

The Earth Science Education Forum (England and Wales)

Minutes of the twenty-eighth meeting

Held at the Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining, 1 Carlton House Terrace, London, at 1.30 p.m. on Tuesday 17 June 2008.

Present: Allan Rogers, Chairman
Chris King, Co-Chairman (and Earth Science Education Unit)
David Bailey, Secretary (and British Geological Survey)
Cally Oldershaw, ESEF(EW) Executive Officer (and Association for Science Education)
Martyn Bradley (Geology Trusts and UKRIGS)
Susan Brown (Geologists' Association and Rockwatch)
Chris Carlon (Anglo American)
Derren Cresswell (Mineral Industries Research Organisation)
Sylvia Knight (Royal Meteorological Society)
Ian Mercer (Gemmological Association)
Annette Thomas (Oil & Gas Academy)
Peter Warren
Toby White (Institute of Materials, Minerals & Mining)
Dawn Windley (Earth Science Teachers' Association)
G Woodrow (Institute of Materials, Minerals & Mining and Ecton Mine Trust)

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from representatives of the following organisations: Committee of the Heads of University Geoscience Departments; the Geographical Association; Geological Society of London; the Learning, Teaching and Skills Network – Geography Environmental and Earth Sciences; the National Stone Centre; the Open University; Royal Geographical Society with Institute of British Geographers. Reports from the Open University and National Stone Centre were tabled.

2 Chairman's introduction

Chairman welcomed everyone. He reminded members that the meeting would be followed by presentations about the Oil and Gas Academy and the Earth Science Education Unit. Members were also invited to attend the meeting of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Earth Science on Carbon Capture and Storage technologies later that evening. A letter would be circulated requesting member organisations to make a subscription to the Forum, but organisations would not be excluded if they could not afford to subscribe.

Action: C Oldershaw

3 Minutes of the twenty-seventh meeting, 17 June 2008

The minutes of the twenty-seventh meeting were accepted as a true record. A copy would be placed on the ESEF(EW) website.

Action: D Bailey

4 Matters arising

[Numbers in square brackets are paragraph numbers from the minutes of the previous meeting.]

- 4.1 [4.1] Geological Society 'first destinations' survey: The survey had been carried out but was not yet available on the Geological Society website.
- 4.2 [4.3] ESEF(EW) Conference: Chairman had not yet had an opportunity to speak to the officers of the Houses of Parliament. Action outstanding. **Action: Chairman**
- 4.3 [4.4] WJEC GCSE Geology: The new specification had been drafted and was being taken forward to the QCA.
- 4.4 [4.5] Conference Study Group: Taken as Agenda Item 10.

4.5 [4.7] *Threat to funding for University Adult 'Open Studies'*: M Bradley reported that a number of universities had indicated that they would continue to fund Open Studies for a further year. Chairman said he had written to the Minister but had not received a reply to date; he had also contacted NIACE.

4.6 [5] *Forum members' subscriptions*: As noted above, a letter was being drafted.

5 **Finance report**: Nothing to report.

6 **Executive Officer's report**: Nothing to report.

7 **ESEF(EW) website (www.esef.org.uk)**: Nothing to report.

8 **SESEF update**

C King reported that the SESEF Development Officer had left. The post would be advertised soon.

9 **Government policy issues**: Nothing to report.

10 **Annual Conference**

Chairman advised that he would be speaking to some of the officers of the All-Party Group on this matter after the meeting. **Action: Chairman**

11 **Potential collaborative projects**: Nothing to report.

12 **AOB**

12.1 C King explained that a proposal had been made that members of the Forum should make presentations to the group. It was hoped that this would encourage members to attend future meetings. He presented a short list of suggested topics (see Annex A). I Mercer suggested that several presentations on a common theme could be made at each meeting to encourage cross-fertilisation of ideas. Chairman suggested that the next meeting should include presentations on interactions between industry and schools and asked T White to convene short presentations from Anglo American, BGS, and IOM3. Chairman asked members to consider the suggestions in C King's paper and suggest topics that might be combined. After some discussion, Chairman asked S Brown to convene presentations on outreach in earth science education and geology in adult education with contributions from M Bradley and D Windley. Chairman invited all members to submit other ideas for discussion. **Actions: T White; S Brown, Forum members**

12.2 M Bradley said that the Geology Trusts held workshops around the country but a lack of funding was a barrier to geoconservation efforts. He would like the Forum to contact Phil Hope MP for Corby and Minister for the Third Sector. Mr Hope has a background in geology and geography at A-level. Chairman asked C Oldershaw to liaise with M Bradley and to draft a letter to Mr Hope to bring the funding issue to his attention. He said it might also be appropriate to send a letter to the Welsh Assembly for funding in Wales.

12.3 The reports from the Open University and National Stone Centre were noted (see Annex B).

13 **Date of the next meeting**

The next meeting was scheduled for **1.30 p.m. on Tuesday 14 October 2008** at IOM3 in 1 Carlton House Terrace.

David Bailey, 24 September 2008

Provisional Plans for Future ESEF Meetings, March 2008

Each meeting will have a particular focus, with input from ‘experts’ who may well be members of the Forum, or others invited for the purpose.

Approximate timings might be as follows, but would be flexible depending on numbers of speakers, etc.

1.30 – 2.15	General Meeting
2.15 – 3.00	Input on focus for meeting
3.00 – 3.45+	Discussion on focussed input

Suggestions for future focussed input – with suggested speakers (that seek to cover most of the Forum membership)

- The new Oil and Gas Academy and the Earth Science Education Unit
- Earth science in the school geography curriculum – with input from Geog Assoc, RGS, Royal Met Soc, ESTA
- Outreach Earth science education – with input from Geol Assoc (Rockwatch), UK RIGS, Natural History Museum, Geological Curators Group
- The school science curriculum and Earth Science – with input from ASE, Royal Society of Chemistry, Institute of Physics, (Institute of Biology?), ESEU
- Geoscience workforce and talent issues (geoscience employment, branding for the mining industry, sourcing and outreach to schools and universities, etc.) – with input from Anglo American
- University geoscience departments/school liaison – with input from CHUGD members, including Bristol, Leeds, Derby, etc.
- Geology in adult education – with input from Martyn Bradley
- Geological industry interaction with schools – with input from IMMM, BGS, MIRO
- Geoconservation – with input from UK RIGS
- Bringing new geoscience into the curriculum – with input from Royal Met Soc, Challenger Soc, Groundwater Forum, Gemmology Soc
- Training geology teachers – with input from Keele, ESEU

Chris King, Vice-Chair

I'm afraid I must send apologies for this meeting as I will not be able to get to it. It is a while since I gave the group an update on OU activities. There have been many changes since I last did, one being that we are developing a Foundation Degree in Environmental Science and the other that we are developing an MSc in Earth Sciences; these complement our various certificates, Diplomas and BSc (Hons.) in Geoscience. Both initiatives will be of interest to the ESEF, so I would be grateful if you would pass this information on at the meeting.

Many thanks,

Hazel Rymer

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DERBYSHIRE GETS GO-AHEAD FOR £1M ECO CENTRE

The country's first adult community education eco centre will be built in Derbyshire after the county council was awarded almost £1m.

Featuring the latest energy-saving technology, the building will be a national and regional showcase for sustainable development.

It will be at the heart of the county's drive to combat climate change offering courses in eco-friendly construction skills, renewable energy sources and arts and the environment.

Traditional countryside crafts will also continue to be preserved with courses in dry stone walling, stone masonry, lime rendering, slate roofing and woodland crafts.

The Education for Sustainable Development Centre will be built on land owned by the nationally-acclaimed National Stone Centre near Wirksworth.

With its state-of-the-art design, it will feature a range of sustainable building systems including a green roof, a water harvesting system, thermal heat pumps and solar panels.

Courses will be run by the county council's adult community education service, College of the Peak, which became part of the service in 2007 and the National Stone Centre, which will share the facilities.

Councillor Bob Janes, the county council's cabinet member for cultural services, said the new building would be a shining example of the county council's commitment to become a low-carbon county by 2015.

He said: "We hope it will become a centre of excellence in keeping rural arts and crafts alive and in teaching adults and young people about sustainable technology and how to become more environmentally-friendly.

"The centre will be the first of its kind in the country and we also hope it will be a showcase for new sustainable building techniques and the use of technology to reduce carbon emissions in addition to developing new adult community education courses in environment and the arts."

The total cost of building the education centre will be £1.1m. The council has been awarded £901,000 from the Learning and Skills Council with the remainder being sought in grants.

Work is expected to start later this year with the centre open to learners of all ages by winter 2009/10.

It will feature a large workshop / studio, a meeting and exhibition area with IT facilities and a covered outdoors area to enable crafts and rural arts to take place in all weathers .

Councillor Janes added: “This centre will provide us with opportunities to expand the number and types of courses we have available and for the first time will provide us with all-weather and indoor learning facilities.”

Note to News Editors: An artist’s impression of the new centre is available by e-mail from the press office

15 May 2008

Media enquiries only to Catriona Cummings on 01629 585271