

# HARROW & HILLINGDON GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Founded 1973. President Dr Dave Brook OBE

contact@hhgs.org.uk

Twitter @HHGeolSoc

([hhgs.org.uk](http://hhgs.org.uk))



## Newsletter May 2023

### MEETINGS & EVENTS SPRING-AUTUMN 2023

This Newsletter will be updated as necessary on the website ([hhgs.org.uk](http://hhgs.org.uk)).

Zoom meetings are available from 7:45pm on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month. We hope to continue some day-time meet-ups, including the Earth Discovery Sessions at Brunel University, enabling those who have been unable to attend the Zoom sessions to meet with the rest of us. You will continue to be informed of the details by email updates. Most of the Zoom meetings are being recorded, so if you want to see a recording please contact Allan Wheeler for the link.

#### May

**Tues 2<sup>nd</sup>** 2-4pm at Brunel University: **Earth Discovery Session 2 – Minerals** (see page 3).

**Wed 10<sup>th</sup>** AGM on Zoom 6:45 for 7pm start, followed by ‘Jurassic Dolerites in the Theron Mountains, Antarctica,’ HHGS President's Address by Dr David Brook OBE to launch our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year.

**Sat 13<sup>th</sup>** HHGS Golden Anniversary Lunch – members have been emailed details.

**Tues 16<sup>th</sup>** Field trip to Newlands Corner, Surrey (see page 2).

**21-24<sup>th</sup>** Residential field trip to Suffolk (see page 2).

#### June

**Tues 6<sup>th</sup>** 2-4pm at Brunel University: **Earth Discovery Session 3 – Industry** (see page 3).

**Sat 10<sup>th</sup>** Eastcote House Gardens Picnic Event – HHGS will have a stand (see page 5).

**Wed 14<sup>th</sup>** ‘Black Mountain quarries and the Tawe Valley,’ Zoom lecture by Alan Bowring, Fforest Fawr Geopark / Bannau Brycheiniog National Park.

**Thu 22<sup>nd</sup>** HHGS Golden Anniversary Picnic: 1pm photo at Pretty Corner, then Eastcote House Gardens for social picnic.

**25-28<sup>th</sup>** Anniversary Field Trip to Weston-super-Mare and the Mendips (see page 2).

#### July

**Tues 4<sup>th</sup>** 2-4pm at Brunel University: **Earth Discovery Session 4 – Rocks** (see page 3).

**Wed 12<sup>th</sup>** ‘The Geology of the Black Country Geopark,’ Zoom lecture by Graham Worton (Black Country Geopark).

**22-6<sup>th</sup> Aug** Colne Valley Festival Fortnight, HHGS involved. (See page 5).

#### August

**Wed 9<sup>th</sup>** Daytime. Members Social Picnic, Pinner Memorial Park.

#### September

**Tues 5<sup>th</sup>** 2-4pm at Brunel University: **Earth Discovery Session 5 – Art** (see page 3).

**Wed 13<sup>th</sup>** ‘North Pennines Geopark,’ Zoom lecture by Naomi Foster

#### October

**Tues 3<sup>rd</sup>** 2-4pm at Brunel University: **Earth Discovery Session 6 – Landscapes** (see page 3).

**Wed 11<sup>th</sup>** ‘The River Thames through Uxbridge,’ Zoom lecture by Prof Philip Gibbard, Cambridge University.



While visitors will still be allowed into our virtual evening meetings, this will be by invitation only (ie by being sent the meeting ID and passcode), and they will be able to do so as a taster before being invited to join the Society.

Your Committee members are continuing to regularly meet remotely by Zoom to organise live and virtual events.

We currently have reciprocal arrangements with Hertfordshire Geological Society and Reading Geological Society to attend each other's meetings, the links for their available meetings will be emailed to our members. Please can you check that your display name includes ‘HHGS’ when attending the meetings of other societies. **Suggestions for future talks and trips are always welcomed.**

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## **FIELD TRIPS 2023**

*Allan Wheeler, our Field Trips Organizer, has been researching HHGS field trips for the coming year or so to include outdoor exploration, building stone town trails and museum visits. Detailed information will be emailed to potential attendees.*

*Please let Allan know of your interest to attend.*

*We try to share cars or use public transport as much as possible to reduce costs and damage to the environment. On field trips we take photos, leave only footprints and collect only loose specimens for educational or personal use, only where it is environmentally safe to do so.*

**16 May (Tues) Newlands Corner, Surrey**, for a traverse of the geology from the Chalk of the North Downs escarpment to the Lower Greensand around Albury. A 5 km walk, downhill and then undulating, finishing at the Silent Pool, from where a lift will be provided by volunteers back to Newlands Corner (car park, café, toilets available). This trip was one that took place early in the Society's existence. After the Chalk, the walk crosses the Upper Greensand and Gault Clay, and various formations within the Lower Greensand. You will also see buildings featuring stones from the Lower Greensand. The Netley Heath Gravels (of possible similar age to the Stanmore Gravels – late Pliocene or early Pleistocene) can be seen at the start, in woodland. They rest on the Chalk on the crest of the escarpment hereabouts.

**21-24 May (Sun-Wed). Suffolk.** This trip will include visits to sites in the Crag deposits of Pliocene and earliest Pleistocene age which outcrop in eastern Suffolk and Norfolk. Walton-on-the-Naze may be included. These fossiliferous sandy deposits were laid down in the southern North Sea between c.4 and 1.5 Ma, during fluctuating climatic conditions. Our February talk on Plio-Pleistocene climatic and environmental change in Eurasia will be relevant. It is hoped to include visits to Eocene sections and Pleistocene glacial and interglacial deposits. We will be based in the Ipswich area.

**25-28<sup>th</sup> June (Sun-Wed) Anniversary Field Trip to Weston-super-Mare and the Mendips.** Re-enactment of one of the Society's first field trips in 1973, as one of the events marking the Society's 50th Anniversary.

### **Future Trips**

**Coldfall Wood**, East Finchley. Anglian Glaciation Till and Dollis Hill Gravel underlain by London Clay.

Geological history of the River Thames' route. Coldfall Wood (nearest station East Finchley, Northern Line, 1.3 km). This locality lies adjacent to an outcrop of glacial deposits from the Anglian Glaciation, the most extensive known on the present British mainland, reaching north London about 450,000 years ago.

Underlying that is the Dollis Hill Gravel, age c.800 ka, deposited by the Wey-Mole combined river, then a south bank tributary of the pre-diversion Thames. Both these deposits rest on London Clay. If time and energy permits, we could also visit Queens Wood, Highgate which is close to Highgate station.

**HS2 site visit.** Possibly joint with the London Geodiversity Partnership. The first visit will be to the Chiltern Tunnel East Portals / Colne Valley viaduct sometime from May onwards (awaiting date owing to waiting list). Number in group limited to 12/15 (TBC). We hope to run another visit, joint with the London Geodiversity Partnership, which could be to West Ruislip (Northolt Tunnels West Portals), Old Oak Common / Northolt Tunnel East Portals or Euston. The main construction company joint ventures involved with these projects are: Align JV (the Colne Valley Viaduct and the Chiltern Tunnels) and Skanska Costain Strabag JV - SCS JV (Northolt Tunnels, Old Oak Common and Euston). Full PPE will be supplied.

**Black Country** (3 nights currently postponed trip on hold) Silurian to Carboniferous rocks - limestones, sandstones and Coal Measures, plus some igneous rocks. The limestones and Coal Measures in particular made the area heavily industrialised from the 18thC.

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## EARTH DISCOVERY SESSIONS

at Brunel University

Email to register : [contact@HHGS.org.uk](mailto:contact@HHGS.org.uk)

Join local enthusiasts from the Harrow and Hillingdon Geological Society for some hands-on activities exploring the ground under our feet, its landscapes and resources.

Starting in April 2023 we will meet for afternoon tea on the first Tuesday of each month to take a closer look at rocks, minerals, fossils and maps. Each session will have a theme (see below).

- Discover what might lie beneath your own home or in the cliffs you see on holiday
- Hold and feel different samples from our collections
- See how rock samples can be tested and what they can tell us about our world

Bring your own samples and compare them with our exhibition pieces!

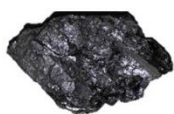


Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2-4pm

## MINERALS

Discover ... where to find minerals ...how did they get there?

Are rocks the same as minerals? What makes them glow in the dark?



FIRST TUESDAY OF EVERY MONTH FROM APRIL 2023

THESE ADULT SESSIONS ARE FREE AND INCLUDE REFRESHMENTS

Tues 4<sup>th</sup> April, 2-4pm Theme: FOSSILS

Tues 4<sup>th</sup> July, 2-4pm Theme: ROCKS

Tues 2<sup>nd</sup> May, 2-4pm Theme: MINERALS

Tues 5<sup>th</sup> Sept, 2-4pm Theme: ART

Tues 6<sup>th</sup> June, 2-4pm Theme: INDUSTRY

Tues 3<sup>rd</sup> Oct, 2-4pm Theme: LANDSCAPES

## HHGS EARTH DISCOVERY SESSIONS

The first of these sessions, '**Fossils**', in April, was very popular, with twenty-one members and visitors chatting cheerfully about the fossils, displays and anything else that came to mind over a cuppa.

Bob Maurer, Allan Wheeler and Jackie & John Gill brought along fascinating specimens from their personal collections to add to the comprehensive examples from the hands-on collection (*maintained by Jackie & John*). We also participated in a fun Fossil Time Line activity organised by Liz Chiu.

A larger lecture room will be used for future sessions, the next one being '**Minerals**', in May, including spectacular minerals from members' collections, fluorescing minerals to explore with UV torches, industrial minerals, and fascinating tiny micromounts to examine.



Social moments from the Fossils-themed Earth Discovery Session at Brunel University in April 2023.





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## HHGS NEWS 2022/23

Mon 6<sup>th</sup>-Thu 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 'HHGS Uxbridge Rock Show' in the ground floor atrium of Uxbridge Central



Library. Exhibits included old favourites such as **Jurassic Coast, Volcanoes, Coprolites, Local Churches and Building Stones, Chalk and Coal Fossils**. There were 'New for 2023' displays on **Hillingdon Geology, Local Rivers** and the **Stanmore Gravel Project**, as well as a totally new display on **Trilobites**, additional fluorescent rocks and a fresh display of **Minerals and Gems** including some newly-donated material, as well as at least 10 new hands-on specimens to examine.

*"It was wonderful to have the Rock Show back,"*

said our Chairman, Guy Fiegehen, who offered congratulations to those involved in setting it up, planning and stewarding. We collaboratively shared the atrium space with other events that were being held (Dementia Friends, Chairobics, Dance Detectives),



their events brought some extra customers to us. One day the Dementia Friends' speaker was absent so we gave them an impromptu hands-on session, which was very well received (*photo right*). Attendance across the three weeks was good, with the Library staff saying that we brought in more people to the library. Some had travelled a long way across London just to visit our show, plus people from Brunel University, Rockwatch, AGS, Herts GS and local volunteer organisations. We had several local primary schools having guided class trips, some secondary school children working on projects from our specimens and, especially during half-term, the Rock Show was a popular family activity.



**10th March Maidstone Museum.** The store houses a new species of fossil grasshopper wing, *Etotabla gillae* from the Coal Measures at Writhlington, Somerset, found by and named after our member Jackie Gill. A museum volunteer from the **Medway Fossil and Mineral Society** brought it out for us to see. He also gave us a tour of the local geology gallery, mainly covering **The Weald**, and allowed us to handle some of his own fossils. We were then unexpectedly invited to visit his private fossil collection, and were given tea and cake to round the day off!

### **28th March Brunel University Experimental Techniques Centre (ETC) Open Day.**

Nine HHGS members attended the ETC Open Day and enjoyed explanatory presentations from staff and an interesting tour of the labs. It included a special visit to the Civil Engineering Lab where Pedro Martin-Moreta showed us his flood management experiment for testing flow through the leaky dams in Ruislip Woods. In the afternoon there was a fascinating talk by **Lorna Anguilano** on "Recycling the un-recyclable", and she has been invited to speak about her urban metal mining project at our meeting next February.

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26 April **Northmoor Hill Nature Reserve (Denham) and Black Park**. We followed the Geologists' Association waymarked Rock Trail to identify and discuss patches of gravel and Chalk at Northmoor Hill and found an active swallow hole where a minor stream sinks into the ground where it meets the Chalk. We then moved on to Black Park, the type locality of the Black Park Gravel, which we identified in the banks of the lake.

## Stanmore Gravel Research Project



Following various site visits with Peter Allen, Phil Collins (technical lead) and Jason Shorrocks (head warden for Harrow Weald Common) we have been able to identify some good sites on the Common outside of the SSSI for sampling the Stanmore Gravels for testing. We now have permission to proceed with the investigation on Harrow Weald Common with the support of the Council's bio-diversity officer and the Conservators of the Common. We are continuing with efforts to get permission from the investment company

which owns the SSSI but it is registered in the British Virgin Islands and progress there is slow.

Keep up with the latest developments by following the monthly summaries on our YouTube channel:

[Harrow & Hillingdon Geological Society - YouTube](#).

For more information about local geology and rivers follow this link: [Local Geology \(hhgs.org.uk\)](#)

## HHGS media

Do keep looking into our **HHGS website** ([hhgs.org.uk](http://hhgs.org.uk)) which, thanks to Liz Chiu, is evolving and growing in depth. You will find reports and précis of some of the previous talks from our evening meetings and photos from field trips and events. Plus Twitter Tweets to interest everyone at [Twitter@HHGeolSoc](#) and videos of HHGS activities on our YouTube Channel, [Harrow & Hillingdon Geological Society - YouTube](#).

## GEOLOGY-RELATED ACTIVITIES 2023

Saturday June 10<sup>th</sup> **Eastcote House Gardens Picnic** – HHGS will have a stand at this local friendly fete advertising our activities including a small rock sale and 'Rocky Dip' (See poster, right).

For more information about Eastcote House Gardens: [Eastcote House Gardens](#)

22<sup>nd</sup> July-6<sup>th</sup> Aug **Colne Valley Festival Fortnight**, HHGS has been invited to take part in this Festival at Denham Country Park. Haydon Bailey has agreed to give a talk on behalf of HHGS (also promoting the Chiltern Society, GA and HGS) about chalk landscape and geology to fit in with Colne Valley's current focus on the Misbourne chalk stream. The proposed date is Friday 28<sup>th</sup> July (to be confirmed). HHGS will present a display about chalk, flint, local geology and building stones with associated rock specimens, depending on space available. The talk will be ticketed via Eventbrite, so look out for emails about this. For more information: [Home - Colne Valley \(colnevalleypark.org.uk\)](#)





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The **Geologists' Association** provides enthusiastic talks and field trips for amateur and professional geologists at all levels: ([geologistsassociation.org.uk](http://geologistsassociation.org.uk))

HHGS have adopted the GA's '***Geology from your Sofa***' for the month of May, so it will feature links to lectures, podcasts, virtual field trips, 'Geofun' and online courses on the theme of '*Investigating Quaternary Landscapes*', to link in with our Stanmore Gravel Project. You don't need to be a GA member to access this online activity, just click the link:

[Geology from your Sofa | Geologists' Association \(geologistsassociation.org.uk\)](http://geologistsassociation.org.uk)

HHGS will also have a stand at the GA's live **Festival of Geology** Nov 4-5 in London, watch this space:

[Festival of Geology | Geologists' Association \(geologistsassociation.org.uk\)](http://geologistsassociation.org.uk)

**Rock Gem 'n' Bead Shows** Our nearest venue for 2023 is **Kempton Park Racecourse**, London, TW16 5AQ, on 29th-30th July and 11th-12th November, 10pm-5pm (4pm Sun ). Adults £5, Seniors £3, children free. An excellent chance to stock up on all sorts of rock-related gifts. *There are other venues around the country on different dates:* [www.rockngem.co.uk](http://www.rockngem.co.uk)

The **British Geological Survey** has all the up-to-date geological news, maps, videos and animations explaining all things geology-related, including children's activities: [www.bgs.ac.uk](http://www.bgs.ac.uk).

**Rockwatch** is the UK's nationwide geology club for children and their families, providing free admission and activities at events, field trips, magazines and a website: [Rockwatch](http://Rockwatch)

*For listings of other geological events see '***Down to Earth***', the quarterly circular, which is available free as part of your membership, or you can find links via our website. The online publication '***Down to Earth Extra***' is also sent each month to members with email addresses.*

## **Information about Members**

We send our thoughts and best wishes to **Winnie Gomme** who broke her pelvis earlier this year. She normally does some stewarding at the Uxbridge Rock Show but was sorry to have to miss it this year. *We welcome any news for this section, especially from our members who are unable to attend our meetings and events regularly.*

### **Change of address**

Please ensure that any changes of address, phone number or email address are notified to the Hon.Secretary, Jean Sippy.

## **COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

HHGS email address: [contact@hhgs.org.uk](mailto:contact@hhgs.org.uk)

**Dave Brook OBE**, President

**Guy Fiegehen**, Chairman

**Jean Sippy**, Honorary Secretary

**Hilary Place**, Treasurer

**Joan Waters**, Publicity & Exhibitions

**Allan Wheeler**, Field Trips Secretary and London Geodiversity Partnership Representative,

**Liz Chiu**, Meetings & Media ([HHGeolSoc@outlook.com](mailto:HHGeolSoc@outlook.com))

**Paul Szadorski**, Field Meetings Assistant

**Jackie Gill**, Newsletter Editor and Assistant Secretary

**John Howard**, Membership Secretary

**Peter & Daphne Moore**, Refreshments organizers

**Membership Secretary, John Howard**, will be pleased to receive any outstanding subscriptions, ideally by bank transfer, thankyou.