

**Warwickshire Geological Conservation Group**  
(Registered Charity Number 1144717)

**Financial statements**  
**for the year ended 31 August 2013**

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# Warwickshire Geological Conservation Group Committee members' annual report for the year ended 31 August 2013

**Full name** Warwickshire Geological Conservation Group

**Principal address**

c/o Warwickshire Museum, Market Place, Warwick CV34 4SA

**Committee members**

David Coates

John Crossling

Brian Ellis – Chair

Andrew Entwistle

Ian Fenwick

Nigel Harris

Christine Hodgson

James Watts – Treasurer

Frank Wells - Secretary

**Observers**

Dr Jon Radley – Keeper of Geology, Warwickshire Museum

Anton Irving – Natural England

**Bankers**

HSBC, 46 The Square, Kenilworth, Warwickshire CV8 1EA

**Independent examiner**

Nigel Grounds, employee of Community Accountancy Services, Community House, Coleshill Road, Atherstone, CV9 1BN.

**Governance and management**

The organisation is operated under the rules of its constitution adopted 19<sup>th</sup> October 2011. A number of Trustees were elected or re-elected at the AGM 19<sup>th</sup> October 2011. All new Trustees attend an Induction Course soon after their election.

The governing body of the WGCG is the Management Committee which comprises 9 Trustees and 2 observers. There are 3 sub-committees – Education, Conservation and Publications – each chaired by a Trustee. Decisions of these sub-committees are subject to approval by the Management Committee

The charity has a series of protocols and policies relating to financial management, reserves, management of risk, safety, volunteers and conflict of interest.

**Aims and objectives**

- a) To advance the education of the public in the significance of geology for the understanding and aesthetic appreciation of landscapes, for human settlements and economic activity, for recreation and leisure and for ecology.
- b) To conserve the geological heritage of Warwickshire through identification and active conservation of geological sites and through fostering an interest in and knowledge of the geology and landscapes of Warwickshire.

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When planning our activities the Trustees take note of the Commission's guidance on public benefit. To meet these Objects and provide 'public benefit' the Trustees have promoted a concerted programme of Education, Conservation and Publications. In 2012-13 particular attention has focused on the links between these activities.

None of our work would be possible without the willing cooperation of a large number of volunteers. They are involved directly in practical activities including supporting outreach events, designating, recording and monitoring LGS and maintaining the database, curating the Group's collection, supporting the lecture and field programme, contributing to and producing the bi-annual Newsletter and other publications, dealing with local enquiries, talking to community groups and not least attending a variety of meetings. This is in addition to the large number of people who are involved in running what is an increasingly complex organization.

As reported last year the Group has received a bequest from a former member, Robert Holloway, which was invested in February 2012 so as to secure an annual income big enough to support the increased range of education, conservation, outreach and publications activities now being undertaken and to secure the long term future of the Group. The Holloway Award to support young geologists early in their career is one outcome of the bequest. The performance of the investment portfolio is monitored by a group of three Holding Trustees and is reported to the Management Committee at its bi-monthly meetings and to the membership at the AGM. Our financial adviser attends a meeting of the Management Committee once a year on the anniversary of the initial investment.

**Education Programme:**

The monthly winter series of lectures (September to April) attracted good audiences (average 60 per meeting) and covered a wide range of geological topics. Notable amongst these was one by the first winner of the Group's Holloway Award, Tom Barrett, who talked about his research in Scotland as part of his MSc degree at Birmingham University.

The programme of summer field excursions continued the successful piloting last year to include weekend, as well as the usual Wednesday evening, visits. This included a joint meeting with Leicester Literary and Philosophical Society to a Local Geological Site (LGS) and a SSSI quarry led by the Chairman of the Group's Conservation Committee. A highly successful residential weekend in Aberystwyth was led by Dr. Bill Fitches which was attended by 20 members. The use of a local expert adds greatly to the success of these trips.

The Group has run two new activities this year. An eight week course on Basic Geology attracted 22 participants, most of whom have joined WGCG only recently. The Group has also used its larger office to curate over 400 items of its collection which gave an opportunity for training members and familiarizing them with some of the Group's resources.

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Also new this year have been two appearances on local radio, one to explain the increasing frequency of landslips in the UK and the other a news report on the Group's activities at Coombe Abbey (see below).

***Education via Public Events (Outreach):***

Activities have included mounting exhibitions and displays. To provide public educational benefit about the geology of the County and to publicise the Group's activities, displays were presented at Kenilworth Festival and Leamington Peace Festival. It is policy to try to use different locations each year so as to contact as many people as possible. Following on from last year's success we ran another Rock and Fossil 'Fun Day' for children (up to c.12 years of age) at the Coombe Abbey Country Park, Coventry. This involved a large range of education activities for children. The Park has asked that this be repeated in 2014. Members have also helped with geological activities in a local primary school and a local scout troop.

The Group was invited to repeat a display on 'the Geology of N. Warwickshire' at another location in Atherstone. In order to interest as wide a range of the public as possible, the geology was introduced through familiar topics such as landscape and former industries. The Group also mounted a joint exhibition with Nuneaton Museum, using some of their geological collection, in the context of the local economy. These activities suggest we may be having some success raising the profile for geology in the northern area of the county.

***External Relations:***

In the course of the year members of the Group have assisted other local organisations with their public education programmes by giving talks or leading field excursions. Some ten groups have benefitted. The group was also represented at the the annual "geology day" run by the Geologists Association at University College London [for other external links see below]

***Conservation Programme:***

Two further Local Geological Sites (LGS) have been designated during the year under review. These are both at Astley Castle. These designations arise out of the Group's cooperation with the Landmark Trust, which leases the site, on the interpretation of the geology of the buildings and the surrounding estate.

The rotational monitoring of the condition of our Local Sites has continued in the current year. This activity also forms one of the key components of the Group's mentoring policy with members receiving supervision and instruction in the application of the agreed criteria. The information is also fed into Warwickshire County Council's Single Data List and is also provided to Natural England in support of their construction of a national database of geologically designated sites

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The Group has worked with Natural England to provide evidence for retaining the valued exposures in a geological Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in Warwickshire in relation to a planning application to landfill the quarry. There have also been on-going consultations about engineering works on railway cuttings, both active and abandoned.

As a member of the Geology Trusts the Group has cooperated extensively on conservation matters with other county geology groups in the West Midlands and further afield. Through this organisation it contributes to national environmental policy development. The Group has also been involved in contributing a geological component to consultations within Warwickshire on local planning documents arising from the new National Planning Policy Guidelines, as well as being consulted on specific proposals. It is gratifying that the Group is being increasingly seen as a source of geological and geoconservation expertise.

A Local Nature Partnership for Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull has been established in partnership with Warwickshire Wildlife Trust (WWT), amongst other organisations. Progress of LNPs is slow due to funding problems but the cooperation has led to a closer working relationship with WWT. Two practical outcomes of this are the publication of an article in the Trust's magazine on the geological background to one of its woodland projects and joint work on design of a geology wall in its Education Garden.

The Warwickshire Museum in Warwick and its store rooms are undergoing renovation. Volunteers from the Group have assisted the Curator of Natural Sciences to wrap, pack and move the geology collection to its new location. This really was a "mammoth" job.

**The organisation's policy on reserves**

In the charity's Reserves Policy, the purpose of the reserve is:

- to ensure continuity of services and benefits to members during lean times
- to contain shortfalls in current income to meet overhead costs and unforeseen setbacks
- to prepare funding bids for new projects
- to set aside a separate reserve of 'unrestricted' funds to finance grant-aided projects where expense claims are reimbursed in arrears by funding agencies
- to aid strategic planning to sustain and develop future activities to fund initiatives and to take advantage of new opportunities

Signed on behalf of the committee members:

Signed

(Chair) Date:

## **Independent examiner's report to the committee members of Warwickshire Geological Conservation Group for the year ended 31 August 2013**

I report on the accounts of the charity, which are set out on pages seven to nine.

### **Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner**

The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act;
- follow the procedures laid down in the general directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

### **Basis of independent examiner's report**

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

### **Independent examiner's statement**

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect that the requirements have not been met viz. –
  - to keep records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
  - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Nigel Grounds, Warwickshire CAVA, Community Accountancy Service