

# **Warwickshire Geological Conservation Group**

## **Trustees Annual Report for the year ended 31 August 2015**

**Full name** Warwickshire Geological Conservation Group

**Principal address**

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

**Committee members**

Barry Dale  
Brian Ellis (Chair)  
Andrew Entwistle  
Ian Fenwick

Nigel Harris  
Christine Hodgson  
Roger Pinkney  
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, Mercia Community Accounting, Lorton, Tamworth, Staffordshire

**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 15<sup>th</sup> October 2014. All new Trustees attend an Induction Course soon after their election. The Trustees Folder was revised during 2014-15 and approved at the Management Committee on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2015.

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 Group. In addition there is an Outreach Group, largely responsible for organising outside events. Decisions of these sub-committees are subject to approval by the Management Committee

The charity has a series of documents outlining policies and procedures relating to financial management, reserves, management of risk, safety, volunteers and conflict of interest. These are subject to periodic review by the Management Committee. The most recent versions are contained within the Trustees Folder of March 2015.

**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.

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, Outreach, Conservation and Publications. It remains the Group's policy to focus 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 organisation.

### ***The Holloway Bequest***

As previously reported 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 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.

The Holloway Award, according to the wishes of the benefactor, aims amongst other things, to encourage an interest in geology in children and to support young geologists early in their career. This year has seen the successful expansion of the scope of these awards. Specifically support has been given to the following activities:

- Two Warwickshire primary schools have each had a day's geological fieldwork,
- Secondary schools have been on visits to the demonstration mine run by the Camborne School of Mines,
- Two geology undergraduates at Leicester University have worked with Year 3 pupils introducing them to geology,
- A post-graduate student at Leicester University has run a pilot project in a Leicester secondary school on 'Ediacaran Enigmas';
- Five Birmingham University geology undergraduates and five from Camborne School of Mines Exeter University) have been supported financially to complete their field mapping projects;
- Two students have undertaken two-week work placements with British Gypsum and one student has undertaken a four-week work placement with Sibelco;
- Two MSc students from Camborne School of Mines have had longer research experience with British Geological Survey

- One student member has successfully completed an MSc and had been accepted to take a PhD in mining geology at Cardiff University from September 2015; and
- A grant of £10000 was made to the Lapworth Institute at Birmingham University to support the redevelopment of the Geological Museum, including its education facilities, as a regional museum of geology.

### **Education Programme:**

A core of the Group's activities is the monthly winter series of lectures (September to April). It continues to attract good audiences (average 60 per meeting) and covers a wide range of geological topics.

The programme of summer field excursions included Wednesday evening and whole-day visits, with the latter involving Mow Cop in Staffordshire and Leckhampton Hill in Gloucestershire. In both these events we were fortunate to be led by local geologists.

There were two residential trips – (i) A visit to Shropshire and the Berwyn area of Wales led by one of WGCG's members and (ii) a weekend visit to Malham in the Yorkshire Dales National Park led by an expert on the area, Dr. Tony Waltham. Both were greatly enjoyed by the members participating.

An important part of our educational programme is the work undertaken with primary school children. There were the two field visits this year referred to above as part of the use of the Holloway Bequest. These are led by one of the WGCG members who is an experienced school teacher.

### ***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 Packwood House (extending our work with the National Trust) and at Compton Verney as part of their Park Life weekend. It is policy to try to use different locations each year so as to contact as many people as possible. As well as photographic and specimen displays the Outreach Group has continued to develop an increasing variety of "fun" (and learning) activities for children and adults. Work has started on making the specimen displays more interactive and/or self-explanatory.

### ***Publications:***

A leaflet on the geology and buildings of Stratford-upon-Avon was published in February. The group continues to produce a newsletter twice a year in Spring and Autumn. Work is well advanced on the production of an interpretation panel for one of our Local Geological Sites on the well-used Sustrans Trail in Kenilworth. Work has started on the production of interpretation materials for the geology wall (see below). An account of building the wall has been published in the geology magazine 'Down to Earth'.

## **Conservation Programme:**

WGCG now has designated over 90 Local Geological Sites (LGS) in the County. The need to discover and designate further sites is now a lower priority and so none have been designated this year. The Group has adopted a new policy of concentrating physical clearance work on those sites with high visitor levels to maximise the value of the effort. However, the rotational monitoring of the condition of our Local Sites has continued in the current year with each site being visited at least every five years. 2015 saw the completion of the first cycle of monitoring all sites. This activity also forms one of the 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.

There have also been consultations about on planning applications eg Mancetter Quarry involved visiting consultation event. The Conservation Sub-Committee continues to monitor new planning applications through monthly Warwickshire County Council Bulletin.

The Group has become aware during this year of increasing difficulties in accessing both working and especially closed stone quarries as a result of the concerns of owners about safety issues as a consequence of recent accidents and fatalities.

## ***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.

A Local Nature Partnership for Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull has been established in partnership with Warwickshire Wildlife Trust (WWT), amongst other organizations. Progress of LNPs is slow due to funding problems but the cooperation has led to a closer working relationship with WWT. Practical outcomes of this are (i) joint work on the design and construction of a geology wall in its Education Garden, completed in December 2014, (ii) publications in the WWT magazine and (iii) joint work on bidding for funding for a new public interpretation of a reserve in an abandoned limestone quarry.

As a member of the Geology Trusts the Group has cooperated 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. It is gratifying that the Group is being increasingly seen as a source of geological and geoconservation expertise.

## **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
- develop and maintain Holloway Bursaries to young and early career geologists in line with our benefactor's wishes

Signed on behalf of the Trustees:

Signed

(Chair) Date:

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

**Financial statements**  
**for the year ended 31 August 2015**

# **Independent examiner's report to the committee members of Warwickshire Geological Conservation Group for the year ended 31 August 2015**

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, Mercia Community Accounting