

Minutes of DIGS Meeting, Tuesday 14th November 2017

Dorset Wildlife Trust, Brooklands Farm, Forston

Present: Pete Bath, Andy Bradley, Jeremy Cranmer, Ian Hacker, Alan Holiday, Geoff Pettifer, Paul Ramsden, Geoff Rowland, Pat Snelgrove, Roger Snelgrove, Kelvin Huff, Malcolm Wright.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Rhiannon Rogers, Jo Thomas, Giles Watts, Charles Jackson, Niall Simpson, Rhiannon Rogers.
2. **Minutes** of last meeting and matters arising: The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record with minor typo corrections.
 - a) Roger reported on recent activity at Wanderwell involving widening and deepening the eastern exposure to reveal the shell-bank and Forest Marble. Dorset Countryside had reacted positively.
 - b) The long-awaited press release on the opening ceremony in March 2017 finally appeared in October!
 - c) Roger has now started to clear the quarry floor as part of the winter maintenance programme.
3. **Financial update:** Rhiannon provided the following figures: the Nationwide account balance stands at £3356.29 (£3846.20) and the Lloyds account balance stands at £834.65 (£131.15). The increase in the latter balance was accounted for by publications sales and a transfer of funds. The figures in brackets are for September 2017.
4. **Recent happenings:**
 - a) A visit by EDHT to the Fleet on 15.9.17 led by Alan found some nice fossils.
 - b) Alan led a Rockwatch Field-trip to Lea Quarry, Wenlock on 30.9.17, with good finds of brachiopods and corals.
 - c) Alan led a Year 2 group from Frome Valley School at Ringstead on 3.10.17 but there were few fossils, only *Deltoideum delta*.
 - d) An American group visited Dorset between 4-5.10.17. After an a.m. visit to Stonehenge (!) Alan took them round the Etches Collection and Kimmeridge Bay. This was followed up the next day with a visit to Lyme Regis with Richard Edmonds.
 - e) There was a DGAG field-trip to Durlston Bay on 7.10.17 with gloomy conditions but great geology.
 - f) Geoff R. and Alan attended a Somerset RIGS meeting on 11.10.17 with 30 attendees. The group are re-visiting the 200+ sites identified by Hugh Prudden with the aim of surveying and recording the geology before contacting land-owners. A visit to Tedbury Camp in the afternoon found the site in a poor state. Conservation work is needed to remove overgrowth and graffiti. Geoff R. commented that he had set up Facebook pages for the group with little response. The group seem to be rather exclusive and over-cautious in responding to suggestions (to put it delicately!)

g) Pete reported on a recent visit to Frogden Quarry and obtained a good specimen and photos. He subsequently contacted the quarry manager, who has made sections of the Sherborne Building Stone, revealed as a quartzose form of Inferior Oolite. The manager is open to a visit by DIGS members to Frogden and other quarries.
Pete agreed to arrange a visit date.

5. **Site condition spreadsheet.** Paul is compiling this to provide a record of when work is done, site condition, etc. It was agreed this could be a shared file with multiple editors and stored on Google Drive or Dropbox.
6. **Ridgeway Project development: ideas.** Alan reported that Jo was keen to develop a geological background for this, but so far nothing has happened, mainly due to a lack of funding. Alan suggested DIGS might get involved and make a contribution as we have a number of LGS within the Ridgeway. Geoff R. has already been involved with his outdoor and digital work. It was suggested that material could be added to the DIGS website under a 'Ridgeway Project' Heading. **Alan will consult further with Jo.** The website 'Land of Bone and Stone' was noted.
<http://www.dorsetaonb.org.uk/south-dorset-ridgeway-partnership>
7. **Rodwell Cutting development.** Geoff P. had previously circulated a document to the group and reported back on his site visits and passed round rock samples. An initial difficulty was finding good exposures of the sequence, which youngs towards Portland. The exposure identified shows a sequence through the Corallian and is c.100m long and up to 10m deep. The intention is to adopt the section as an LGS. It was noted that p.11 of Alan's Weymouth Town Trail also contains information that could be incorporated into any leaflet or display board produced. **Alan and Geoff P. are to meet with Tara Williams of WPBC and report back on how we might proceed.**
8. **Update on Biddulph Grange Project.** Alan is still trying to source specimens for the geological gallery. A specimen of Wenlock Limestone has proved difficult to locate since no working quarries are extant. Keele University has produced a list of various sites/ rock types, including Comley Quarry for example. The latter is where Britain's earliest trilobites were discovered but is currently overgrown and has SSSI status (personal visit 2016)
<https://necmsi.esdm.co.uk/PDFsForWeb/Citation/1003231.pdf>
9. **Sites and conservation:**

- a) Holt Farm. (9.10.17). A good session with more of the rock face being exposed.
- b) DIGS Wessex OUGS event 15th October. Cancelled owing to low numbers but a conservation session is still needed here.
- c) Hardown Hill.
- d) Roger reported there had been three successful sessions with the cooperation of the National Trust. These resulted in improved access and a considerable area cleared on both eastern and western exposures, including lower down the succession. The area around the marker and information board was also cleared.
<https://dorsetrigs.org.uk/southwestrigs/hardownhill/>

10. **Future Events:**

- a) Fleet Study Group Meeting 13.30p.m., 24.11.17 Chesil Beach Centre.
Alan will attend and report back.
- b) DGAG Annual Dinner 18.11.17 at Wessex Royale Dorchester.
- c) West Hill Chalk Pit conservation 21.11.17. Could also include Crack Lane if finished early.
- d) Geology Trust meeting Brockworth Gloucs. 4.12.17. We are now associated to the Geology Trust (has it replaced GeoConservation UK?) **Alan will attend and report back.**
- e) DGAG Christmas Workshop. Broadmayne Village Hall 10.00-16.00 9.12.17.
- f) Jurassic Coast Trust Launch. 17.00-19.00 13.12.17. Alan and Geoff R. will attend.
- g) DGAG AGM Broadmayne Village Hall 14.00, 13.1.18. Geological talks on wales to follow.
- h) Wessex OUGS AGM D'Urberville Centre, Wool. 10.00-16.00, 27.1.18

11. **Conservation future events:**

- a) PB suggested a session at Spring Lane, Longburton (Forest Marble) **and will negotiate a date.**
- b) Toller Fratrum. A recce visit is advised here but no further conservation sessions are planned until the next meeting is convened.

12. **Any other business:**

- a) Black Down, Hardy Monument construction activity. Malcolm had flagged this up and we need to monitor it. This site might be a good location for a DIGS display on structure and scenery as it gives such a good overview of the area.
- b) The Dorset Building Stone website {not strictly DIGS but a splinter (or clast??) group} was mentioned as a project that might attract further contributors with expertise and also funding. The *modus operandi* for adding material to the site is working well and doesn't need adjustment.

13. **Date of next meeting:** Tuesday 16th January at 7.00 p.m.
Meeting closed 8.45 p.m.