

# Minutes for DIGS Meeting

## 7.30 pm Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2017

Dorset Wildlife Trust, Brooklands Farm, Forston

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1. **Present:** Pete Bath, Stephen Baughan, Andy Bradley, Jeremy Cranmer, Ian Hacker, Alan Holiday, Charles Jackson, Geoff Pettifer, Paul Ramsden, Rhiannon Rogers, Geoff Rowland, Pat Snelgrove, Roger Snelgrove.  
**Apologies for absence:** Bob Christian, Kelvin Huff, Niall Simpson, Jo Thomas, Ruth and Martin Warden, Giles Watts.
2. **Minutes** of last meeting and matters arising. These were taken as read. Matters arising AH gave a brief summary of the situation with the Fossil Forest site at Lulworth. AH visited the site on 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> August while work was carried out by Vertical Technologies, removing some of the material from the overhand above the access steps. The debris removed did not appear to have any great geological value. Further work is necessary improving the steps and the railings which have probably been in place for at least 50 years. Companies are tendering for this work that must be carried out in school holidays when the ranges are not being used for firing. This means that the earliest the work can be done is the end of October but may be not until Easter 2018. Comment was made about the information board and its inaccuracy pointing out the need for it to be replaced to correct the misconception that early man was around at the same time as the dinosaurs!
3. **Financial update:** The Nationwide balance is £3846.20 and Lloyds balance £127.15 + £4 cash in hand. Change names of those to sign cheques was agreed at the AGM and steps will be taken to make the necessary changes.
4. **Recent happenings:**
  - (a) Rockwatch visit to Leeson House August 2017 brief report. Including visit to Keats Quarry. AH gave a brief resume of the visit as he looked after the group in the absence of Susan Brown for health reasons. Visits were made to the Upwey Cutting and Portland, Kimmeridge, the Etches Museum, Swanworth Quarry, Landers Quarry, Keats Quarry and Osmington Mills. The latter was a wash out due to torrential rain! Overall the trip went very well and the group of 23 parents and young people thoroughly enjoyed the Dorset experience. For some it will be there last trip with Rockwatch as they are 18 and off to university.
  - (b) Planning application for work on Brownsea Island – extension of sewage treatment, possible temporary exposure? AH will liaise with the DCC planning department and National Trust.

### 5 Recent sales and publications:

Remaining leaflets.

1 box Weymouth geological trail some Poxwell Pericline leaflets

2 boxes West Dorset.

9 boxes Purbeck.

AH gave a summary of recent attempts to sell the leaflets. All the Purbeck Project postcards have now been sold, the last ones going when AH gave a lecture to Bournemouth Natural Science Society in early August. Despite the attractive nature of the cards they have not sold well for some reason and there seems little point in having a reprint. The walks leaflets are going slowly and it has been difficult to persuade outlets such as TICs to stock the leaflet packs. However, a recent effort by AH actually visiting outlets rather than communicating by email has brought results. Leaflets have been taken by Lyme Regis T.I.C., Charmouth Heritage Centre, Lulworth Heritage Centre and Durlston Castle. Ferrybridge Visitor Centre said there was a problem because they didn't have a barcode! Members suggested possible outlets and AH will follow these up but it may be too late for this year as the holiday season is now more or less over. Potential outlets

mentioned were Portland Lighthouse, Nothe Fort (Weymouth), Portland Museum and the Etches Museum at Kimmeiridge. There are few large public events that DIGS can be represented at now the DGAG Fossil and Mineral Fair has ceased to occur. The Festival of Geology run by the GA at UCL in London is difficult to access with information boards and material to sell because of parking restrictions. The OUGS Symposium taking place 10-12 August 2018 is one possible venue as it is taking place at Worcester University.

**6. Website revamp.** Members were positive about the recently revamped website and were appreciative of Gillian Gunner's work carried out without prompting and not in expectation of remuneration. AH has to sort out the minutes of past meetings which have not been updated recently. Gillian asked that members should make comments on the site which might persuade other members of the public to give their views. One problem the group has is that we don't know who visits the sites in the field.

#### **7. Future events:**

- (a) Fossil hunting session at Lyme Regis on 24<sup>th</sup> September, Sam Scriven with Wessex OUGS.
- (b) Somerset RIGS meeting 11<sup>th</sup> October. Information will be circulated on this (done 13.9.17)
- (c) Rocktober Mendip Rocks 30.9.17 to 28.10.17. See <http://www.mendiphillsaonb.org.uk/our-work/mendip-rocks/>
- (d) DGAG Durlston FT 7<sup>th</sup> October
- (e) DIGS / Wessex OUGS joint event at Upwey Cutting and various former quarries in Upwey.

#### **8. Sites and conservation:**

- (a) **Wanderwell**, RS gave a summary of activity at the site. Tree clearance had taken place by the end of June. This was followed by vegetation clearance through the former quarry to allow ease of access. A conservation session occurred on 18<sup>th</sup> August to start clearing the rock face at the southern end of the quarry where beds of limestone and clay can be seen. The limestone is fossiliferous with shell fragments and some larger pieces especially bivalves. A yellow sandy layer was also seen which has been seen at other Forest Marble localities. A session on 8<sup>th</sup> September had to be abandoned because of poor weather and a further session is planned for September 15<sup>th</sup>. Once the southern end is clear there is further opportunity to develop the eastern face. The DCC County Botanist lives in Bridport and has taken an interest in the site identifying some rare and threatened species. The reserve has woodland and grassland species.
- (b) **Todber**, The Todber day on 11<sup>th</sup> August was a great success and resulted in good clearance at Church Lane which was much appreciated by the owner James Clarke. The afternoon at Birds Quarry was also very successful although little could be achieved in the extension area due to lack of time.
- (c) **Holt Farm** was postponed due to lack of members being available.
- (d) **Bookham Farm** was visited by JC and he reported on the condition of the site. The signage is in place and he cleared some of the vegetation that was obscuring the rock face.
- (e) **New activity**: Holt Farm has been reorganised for Monday 9<sup>th</sup> October starting at 10.30. Hardown Hill session is planned for either 20<sup>th</sup> or 27<sup>th</sup> October, RS to circulate final details. Westhill Chalk Pit at Corfe 21<sup>st</sup> November also 10.30. JC to visit Tarrant Rawston to see if work needs doing.
- (f) **Goat Island**. Geoff Rowland reported that conservation work with members of Jurassic Coast Trust was taking place – check with GR for dates.

**9 Any other business:** (a) AH reported on recent visit to the exhibition of ichthyosaurs, Sea Dragons of Street. Some excellent specimens were on view 7<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> September at the Grange,

Street. These were collected in Victorian times from Lower Lias Quarries in the area around Street and are owned by the Alfred Gillett Trust.

- (b) Comment was made about lack of website information on the DIGS site signs, the DWT phone number is given for access to information so unless we can get some weatherproof stick on labels to add to the signs not much can be done about this.
- (c) Dorset County Museum lectures start on 13<sup>th</sup> September but there is little information about later events. Sam Rose will be talking about the Jurassic Coast Trust.
- (d) **Date of next meeting:** Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> November?

Alan Holiday 14.9.17