



Down to Earth^{Extra}

Issue 165 September 2026

NEWS FLASH...

2027 Trips

- All eight trips can now be booked!

More Autumn Zoom sessions!

- The geology of Oman
- Venezuela tectonics
- In the steps of the pioneers
- The Wednesday Club
- Rocks from the Pressure Cooker

Enrol for all sessions & courses NOW!

What are you waiting for?

The landscapes of Shetland are so unique! Where are the trees in this image of the Ness of Hillswick, taken in June of this year? That said, even houses are few and far between. But what fabulous coastal scenery!

*This is a landscape made by metamorphic rocks in the foreground with the Ronas Hill granite forming the background.
(Image: Chris Darmon)*



From the Editorial team...

During the fifth heatwave of the summer we were out in the field in a very hot and scorched Shropshire at our annual Summer School which was based this year at Harper Adams University. For us, the impact of the heatwave were limited to not having a steam engine on the Severn Valley heritage railway and enduring 36°C on the Thursday.

That said we were acutely aware via the media, of what was happening, not far way, in Stourbridge in the West Midlands. Here, a total of 19 largely upmarket homes, were completely destroyed in a devastating fire. It began in nearby woodland and open fields and rapidly spread to a nearby estate. No doubt the owners looked upon the woodland, semi-rural setting as ideal when they bought their homes. Little realising that in drought conditions they were exposed to great danger.

Make no mistake about it, wildfires, even the mere prospect of them, expose us to huge risks and require us to make plans to mitigate those risks before they happen. What if you are on a walk and a fire starts behind you, say you are heading into a nature reserve in an old quarry. A situation we've been in many times. Ask yourself a simple question. Is there an alternative way out other than the one you've taken to enter the site? If the answer to that question is no, you're in potential trouble.

Back at home, the Stourbridge disaster points to problems with adjacent trees, wooden garden fences, picnic tables and garden sheds. All of which can put you at increased danger. But its parched grass that's often really close to our homes, and a carelessly discarded cigarette butt is all it takes to ignite. All of a sudden availability of water becomes vital. I suspect that garden centres will find that demand for water butts will increase this autumn.

So the message appears to be that climate change is indeed bringing with it the extremes that the experts have been predicting. We're going to have to get used to long hot and extremely dry summers. So our message is to continue to enjoy the outdoors with its geology and landscape, but take precautions and be aware of the potential fire hazards that you may encounter along the way. Enjoy a cooler, and wetter Autumn!

Chris Darmon & Colin Schofield
The Down to Earth Editorial Team



news update

Despite the hot, dry summer, UK aquifers remain strong says BGS...

A hot and dry summer has given rise to an official drought being declared in parts of England and across the entirety of Wales. But what about the state of our groundwater aquifers, that are so vital for out water supplies in many areas?

BGS has been looking into the resilience of these aquifers and finds some good news...

“Groundwater is a critical water source in the UK. Across England it provides around a third of the overall public water supply and as much as 100 per cent in some communities in south-east England and East Anglia, which are underlain by chalk and limestone aquifers. groundwater can also be a vital tributary to streams and rivers, helping to maintain water levels and important habitats.

Research conducted by scientists at the British Geological Survey (BGS) has highlighted groundwater's remarkable resilience to extreme weather events against the backdrop of 2026's record-breaking summer in terms of meteorological and hydrological drought.

The latest groundwater analysis reveals the status of aquifer levels around the UK at the end of July 2026. Remarkably, despite two-thirds of England and Wales being declared in drought, the general health of groundwater resources around the country is robust and, in some cases, higher than the normal historical levels. The data shows that groundwater levels are now stabilising after a period of declining and, while some levels are lower than in a normal year, there are no record



*The River Chess: a classic chalk stream fed by the Chalk aquifer of the Chiltern Hills. low levels at this stage.
(Image: Courtesy of BGS/Josh Brown)*

low levels at this stage. Only a handful of sites are close to the lowest end of the historical average.

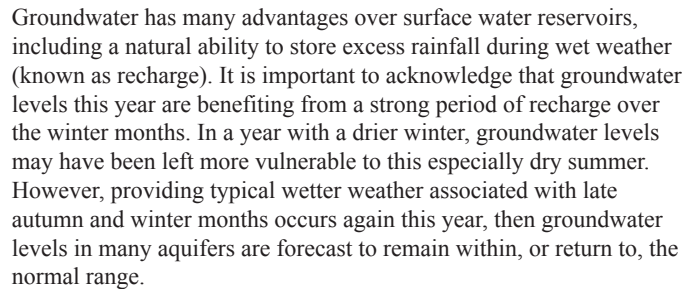
Down to Earth extra is designed & published by Geo Supplies Ltd.,
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to periods of extreme weather. Groundwater augmentation schemes are already underway, such as the Environment Agency initiative in the River Severn, which can access water from the Shropshire Groundwater Scheme in periods of dry weather. At full capacity, this can release up to 240 million litres of water a day to help maintain river levels and protect water suppliers and wildlife habitats. There may be an opportunity to revisit current groundwater abstraction targets, to ensure more drought-resilient groundwater supplies are made available during periods of drought in future.



Long running baby powder saga may be near to end...

The pharmaceutical giant Johnson & Johnson has been in a lengthy legal wrangle with ten of thousands of claimants regarding the talc content in its baby powder and other products. They allege that this

 **Hampshire** 

Mineral & Fossil Show

Saturday 19th September 2026
Oasis Academy, Southampton, SO16 8FA
10am to 4pm

MINERALS ~ FOSSILS ~ GEMS ~ METEORITES ~ DINOSAURS
ACCESSORIES ~ JEWELLERY ~ BOOKS ~ EQUIPMENT
50+ tables of SALES, EXHIBITS and ACTIVITIES



Admission £2 adults, accompanied Children £1

Show organised by **Southampton Mineral & Fossil Society**
For further information, visit our website www.sotonminfoss.org.uk or email
contact@sotonminfoss.org.uk

The health of aquifers in comparison to surface water resources across North Wales, the Midlands, East Anglia, Kent, Devon and Cornwall is particularly striking; all are regions that were recently declared in drought by the Environment Agency and Natural Resources Wales — Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru.

The data highlights that, subject to careful management, groundwater has the potential to play a larger role in enhancing national resilience

has caused ovarian cancer.

The firm continues to deny that its products caused the cancer, but has now changed the formula to omit the use of talc (they now use a non mineral cornstarch). However the company has offered a settlement that should resolve around 76,000 cases, according to Erik Haas the firm's vice president of litigation. So far the company has stated that will offer up to \$3 billion for next year with an additional payment due before 2028.

Issues around the mineral around the mineral talc arise because it is related to natural asbestos minerals with which it is often closely found. Whilst talc is safe for many other uses, it is no longer recommended for body use on babies and young children.

The quarry blast that ended up flooding a village...

Blasting takes place safely everyday in quarries up and down the land, but one in a South Wales quarry caused a release of water that flooded a number of homes in Gwaelod-y-Garth, near Cardiff, in early August. The quarry in question was Taff's Wells, part of the Breedon Group.

This description of Taff's Wells Quarry comes from Mindat:

"The geology at Taff's Well essentially comprises a series of northward dipping dolomitised limestones of Lower Carboniferous age, interbedded with clays and haematite near the top of the quarry.



Large scale machinery in operation at Taff's Well Quarry
(Image: Courtesy of Agg-Net)

The 60 hectare limestone quarry, which has been worked since the 1920s, was owned by Steetley during the 1950s before being acquired by Redland Aggregates and then Lafarge. In March 1999, London based RMC Group (formerly "Ready Mixed Concrete Limited") bought the quarry from Lafarge to bolster their dwindling reserves at Wenvoe Quarry, some 11 miles south of Taff's Well. Taff's Wells Quarry, which produces a million tonnes of aggregates each year for road laying and construction, became part of CEMEX's UK operations, following the Mexican firm's acquisition of RMC Group in 2005."

It is the mention of haematite that is crucial to understanding what happened in the recent flooding event. Between about 1840 and until 1884 when it was officially abandoned, this was the site of Garth Iron Mine. Haematite was extracted from bodies within the limestone, much like those in Cumbria. Over the years, its estimated that at least 10,000 tonnes of haematite were extracted. Today, all of the chambers are thought to be either back-filled with waste rock or are currently flooded.



Inside Garth Iron Mine, an image taken when the mine was working in the nineteenth century.

(Image: Courtesy of Welsh Coal Mines)

This comes from the website: <https://www.welshcoalmines.co.uk>:

"Today only two of the main top caverns are visible at the north side of the Taff's Well quarry, the others having been in-filled over the years. These are inside the confines of the quarry and located within the limestone aggregate stockpile area and surrounded by trees and safety fences."

It seems that the 'offending blast' on July 31st may have released some of this pent up water within the old Garth Iron Mine. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) confirm that ground rock voids holding the water, and an underground tunnel, have not been compromised in the incident.

Meanwhile Breedon Quarry Group issued a statement that said:

"Breedon Group stated they are working with authorities and the local community to support residents affected by the Taff's Well Quarry blast. CEO Mike Pearce confirmed the company is prioritizing support for affected residents and is conducting an internal investigation alongside official inquiries into the incident."

At the end of the investigations into what went wrong there's likely to be some kind of compensation deal for those affected residents. Thankfully incidents like this, involving working quarries are extremely rare.

Where's the giant Finn McCool when you need him?

Anybody visiting some of our finest beauty spots cannot have failed to spot coins that have been placed into trees or fences as some kind of memento of their visit. Another in the same vein is the leaving of padlocks on fences or bridges.

But in the case of the Giant's Causeway on Northern Ireland's Antrim Coast it has proved both costly and extremely time consuming to remove up to 10,000 coins that have been inserted into the world famous basalt columns. Many of the coins of numerous different denominations and currencies have been in place for so long that they are now causing damage to the columns. As the metal breaks down in this highly saline environment, the coins expand threatening the stability of the basalt, in much the same way that tree roots do.



Dr Cliff Henry of the National Trust in front of the famous basalt columns. (Image: National Trust)

Dr Cliff Henry, nature engagement officer with the National Trust said, speaking to BBC Radio Foyle: “It is a relief, the coins were doing a significant amount of damage. These coins were rusting and expanding and were capable of pressing the whole column of rock above them, pushing them up.”

Previously the Geological Survey of Northern Ireland (GSNI) had recommended the removal of the coins in order to stop the physical and chemical impact on the columns.



The coins have been placed into joints within the basalt columns and are now expanding as they rust. (Image: National Trust)

The GSNI report, published in 2025 was a game changer and resulted in the action plan carried out this year. Dr Kirstin Lemon of GSNI

said: “The advice of the Geological Survey to the National Trust is to see if we can remove as many of those coins as we can. By removing them, it means we’re stopping any further physical impact on the site itself. We’re also stopping that chemical impact as well.”

The work has been carried out by an experienced stonemason and whilst some pop out easily, others are more difficult or time consuming.

The stonemason, Nathan Morrow was praised by Dr Cliff Henry: “He found it satisfying but frustrating at the same time. It was fiddly work, and frustrating work. Some coins were quite well stuck. He found if he got them to move at all, if he worked them forward and back, eventually he would be able to get them out.”

As for the future, the National Trust hopes that by the use of specific notices around the site and also by encouragement from the on site guides, that people will be discouraged from refilling the voids left behind in the basalt. Perhaps now we’ll be able to see the columns in their natural state without added coins.

BGS announces its first across the board price increase for about 10 years...

British Geological Survey (BGS) has announced its first across the board price increase on books and maps for about 10 years.

We managed to include a ‘stop press’ announcement in the last issue of *DtoE extra*. From August 1st the price of all BGS products has increased by 20%.

The base price for 1:50 000 and 1:25 000 geological maps has therefore gone from £12.00 to £14.40. The strict application of the increase has resulted in some quirky prices so that the Holiday Geology and Fossil Focus publications have gone from £1.95 to £2.34.

Remember that most retailers, including ourselves and BGS, charge an additional sum for postage. Despite this increase, BGS books and maps remain excellent value for money.

Len Sims of Geo Supplies said: “Because of the way we hold and pay for our stock of BGS maps we have had to pass on this price increase with immediate effect. This has not meant that we have made any additional profit for the price rise. We hope that you will continue to purchase these products now and into the future as they still represent excellent value for money.”



Get Down to Earth - by e-mail...

If you’ve enjoyed reading this Down to Earth extra, you’ll love our quarterly Down to Earth! It’s a 32-page quality magazine in full colour that’s packed with up to the minute geological news and articles. You can get your hands on this either in print or electronic formats. Why not request a FREE sample electronic copy of the current issue?

For 2026 why not treat yourself or a loved one to a gift subscription? Go to: www.geosupplies.co.uk and enter the online shop or ring us on 0114 245 5746.

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Chris Darmon unveils another GVIP at the Severn Valley Country Park...

Your Editor Chris Darmon, in his capacity as President of the Abberley & Malvern Hills Geopark unveiled the latest in the network of Geopark Visitor Information Points (GVIPs) at the Severn Valley Country Park on August 12th. This took place during our Summer School and was witnessed by our group of 30 people and volunteers from the geopark.

The Severn Valley Country park at Alveley is on the site of a former coal mine which closed in 1969. The hillside surrounding the popular visitor centre comprises former waste tips from which fossil plant remains can be found. The park is visited by at least 200,000 people a year so the GVIP will act as a great way to communicate geology to the public at large.



*Chris Darmon and Andy Harrison, one of the Geologists in the Geopark Group in front of the Geopark Visitor Information Point (GVIP) at the Severn Valley Country Park.
(Image: Georgia Jacobs)*

The Abberley & Malvern Hills Geopark receives no public finances and is dependent upon financial support from Merlin Energy and Oracle Environmental. Their support more or less enables the Geopark to run the three months of GeoFest and also put content on to the website each year.



*A bit of precious shade awaits the members of our Summer School in the Severn Valley Country Park on August 12th. It's hard to imagine that much of this site used to be a coal tip!
(Image: Georgia Jacobs)*

This, along with the tireless work of volunteers from the group - Geologists in the Geopark, led by Dr Peter Oliver, provide information, posters, specimens, site visits, expert sessions for the public, website content, trails and much more. No other UK geopark puts on so much over the summer period.

There is great support for the Geopark by many of the Geopark Forum members in the form of a great range of events throughout GeoFest. Also Geology is provided by Members at Lapworth Museum, Worcester Museum, Hereford Museum, Malvern Hills GeoCentre, Bewdley Museum, Severn Valley Country Park and Forestry England at Wyre.

*To find out more go to:
<http://geopark.org.uk/pub/category/geofest-events/>*

You're not too late for some of the GeoFest events that continue into September!

An unusual present idea - limited edition...

'The Cream of the Crop 2025'

As part of their work for Geo Supplies, your editorial team, Chris Darmon and Colin Schofield go to some very interesting places around the British Isles. Whilst they are in these places they often pick up rock specimens, most of which go to students and institutions both here and even around the world. However there are also some rare or unusual rocks that don't form part of our regular stock and it is these that we've gathered together into a limited edition collection that we are offering as our 'Cream of the Crop 2025'.

The set comprises 14 carefully chosen specimens from the British Isles: with: graptolitic shale (Llandrindod Wells), Stanner Rock metaigneous (the oldest in Wales), Old Red Sandstone (Goodrington), Hematite (Cumbria), Folly Sandstone (Silurian), Phyllite (Arran), Newmead Sandstone (Builth Wells), Man-o-War Gneiss (Cornwall), Quartz Porphyry (Cornwall), Honister Slate (Cumbria), Hybrid Rock (Arran), Tonalite (Ardnamurchan), Pitchstone (Arran), Felsite (Loch Ba, Mull). Each set comes boxed with notes and costs £54.95 including postage. The set is available NOW for immediate shipping!

Purchase online at: geosupplies.co.uk or ring us on: 0114 245 5746.

**Available
Now!**

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Great geo-adventures in 2027 begin here...



How's this for stunning view of British Camp on the top of the Malvern Hills? Come and enjoy more of the same on our visit to Great Malvern in July.
(Image: Courtesy of Visit the Malverns)

All of our programme of eight trips for 2027 are now available for you to book. Several are close to being fully booked already.

We begin with a visit to Furness in the South Lakes of Cumbria and then the Magma Geopark in Norway. In the Spring and Summer we go to Strathpeffer, Eastbourne and Great Malvern with our Summer School at the University of Warwick. Moving to the Autumn we've got a week based in Oban followed by a visit to Whitby.

To view a brochure, go to our website at:
www.geosupplies.co.uk or Tel: 0114 245 5746

Remember that booking forms are only available direct from us:

Email: downtoearth@geosupplies.co.uk

Residential Field trip programme 2027...

- Furness & South Lakes, April 16-23
- Magma Geopark, Norway, May 4-13
- Strathpeffer & Cromarty, May 21-29
- Sussex Coast & South Downs, June 20-26
- Abberley & Malvern Hills, July 18-23
- Summer School University of Warwick July 31-August 7
- Oban & the Hebridean Isles, Scotland, September 30-October 8
- Whitby, Yorkshire Coast, October 17-23

Early booking is advised, especially if you are looking for a single room.

Several trips are nearly full.

Search online at www.geosupplies.co.uk or ring us on 0114 245 5746
Geo Supplies Ltd 49 Station Road, Chapeltown, Sheffield S35 2XE



If you haven't joined one of our residential field trips before, what can you expect?

- *Our residential field trips are suitable for adults of all levels of interest and geological knowledge.*
- *Our trips are friendly and informal and usually comprise 15-20 people. Overseas trips are usually larger.*
- *We usually make use of comfortable small hotels and guest houses and all meals are included.*
- *You have the services of Chris Darmon and Colin Schofield as field leaders. Both are highly experienced and knowledgeable field geologists.*
- *For some trips we have a hired minibus but on other trips we will use shared cars, or even public transport.*
- *Dates shown in this listing are the start and finish dates.*
- *Where prices are quoted, they are per person in a shared twin/double room.*

If you still have any questions or queries, don't hesitate to email us at: downtoearth@geosupplies.co.uk or tel: 0114 245 5746

Before you book on one of our trips...

We are always pleased to welcome new people along on our trips. So if you are thinking about it, what do you need to know before you 'take the plunge'?

Who are the trips aimed at?

The short answer is that they are not aimed at any particular group of people. Our participants are mainly older retired people who want to keep their minds and bodies active, but younger people are welcome.

Some people have lots of geological field experience whilst others are complete beginners. As one person put it to us "I've forgotten all I once knew and need to come along to hear it again." Our UK trips are all small groups of 15 to 20 people maximum so we can make lots of what we say personal to you.

In recent years we've run several special trips for American geologists and now some of them join us on our regular trips, adding greatly to the character of our field experiences.

Will I be able to manage the walking?

We always try to keep walking to a minimum, but, almost by definition, some walking will be involved. If you can't manage a particular walk, just tell us and it will never be a problem for you not to do it. We have one person who really enjoys sketching - she's done some amazing sketches while the rest of us visit a quarry!

How do we get about on trips?

It varies a lot from trip to trip. Sometimes we hire a minibus, on other occasions we use public transport and at other times we'll make use of shared cars. Look at the details for each trip to find out.

What about accommodation?

We always try to use hotels or guest houses that have ensuite rooms as

standard. Most of our accommodation will provide breakfast and evening meals, but sometimes we eat in local restaurants. We include the cost of all food, including a packed lunch for each field day.

We prefer to use small family run hotels and guest houses but they are getting harder to find, so sometimes we use larger hotels such as hotels in the Leisureplex and Strathmore group. Once again, see the individual trip brochures for details.

Are your bookings safe with us?

Yes indeed they are! We've been in the business of running trips a long time and ensure that all the money you pay us is safe in a client trust account until your trip is completed.

But, above all, our trips are educational informative and FUN! We don't take ourselves or our geology too seriously. After all you are on holiday - and you are paying for it! We look forward to welcoming you on a trip sometime soon.

The full list of field trips for 2027...

We are now looking forward to another great season of field trips in 2027. As we are hosting two groups of Americans during the year, it means that the number of trips for general sale will be somewhat reduced. All the more reason to get your bookings in early!

Despite running these trips for a number of years, we've managed to find some great new venues for 2027 and, as a result, have more than 100 confirmed bookings, even at this stage.

Why not contact us now for a booking form:

downtoearth@geosupplies.co.uk or ring us on: 0114 245 5746

You can view brochures for all the trips featured here (apart from the 2027 Summer School) on our website at:

www.geosupplies.co.uk

Furness & the South Lakes. April 16-23 (7-nights) £1295

The Lake District is arguably our premier National Park and it's an area that many of you will have visited. But how many of you know or have ever visited the South Lakes, known as the Furness area? It's an area of scenic coastline with small coastal communities like Grange over Sands and Arnside. From our base in Grange we'll be able to explore a wide area taking in places such as Ravenglass, St Bees, Arnside, Lake Windermere and quarries around Millom.



The Cumbria Grand Hotel is in the tranquil resort of Grange over Sands - our base for the week

Welcome to our exciting world!



All this from the comfort of the Cumbria Grand Hotel in Grange over Sands. Take advantage of this excellent value package, just as the spring flowers come out!

Sorry, single rooms for this trip have now sold out!

Norway - Magma Geopark, May 413 (9-nights) £2595

We have been to Norway on two previous occasions to the Gea Norvegica Geopark where we saw great geology and landscape. This time we are staying in the south of the country but venturing to the Stavanger area which is the location of the fabulous Magma Geopark.

The tour commences with the first night in Oslo where we will be staying in an historic hotel which is actually within the main railway station. From there, we'll take a 7-hour train journey direct to the small town of Egersund, our base for the entire week. Each day we'll venture out into the geopark with their own geologist. You'll see some amazing ancient rocks including anorthosite, that's much more common on the surface of the moon! There will be visits to former metal mines, a guided tour of a local quarry, as well as walks in the fjord landscape, a boat trip to a local island and much more!



Some of the rocks in the geopark include anorthosite, which is more commonly found on the moon. (Image: Magma Geopark)

There will be visits to former metal mines, a guided tour of a local quarry, as well as walks in the fjord landscape, a boat trip to a local island and much more!

The last few places on this trip available to book NOW!

Strathpeffer & Cromarty, May 21-29 £1695



The Ben Wyvis Hotel our base for the week.

Another new location - not far from Inverness but so very different. The spa town of Strathpeffer was a Victorian favourite for 'taking the waters', But today our hotel has all mod cons and there's no cold baths! It's a great starting point from which to explore the local area which has much to offer the geologist.

From the local Devonian rocks of Cromarty birthplace of Scottish geologist Hugh Miller to the metamorphics of the local Moine rocks. We'll take in a train trip to Kyle of Lochalsh as well as another to Golspie on the coast to see the Jurassic and Triassic. We also see some of the younger sedimentary rocks around Lossiemouth to the east of Inverness.

This is a great new location that gives us some super days out! We can still accommodate people in double or twin rooms only.

Sussex Coast & South Downs, June 20-26 (6-nights) £1095

Based at the Queen's Hotel in the resort of Eastbourne this is a trip that will take in some of the classic chalk cliffs in places like Beachy Head and also some of the Lower Cretaceous rocks in places like Hastings, not forgetting the beautiful landscape of the South Downs National Park.



The Queens Hotel on Eastbourne's seafront

If you've never sampled some of our finest Chalk landscape then do so now! you won't regret it we can assure you. This is English landscape at its very best.

Single, double and twin rooms are still available for this trip.

The Abberley & Malvern Hills Geopark, July 18-23 (5-nights) £1195

Your Editor has had the pleasure of being the President of the Abberley & Malvern Hills Geopark for the past five years and along with the geopark volunteers, knows the area well.

Based at the Abbey Hotel in Great Malvern, this trip will take you to places where you can enjoy rocks and fossils from many different periods. We go back to the Ediacaran of the Precambrian to see the hard igneous rocks of the Malvern Hills, right on our doorstep. During the Cambrian and Silurian periods we see fossiliferous sediments. The Devonian and Carboniferous see are very different sandstones and even coal seams in the Wyre Forest and around Highley in the Severn Valley. Around Bridgnorth we see the bright red Permian sandstones from a desert environment.



*Fabulous Precambrian rocks and an unconformity at Gullet Quarry.
(Image: Abberley & Malvern Hills Geopark)*

Come and enjoy geology and landscape at its very best! Suitable for all, including those who are new to field geology. Currently there are plenty of vacancies on this trip, including singles.

Why come and join our Summer School?

Our Summer School is modelled on those that used to be run by the Open University a number of years ago. All are based on a campus of one sort or another where we can sleep in largely single, en-suite study bedrooms and enjoy on site meals. They are also more than just field trips with dedicated transport each day. There's an evening programme of talks from local experts and also social events. In short - something for everybody, including those with limited mobility!

Summer School at the University of Warwick £1695 July 31-August 7 (7-nights)

Our popular Summer School moves to a new location and you cannot get much more central than the University of Warwick, set in countryside on the southern edge of Coventry.



*Beacon Hill, Charnwood Forest Geopark
(Image: BGS)*

This location will allow us access to the rich and varied geology of north Warwickshire around Nuneaton, Charnwood Forest in Leicestershire, the Black Country Geopark and the Jurassic rocks of the local area and also the Cotswolds. In short, something for everybody, from the Precambrian to the Quaternary!
This is the last trip to be released and the brochure is now available on our website. Remember that most of the rooms are singles, so take advantage and make that booking!

Oban & the Hebridean Isles, September 30-October 9 (8-nights) £1495

Yes, we've found a hotel base in Oban! Now that we can tick that box, we can bring you an action packed week of trips around the surrounding area. With luck we'll get you to the islands of Kerrera, Lismore, Mull, Iona, Luing and Easdale. We'll also take in some of the geology of the mainland, around the Falls of Cruachan, Crianlarich and Tyndrum. You'll see fabulous Scottish geology from the Lewisian through to the Tertiary volcanics with much in between.



The Royal Hotel is on Oban's seafront and is close to the harbour and railway station.

Enjoy the comforts of the 3-star Royal Hotel in Oban where we offer ensuite rooms and all main meals.

Last couple of places available on this trip. Sorry no more singles.

Whitby on the Yorkshire Coast, October 17-23 (6-nights) £1195

Whitby is the jewel in the crown of the Yorkshire Coast and is truly an all year round resort. We are lucky to have secured a slot in the prestigious Royal Hotel that sits atop the nineteenth century splendour of the West Cliff.



The Royal Hotel sits atop the West Cliff.

With so much geology right on the doorstep we won't be spending hours getting to our field locations. Almost all of the solid geology was formed during the Jurassic period and much of it is very fossiliferous containing everything from humble brachiopods and bivalves through to ammonites and the remains of giant sea reptiles. During this trip we will take in the geology of Whitby and local places including Robin Hood's Bay, Staithes, Grosmont and Sandsend. We'll use the local buses and also the train to get inland.

As it has been some time since we last visited Whitby, we expect this trip to fill up rapidly, so you are strongly advised to make your booking soon. Currently we still have single as well as twin and double rooms available.

Welcome to our live Zoom world!

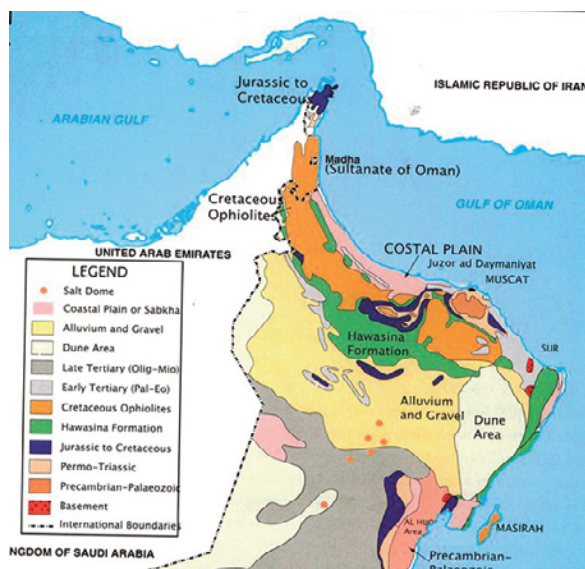
Autumn & Winter Zoom courses and individual sessions...

This Autumn and Winter we will be presenting several series of mainly live, hour-long Zoom sessions. Some are available as single sessions whilst others are courses consisting of 6 or 10 sessions. Most begin in November with some continuing after a break for Christmas and New Year.

All our Zoom classes and courses are available to everyone and are informal and designed to be both educational and enjoyable. We have a great and varied online community. You would be most welcome to join us!

Please see below for our programme up to the end of this year, further courses and sessions will be available to book in November for the Winter period.

The Geology of Oman and the Strait of Hormuz Special Session, Monday November 2 £15.00



The country of Oman and Strait of Hormuz have hardly been out of the news for the past few months, ever since the start of hostilities between the US and Iran. But aside from oil and gas, what else is in the geological story?

Explore with us in this extended Zoom session all about the geology of the region. You'll learn why this is such an important and interesting area - prepare for some surprises!

Make sure to book NOW!

The Tectonics of Northern Venezuela Special Session, Monday November 9 £15.00

The tragic twin earthquakes of June 24th 2026 will probably go down as one of the worst natural disasters of modern times. In this specially extended Zoom session we will explain why this happened by looking at the regional and more local tectonics. We'll also examine what could have been done to minimize the number of casualties, by way of design for buildings and infrastructure, especially bridges and roads. *If two people share the same computer screen the cost is £22.00 for these sessions.*

Metamorphic Rocks - rocks from the pressure cooker (10-weeks)

It has been several years since we last offered this course and it always proves to be a popular choice. We take the mystery out of metamorphic rocks by taking a close look at how they form from existing rocks of all types.

The course is arranged in a way that covers all the basic elements of metamorphic rocks. It takes you through how metamorphic rocks form, the textures the rocks exhibit and the minerals that make them up. You'll learn about contact, regional and dynamic metamorphism and how we classify these enigmatic rocks. **Course dates: Starts Monday November 16 - December 14 and then restarts January 18 for a further 5 weeks.**

Cost: Ten hour-long Zoom sessions with electronic background papers £80.00 for one person or £100.00 for 2-people studying together. Printed background papers cost an additional £25.00. Zoom sessions on Mondays at 2.00 and 7.00 pm (you choose)

The Wednesday Club

We started this eclectic mix of subjects on Wednesday afternoons and evenings two years ago and they are now a firm favourite with many of you. We hope that you like our new selection - they are all designed to bring you up to speed on some of the very latest ideas on a variety of very different subjects.

You can take individual sessions or why not dive in for them all and make a significant saving into the bargain!

November 11	Geological riches of the Yorkshire Coast
November 18	Alfred Harker - an extraordinary geologist
November 25	Anorthosite - a rock that's out of this world!
December 26	The evolution of the North Atlantic - new ideas
December 2	The unique geology of Islay, Jura & Colonsay
December 9	Extremes & extinctions in the Tertiary
December 16	Tyrannosaurus rex from bones to Hollywood

Cost: Individual talks £11.00 or £16.00 for 2 people.

Take all 6 sessions for £50.00, or £75.00 for 2 people.

Timings: Wednesdays at 2.00 or 7.00pm - your choice.

In the steps of the pioneers (6-weeks)

The history of geology is closely linked to a few individuals, many of whom were British. They each made their indelible mark on our subject in a unique way. In this course we'll take a look at the life and achievements of 'six of the best'.

We'll be studying these pioneers: Adam Sedgwick, Roderick Murchison, Charles Lapworth, Mary Anning, Henry de la Beche and George Barrow.

Course dates: Starts Thursday November 12 and runs through to December 17

Cost: Six hour-long Zoom sessions with electronic background papers £50.00 for one person or £70.00 for 2-people studying together. Printed background papers cost an additional £15.00. Zoom sessions on Thursdays at 2.00 and 7.00 pm (you choose)

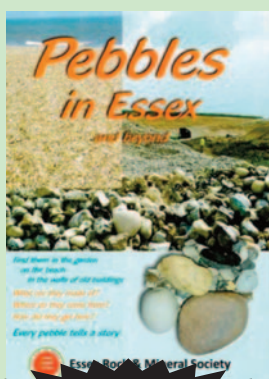
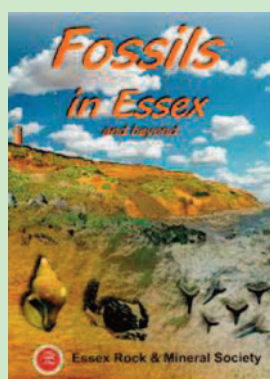
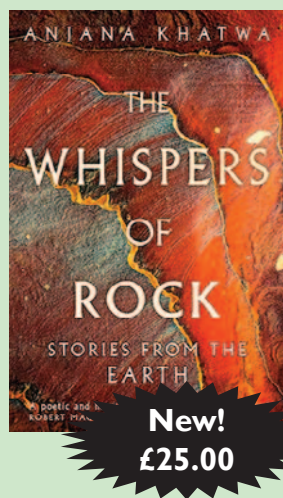
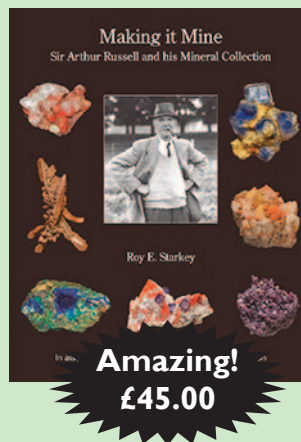
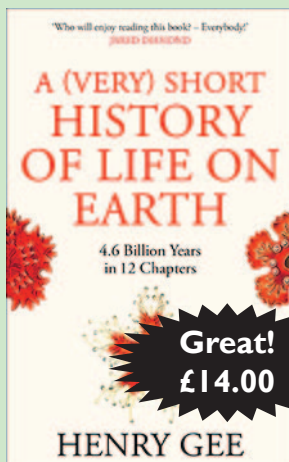
To find out more or to enrol, email us at:

downtoearth@geosupplies.co.uk or ring us on: 0114 245 5746

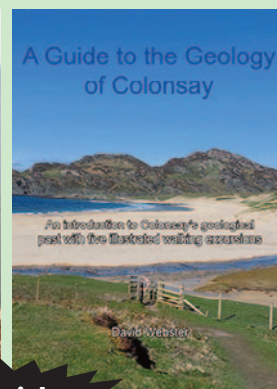
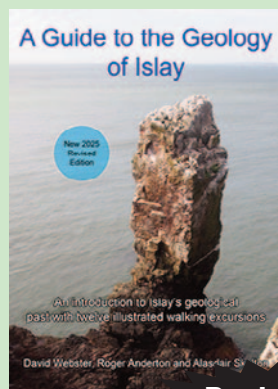
To enrol, go to: www.geosupplies.co.uk. enter our online shop FIRST and THEN find the course.

Featured books for September 2026

In each issue we are pleased to be able to introduce you to a range of featured books. Where they are being offered at reduced prices, these will be current to the end of September 2026 provided that stocks are available. This month we feature a variety of different books. N.B. all prices include UK postage.



All three titles
£8.00



Both titles
£26.00

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