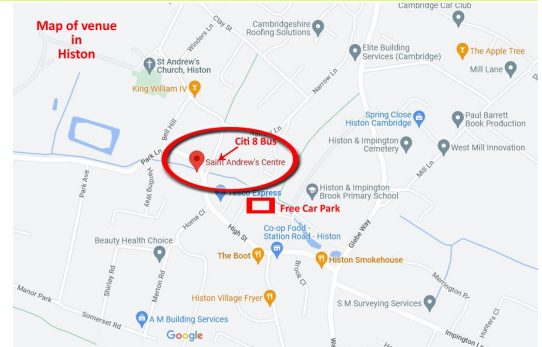
adventures in exhilarating detail.

The author has kindly agreed to come and talk to the Society some time next season.

Monthly Society Meetings

All talks are at 7.30 pm (doors open 7.00 pm). Everyone welcome, free to CGS members, small charge for non members. Refreshments available.

Venue: Hall 1, St Andrew's Centre, School Hill, Histon, CB24 9JE



Below are the titles of our upcoming talks, please see our website for details and abstracts

Monday 11th March 2024 7.30pm

The interpretation of the periglacial landsystem through LiDAR
by Dr David Giles, Technical Director, Card Geotechnics Ltd

Monday 8th April 2024 7.30pm

Members evening—Social and Short Talks

Monday 13th May 2024 7.30pm

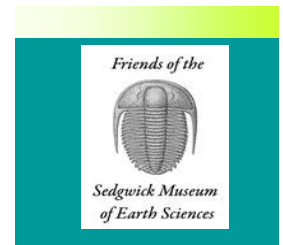
Potential for carbon dioxide sequestration in volcanic rocks of the North Atlantic Igneous Province
by Dr Simon Passey, CASP

Other Society Meetings

Friends of the Sedgwick

Meetings held in Dept Earth Sciences, 19:00 small charge applies

<https://sedgwickmuseum.cam.ac.uk/support-us/friends-sedgwick-museum>



CNHS lecture meetings .

The CNHS lectures take place on Thursday evenings during the winter half of the year and start at 6:45 pm prompt, usually in the David Attenborough Building CB2 3QZ.. Small admission charges apply

<http://www.cnhs.org.uk/>



Cambridge Natural
History Society

Local Fen Edge / Cambridgeshire museums

There are several museums with interesting fenland exhibits. Two that are now involved in the Fen Edge Trail are Burwell Museum www.burwellmuseum.ork.uk and Ramsey Rural Museum www.ramseyruralmuseum.co.uk.

Out in the Fen Basin, are a number of other collections including those at Wisbech Museum www.wisbechmuseum.org.uk which has numerous natural history specimens including local fossils..

Peterborough (<https://peterboroughmuseum.org.uk/>)

and Ely (<https://www.elymuseum.org.uk/>) museums are also well worth a visit.

Art & Geology at Sainsbury Centre UEA

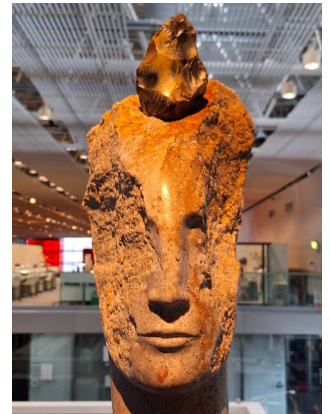


Earlier this year I visited the exhibition centre in UEA and found one with a Geological slant: “Sediment Sprit”. The collection of art works invites the viewer to see the Earth as a living and responsive entity.

Curated by John Kenneth Paranada, the first Curator of Art and Climate Change at a UK museum, this

together local and international artworks from the 1960’s to the present day which are responding to the climate crisis in all its complexities

The hand axe opposite on top of the quartzite head, came from Happisburgh beach. It is estimated to be 600,000 BCE



“The Connection—a meeting of minds”—Emily Young

Fen Edge Trail news—Chris Donnelly



St Ives



Reach Lode, Upware



Peterborough Cathedral

Five Walk Guides will be published soon, in time for some enjoyable spring walks on which you can discover our local, Cambridgeshire geology. From the ‘high’ ridge of Yaxley in the north west, to the low fen between Burwell and Wicken in the south east, the next few walks will give you some classic views, plenty of interesting history, a variety of building stones and a museum famous for its internationally important fossils. Three National Nature Reserves also feature on these walks as well as the iconic archaeological site of Flag Fen and our three major rivers– the Nene, the Great Ouse and the Cam.

The first starts in Peterborough – a name with strong geological links –St Peter being ‘the rock’, a reflection of the city’s underlying hard limestone, raising it above the adjacent, watery fens. The walk passes the famous (Oxford Clay) brickmaking area of Fletton before an optional detour along the Nene Washes to Flag Fen, and then finishes at Stanground Lock – a once important junction on the fenland waterways. The next walk follows on, via extensive views from the Glacial Till ridge at Farcet to where Whittlesey Mere once lay and the NNR of Holme Fen, to Yaxley church, its spire being a landmark of this corner of

the Fens.

The walk from Wood Walton to Ramsey has some lovely views, again from a Glacial Till ridge, down over another NNR, Woodwalton Fen. It passes two of the best bluebell woods on the fen edge and through another NNR, Upwood Meadows, famous for its orchids. The walk from St Ives to Swavesey, mostly on Terrace Gravels, follows the Great Ouse downriver and passes RSPB Fen Drayton Lakes. It is the first walk on the section between St Ives and Cambridge via Waterbeach and the Cam. Finally, the walk from Burwell to Wicken takes you along the lodes and over the Upware Corallian limestone to the peatlands of Wicken Fen NNR.



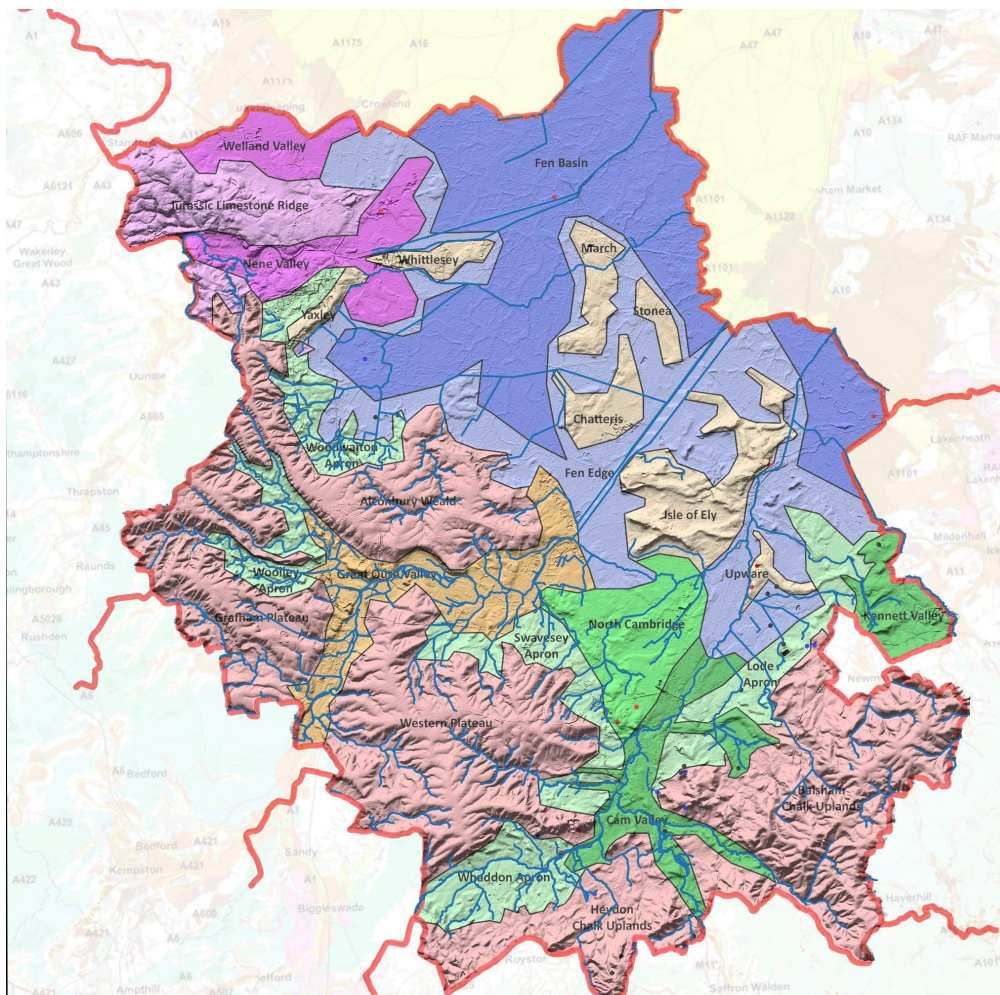
Wood Walton to Ramsey

Geosites Updates (Chris Donnelly & Reg Nicholls)

Having made good progress with our work to designate Local Geological Sites (LGS) in the county, we are now preparing a report that describes the geology of Cambridgeshire and the geological (and geomorphological) features to be found here. We are taking a landscape approach to this so that we can set the geology in a context that is more relatable to most people and also link it with local ecology.

We are hoping that the 'Geodiversity Landscapes' map (below) and accompanying descriptions in the report will be of use to landowners, particularly those working on land and nature recovery. It will also provide the background to how the current landscape evolved and how geological resources, including limestones, clays, chalk, gravels and peat have played key roles in the economic development of local areas. A wider aim is to promote interest in Cambridgeshire's earth heritage and encourage geoconservation of the county's features, for example as part of the county's Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

Each Geodiversity Landscape is defined by the combination of bedrock geology, overlaying superficial geology and topography. So areas like the Balsham Chalk Uplands are distinctly different from the Cam Valley: the former being undulating hills underlain with Chalk and overlain in part by glacial till and the latter being a low flat valley mostly covered with fluvial sands, gravels and alluvium.



Geodiversity Landscape Areas of Cambridgeshire

Hillshade layer from DEFRA Lidar data ©
Environment Agency 2022

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Geosites Updates -continued

‘Local Nature Recovery Strategies: England is widely considered to be one of the most nature -depleted countries in the world following historic and ongoing declines. Government has made legally-binding commitments to end these declines and for nature to recover. Each local nature recovery strategy will agree priorities for nature recovery and propose actions in the locations where it would make a particular contribution to achieving those priorities.’

‘Nature Recovery an establishment of a Nature Recovery Network (NRN), delivered in a large part through the development of Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS), is now established as the Government’s primary means of delivering nature conservation in England . With a clear focus on nature recovery there are real opportunities for geodiversity as a fundamental element of nature. Geodiversity will both benefit from and contribute to the four aims of the NRN including the enhancement of designated sites, improving landscape resilience and, most importantly, reinforcing the geological diversity of our landscapes, and enabling us to better connect with nature.’ **Colin Prosser, Principal Geologist, Natural England.**

With the help of Dr Steve Boreham, we have liaised with the team that is driving the Cambridgeshire LNRS, to ensure that geodiversity is included and considered and we have submitted initial maps of the Geodiversity Landscapes. More information will be on our website soon, including larger map images and details of the individual Geodiversity Landscapes. We will be developing this work over the next year so do let us know if you would like to help – geological knowledge is not essential as training will be given and it is an excellent way to learn about local and general geology.

