



Earth Science Education Forum (England and Wales) **Minutes of the 65th meeting**

Held in the Arthur Holmes Room, Geological Society, London. 1.00 pm, 12 December 2017.

Present

Annette Thomas (Project Consultant at Subsea UK)
Cally Oldershaw
Chris King (Earth Science Education Unit)
Emma Bernard (GCG & NHM)
John Stevenson (BGS)
Judi Lakin (GSL)
Nikki Edwards (ESTA)
Pete Loader (Geological Society)
Susan Brown (Rockwatch)
Tom Hose (GeoConservationUK)

Apologies for absence:

Alan Holiday
Annette Shelford (NHM Learning Team/Real World Science)
David Brook (London Geodiversity Partnership)
Duncan Hawley (Geographical Association)
Maggie Williams (Liverpool Uni.)
Matthew Parkes (GCG)
Steve Brace (RGS & IBG)

1. Talk /discussion

Judi Lakin (GSL) - 'Education and outreach at the Geological Society'

2 Minutes of the 64th meeting, 10 October 2017

The minutes of the 64th meeting were accepted as a true record. A copy has been placed on the ESEF website. **Action: JS**

3 Matters arising

3.1 *National Curriculum (KS3 & 4 and A level)*
GCSE- and A-level geology

GCSE and A-level geology uptake shows a continued decline. JL reported that the 'first destination survey of recent graduates' wouldn't be run again in the short term. However, the Geological Society would look at relevant data from UKAS and the Higher Education Statistics Agency ([HESA](http://www.hesa.gov.uk)).

[Progress 8](#) was discussed. Progress 8 is the government's new way of measuring how well students make progress at secondary school. In the past, the main measure of school performance has been the percentage of pupils who got five or more A* to C grades in their GCSEs, including maths and English. Progress 8 uses a bucket system to weight certain key subjects. Maths and English are double weighted to account for their importance overall. The 'second bucket' includes science, computer science, history, geography and languages. Currently, geology is not counted as a science in this 'second bucket' because it is not recognized as a science within the English Baccalaureate ([EBacc](#)) performance measure.

[Progress 8: An Explanation - NAHT](#)

The group discussed how best to get geology included, even though the route to achieve this was not clear, but it was agreed that schools would be more likely to launch a new geology GCSE programme if they knew it contributed to Progress 8 and EBacc scores.

Action CK to send an email to Steven Stanton, Policy Adviser at Department for Education, asking who would be the best person to contact to lobby for this change.

3.2 *Training for secondary geology teachers:*

The Keele Summer School will run again in 2018. The Summer school is planning to have 10 bursaries places. BESER will underwrite eight places so that the course can go ahead with advertisements in Geographical Association's Teaching Geography and ASE Education in Science magazine.

3.3 *Geology for Non-Geologists training 'Geolab':*

The next Geolab event is planned for spring 2018 at Martley, Worcestershire.

3.4 *National Geology Database*

JS reported that his actions from the previous meetings had been actioned and he had submitted articles to the Geologists' Association, GCUK, Teaching Earth Sciences and Down to Earth magazines.

EB suggested that NATSCA and GCG blogs would likely accept an article about the map. The Museum Association could also be a good contact. FENSCORE database could also be a source for new additions to the map.

3.5 *Geological poster map of UK and Ireland*

JS sent 'wishlist' document to ESTA chair, Jo Conway, with a suggestion to request ESTA members to provide suggestions for downloadable supporting resources in the next edition of Teaching Earth Sciences.

3.6 *Mobilising the geoscience community' project.*

CK reported that the name and the date for the initiative had been provisionally agreed with ESTA council at a recent meeting – as GeoWeek, 5-13 May, 2018 - but the ESEF should first discuss comments forwarded by Duncan Hawley (Geographical Association). The main concern from the GA PSIG was that the provisional date clashed with school examination activity. Discussions concluded that ultimately that some dates wouldn't suit everyone and the proposed date conveniently coincided with the Lyme Regis Fossil Festival. For launch of GeoWeek, 5-13 May was agreed as the date for 2018.

CK drafted the letter (attached at Annex A) that was sent out to ESEF members and survey respondents on 14 December 2017.

PL commented that he had successfully created several EarthCaches and despite a few teething problems, with permissions to use private buildings e.g. walls etc. he felt quite proficient and creating further Earthcaches. PL had successfully used [C.GEO](#) a free Android GeoCaching application. He also queried whether the ESEF/GeoWeek made an approach to the Natural Trust to find out whether they would be interested in becoming a 'GeoWeek/Earthcache partner'?

3.7 *BESER 'Subject leadership development programme'*

AT gave the following progress update.

Agreement was gained from ESTA Council to start scoping a “unifying “ project i.e. to protect and grow geology and Earth science whilst also restructuring ESTA with the aim of getting more people teaching geology and more people studying geology. Additionally, there was a green light for three projects that will contribute to the overarching ambition.

The three projects proposed are:

- GCSE hub model, piloted using a sixth-form college (City of Stoke). Students from surrounding schools wishing to study geology, not available at their own school, could study at such hubs.
- support for museums/Geoparks etc and the wider Earth science community
- higher education outreach and student membership, where universities could become educational hubs.

4 **Finance report**

Nothing to report.

5 **ESEF website (www.esef.org.uk)**

JS reported that the website is up to date.

6 **Potential collaborative projects**

EB reported that the new GCG online, pdf advice note for third year university students; 'what to do with your collections' was in draft; publishing date Autumn 2018.

TH is writing two CPD courses on 'plain English' geoeducation.

7 **ESEF Achievements**

ESEF GeoWeek questionnaire returned 137 responses, which showed a high level of engagement and positivity for the initiative.

8 **AOB**

Geology walking guides/maps

JS Reported positive email conversations between BGS and the Geologists' Association, re ESRI Story Maps as geological guide 'templates', which had left the action with JS to make further enquiries to ESRI regarding ARCGIS online licenses for charitable organisations such as the GA.

Updates from the Geographical Association and Royal Geographical Association are included below as an Annex to these minutes.

9 Dates of future meetings

17 April 2018 Speaker Matthew Parkes, GCG; ‘Geological education in museums’

5 June 2018 Speaker TBC

Annex A

Royal Geographical Society Update – Steve Brace

1. New Geography Scholarships programme – geography is now a shortage subject for school recruitment. Last year with DfE support we recruited 111 Geography Scholars who are currently doing their teacher training – a good number came from an earth science background (both academic and professional) and this is a qualifying criteria for the scheme. We are currently recruiting for the next cohort of scholars (who will start their teacher training in September 2018) and full details are available on www.rgs.org/scholarships

The Scholarships provide an enhanced training bursary, lots of additional training and support and Fellowship of the Society. It doesn't matter if applicants are current 3rd years or career switchers

2. Geography continues to grow in terms of candidate numbers at GCSE and A level with the highest numbers for 15 years in this summer's examinations.
3. Dr Rita Gardner will leave the Society (after 22 years as Director) in March – application process for her successor is underway and we hope to have a new Director identified by end of the year

Geographical Association Update – Duncan Hawley

As below (pdf document)