



Golden Anniversary Extra Newsletter January 2023



2023 is Harrow and Hillingdon Geological Society's 50th Anniversary year.

We will celebrate it with special events and memorabilia, including embroidered jumpers, to be found in this newsletter (page 2), on the HHGS website, and in members' emails.

Chairman's Introduction to HHGS's Golden Anniversary

2023 is an exciting year for us. The Society marks its 50th Anniversary, we are starting a new joint venture with Brunel University, we have intriguing speaker meetings arranged, and some pre-lockdown favourites are returning, such as the Rock Show in Uxbridge Library. That's on top of a range of planned walks and field trips and other events to allow members to meet in person.

Our online offering continues to expand - Bob Maurer's work has its own section on our website - and we now have our own YouTube channel in addition to Twitter contacts. Best of all, our membership increased by 25% last year. 2023 will also see the start of our new joint research project on the Stanmore gravels, and other co-operation with neighbouring local geological societies continues to grow.

It's a great time to be an HHGS member! Tell your friends and encourage them to join in.

Guy Fiegehen, HHGS Chairman

HHGS President's Address

"This year is the 50th anniversary of the founding of a society that has flourished and achieved a great deal towards its declared aims of supporting the dissemination of knowledge about geology, though the last few years have presented problems that are being slowly overcome.

"I have only been involved in the society for half that time and I think it would be appropriate at this stage to pay tribute to my predecessor as President, **Dr Bob Symes OBE**, who inspired his extra-mural students to form the society and was a guiding light in its progress for over 40 years until his death in 2016. In particular I would quote from his obituary from the Geological Society which states:- "*Perhaps closest to his heart was the Harrow & Hillingdon (formerly the Harrow & Ruislip) Geological Society which he helped to establish in 1973. Bob had been an extra-mural lecturer at London University for ten years and was asked to do two evening classes in Harrow and Uxbridge. Some of his students decided it would be a good idea to form a society and Bob had a major hand in bringing this about.*" We would not be here without him and it is my hope that we will continue in a way that would be in keeping with his legacy."

Dr Dave Brook OBE, HHGS President

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HHGS Golden Anniversary Sweatshirts and Poloshirts to order

To celebrate HHGS's Golden Anniversary we have commissioned from **Cressex Embroidery Ltd** sweatshirts and poloshirts embroidered with our logo in golden yellow and black, at a cost of just **£24 for sweatshirts, £27 for full-zip hoodies, £18 for short-sleeved poloshirts and £21 for long-sleeved poloshirts.**

They are modelled here for you by members, Jackie (size 14) and John (40" chest).

The seamless classic raglan-sleeved **sweatshirts** (pictured right) and **hoodies** are hard-wearing easy-care 'Fruit of the Loom' 80/20 cotton/polyester with brushed inside and ribbed crew neck, hem and cuffs. Marked Sizes: S 35/37", M 38/40", L 41/43", XL 44/46", 2XL 47/49", 3XL 50/52", 4XL 53/55".

All measurements are in inches. (The sweatshirts are generously sized, measuring up to 3" larger than the given marked sizes.)



The **polo-shirts** (pictured left), in long- or short-sleeved style, are pique easycare 65/35 cotton/polyester, with 3 buttons and a collar. Marked Sizes: S 35/37", M 38/40", L 41/43", XL 44/46", 2XL 47/49", 3XL 50/52", 4XL 53/55", 5XL 56/58".

All measurements are in inches. (The polo-shirts are very generously sized, measuring up to 4" larger than the given marked sizes.)

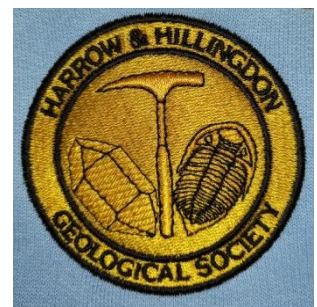
All the shirts come in a wide range of colours: **black, bottle green, olive, Kelly green, red, burgundy, navy, deep navy, royal blue, purple, dark heather grey, light heather grey.** The polo-shirts also come in lighter colours including **sky blue, yellow, white.**

To order shirts please complete the order form separately attached (including any special requests) and email it back to:

Jackie Gill, HHGS Assistant Secretary
or email contact@hhgs.org.uk if you are not a member.

Please make your payment to: **Harrow & Hillingdon Geological Soc**, Lloyds Bank, Sort Code 30-90-90 A/c no. 41083968 and put 'sweatshirts' as the reference.

Please send your order to me and **pay** for them by **15th March** 2023, thanks.



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MEETINGS & EVENTS SPRING 2023

Zoom meetings are available from 7:45pm on the 2nd Wednesday of each month. We hope to continue some day-time meet ups before the virtual evening meetings, which enable us to meet with some of those who have been unable to attend the Zoom meets. You will continue to be informed of the details by email. Most of the Zoom meetings are being recorded, so if you want to see a recording please contact Allan Wheeler for the link (or email contact@hhgs.org.uk if you are not a member)



January

Wed 11th **'Jurassic Dolerites in the Theron Mountains, Antarctica,'** HHGS

President's Address on Zoom by

Dr David Brook OBE to launch our 50th anniversary year. (Lecture postponed to May)

February

Mon 6th-Thu 23rd **'Uxbridge Rock Show'**, Uxbridge Central Library, Our own exhibition of all things geological. Please contact Joan Waters (or email contact@hhgs.org.uk if you are not a member) to volunteer as a steward or helper. (see page 6)

Wed 8th **'Earth's Changing Temperature and Sea Level over the Past 540 Million Years Leading to Novel Insights for Sequence-Stratigraphy of the Guyana-Suriname Basin,'** Zoom lecture by Dr Douwe van der Meer.

March

Wed 8th **'Volcanoes where the Earth rips apart: basaltic processes in the Ethiopian Rift,'** Zoom lecture by Dr Kevin Wong.

Fri 10th Field Trip to **Maidstone Museum** including seeing Jackie Gill's proto-grasshopper wing fossil. See pages 3-4 for Field Trip details.

Tue 28th Visit to **Brunel University Experimental Techniques Centre (ETC)**

Wed 29th Field trip to **Newlands Corner**, Surrey for a geological traverse. (See pages 3-4)

April

Tue 4th **NEW monthly Earth Discovery Sessions** start at Brunel University, open to the public. (Please see page 5 for more information)

Wed 12th The first of our **Geopark** series of talks: **'The Geology of the North West Highlands Geopark,'** Zoom lecture by Pete Harrison (Geopark geologist).

Wed 26th Field Trip to **Northmoor Hill** and **Black Park** to see the local gravels. (See pages 3-4)

May

Wed 10th **AGM** and **President's Lecture** by Dr David Brook

Sat 13th **HHGS Golden Anniversary Dinner.** More details to follow in the next newsletter.

Your Committee members are continuing to regularly meet remotely by Zoom and are looking into places to hold 'live' evening meetings in the future, maybe even 'hybrid' meetings so as to include those who wish to continue accessing meetings via Zoom.

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.

We currently have reciprocal arrangements with **Hertfordshire Geological Society** and **Reading Geological Society** to attend each other's meetings and 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.



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 or email contact@hhgs.org.uk if you are not a member.

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 where it is environmentally safe to do so.

10 March (Fri). Maidstone Museum. The museum has a geology gallery mainly covering The Weald but focussing on Kent. The store houses a new species of fossil grasshopper wing from the Coal Measures at Writhlington, Somerset; this was found by our member Jackie Gill and it was named after her. A museum volunteer from the Medway Fossil and Mineral Society will bring it out for us to see. He will be on hand to answer any questions during our visit.

29 March (Wed). 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 back to Newlands Corner. This trip was one that took place early in the Society's existence.

26 April (Wed). Northmoor Hill Nature Reserve, Denham and Black Park. Northmoor Hill lies on the western side of the Colne Valley and features a long-disused chalk quarry. It displays the same unconformity between the Chalk and the Palaeogene Lambeth Group sediments as at the Harefield Great Pit SSSI. The area also features an active swallow hole where a minor stream sinks into the ground where it meets the chalk. We then move on to **Black Park**, the type locality of the Black Park Gravel, the oldest post-diversion Thames gravel. Both localities involve a walk of 1.5 to 2 km. Steps down to the swallow hole at Northmoor Hill, and steps up to the unconformity. The Black Park walk is flat.

21-24 May (Sun-Wed). Suffolk. This trip will include visits to sites in the Crag deposits of Pliocene and earliest Pleistocene age. Walton-on-the-Naze may be included.

Future Trips

Coldfall Wood, East Finchley. Anglian Glaciation Till and Dollis Hill Gravel underlain by London Clay. Geological history of the River Thames' route.

Black Country (3 nights, Aug/Sept.). 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.

HS2 site visit. Possibly joint with the London Geodiversity Partnership. Possibilities are the Chiltern Tunnel E. portals / Colne Valley viaduct, West Ruislip, Old Oak Common and/or Euston.

Re-enactment of the Society's first field trip in 1973 - to be identified, as one of the events marking the Society's 50th Anniversary.

Other visits may be organised to Dorset/Hampshire.



Earth Discovery Sessions

at Brunel University

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!

Rocks (eg chalk, flint, sandstone, granite, slate ...)



Fossils (eg bones, shells, leaves, scales, teeth, traces of life ...)



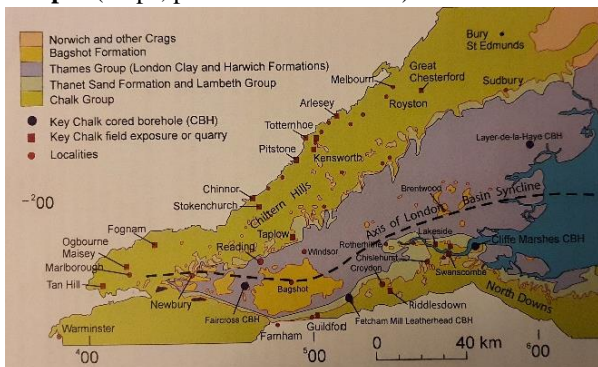
Minerals (e.g. gold, rubies, fluorite, malachite...)



Art (eg sculpting, sketching, arranging, admiring)



Landscapes (maps, photos and memories)



Industry (eg salt, coal, iron, lead, lithium ...)

Anthracite

High carbon content
High energy density
The most pure variety of coal



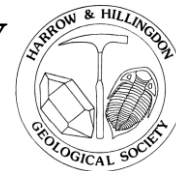
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HHGS NEWS 2022/23

Mon 6th-Thu 23rd 'Uxbridge Rock Show' in the ground floor atrium of **Uxbridge Central Library**, High Street, Uxbridge, 5 mins walk from Uxbridge bus & tube station and the town car parks. Our own HHGS exhibition of all things geological: *hands-on rocks, minerals and fossils that can be handled; local geology and building stones; glowing fluorescent rocks; decorative stones; coprolites (fossilized poo!); what rocks to look out for on your holidays.*

Open all normal library times, 7 days per week and some evenings. Suitable for all ages, toddler to senior citizen, no prior understanding required, just interest.

Please contact [Joan Waters](mailto:Joan.Waters@hhgs.org.uk) if you would like to volunteer as a **steward** to talk to adults and children from local schools about the exhibits. You will be teamed with an experienced enthusiastic steward, and all exhibits will be well-labelled. *We are also looking for **helpers** for the set-up and take down days, Sun 5th and Fri 24th February, again please let Joan know of your interest to help or email contact@hhgs.org.uk if you are not a member.*

To see photos of our 2020 Rock Show, follow this link: [Rock Show Online \(hhgs.org.uk\)](https://www.hhgs.org.uk/rock-show)

Stanmore Gravel Research Project

The London Boroughs of **Harrow** and **Hillingdon** sit largely on **gravels** laid down in fairly recent geological time on top of much older **clay**, as is the case across much of the **London Basin**. We can say that most of the gravels were deposited by the major river of our region, the **River Thames**, but it is hard to pinpoint the dates of deposition and unravel the precise history of the river.

For decades, geologists have been examining the whole range of gravels across the London Basin in order to build up a history of the Thames. It is a fascinating story that tracks the movement of water across much of southern England in response to ice blockages, meltwaters and land movements. The gravel pebbles now found in our area derive from different types of older rock which have been carried by water from far and wide, breaking down into smaller and smaller fragments as they go. These can be very varied and interesting to study but knowing the composition of the pebbles does not necessarily help us tell the whole story of the river or fix the times of deposition.

Prof. David Bridgland is one of the foremost experts in this field of study, having published [The Quaternary of the Thames](#) for the Geological Conservation Review Series in 1994. Since then, he has been calling for further research to be carried out on the **Stanmore Gravel** in our area; **Harrow Weald Common SSSI** has the most complete exposure of early gravel beds in London. At our **July 2022** meeting, **Dr Peter Allen** introduced the topic of the Thames and its gravels through time and suggested that HHGS might conduct some research locally. He and David Bridgland joined our **September 2022** meeting to discuss setting up the **Stanmore Gravel Project**, and **Dr Phil Collins** of **Brunel University** has also joined, with an offer to run some tests using the high-tech equipment of his lab.

This project has already attracted interest from the **London Geodiversity Partnership**, the **Geologists' Association**, and members of **Herts Geological Society**. It aims to examine a clean sample of the Stanmore Gravel to better understand its origin and contribute to the understanding of the early history of the Thames. Of importance to this Society is our aim to advance public appreciation of local geology, and to this end we will be opening a new webpage dedicated to the Stanmore Gravel. Look out for that, coming soon!

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

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HHGS website

Do keep looking into our **HHGS website**, (hhgs.org.uk), which, thanks to Liz Chiu, is evolving and growing in depth. Reports and précis of some of the previous talks that have been given at our evening meetings and photos from field trips. Plus Twitter Tweets to interest everyone at [@HHGeoSoc](https://twitter.com/HHGeoSoc).

Still available are the Virtual Trips to see the 'Building Stones of Pinner' and 'Building Stones of Uxbridge' that Allan created for the Virtual Festivals of Geology 2020 and 2021. Soon to come is a virtual building stone tour of **Harrow** following our field trip there for our August 2022 meeting.

Our virtual presentation for the UNESCO International Geodiversity Day 2022 is still available to see on our website by following this link: [Geological Sights! \(hhgs.org.uk\)](http://hhgs.org.uk)

Do also pay a visit to the online **HHGS Rock Show**, it includes interactive sections on The Rock Cycle, Art & Industry, Fluorescent Minerals, another look at our last live Rock Show 2020 and even a Fossils & Dinosaurs Quiz to stretch you! Find them here:

Rock Cycle: [Rock Show Online #RockCycle \(hhgs.org.uk\)](http://hhgs.org.uk)

Fossil and Dinosaurs Quiz: [Rock Show Online #fossils \(hhgs.org.uk\)](http://hhgs.org.uk)

Holiday Geology: [Rock Show Online #HolidayGeology \(hhgs.org.uk\)](http://hhgs.org.uk).

To read about **Bob Maurer's** theories about how the Earth works go to:

[Robert Maurer Tectonics \(hhgs.org.uk\)](http://hhgs.org.uk)

Jon Noad, our local 'home-grown' geologist, who provided our November 2022 talk online from Canada, has provided our Rock Show with a set of informative photographic posters of the **Harefield Chalk fossils** that he found. Follow [Rock Show Online #fossils \(hhgs.org.uk\)](http://hhgs.org.uk) and scroll down.

GEOLOGY-RELATED ACTIVITIES 2023

Rock Gem 'n' Bead Shows Our nearest venue for 2023 is **Kempton Park Racecourse**, London, TW16 5AQ, on 4-5th March, 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

The **British Geological Survey** has all the up-to-date geological news, videos and animations explaining all things geology-related, even models of volcanoes and dinosaurs to print out and make www.bgs.ac.uk.

The **Geologists' Association** provides enthusiastic talks and field trips for amateur and professional geologists at all levels: geologistsassociation.org.uk

Rockwatch is the UK's nationwide geology club for children and their families, providing activities at events, field trips, magazines and a website: Rockwatch

For listings of other geological events see '**Down to Earth**', the quarterly circular, which is available free as part of your membership, currently online, 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.

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Information about Members

We welcome any news for this section, especially from our provincial members, or those who are unable to attend our meetings regularly.

Change of address

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

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

HHGS email address: 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 Secretary and Webmaster (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, thank you.