

# Berkshire Geoconservation Group

## Programme 2023 - 2024



### Sunday 10 September 2023

10:30am Building Stones walk around Ashbury led by Bill Horsfield and Lesley Dunlop

Meeting point - Outside the Rose and Crown pub in Ashbury, SN6 8NA, OS: SU 2648 8505  
Lat:Long: 51.5637218, -1.6193571;

A joint walk with Oxfordshire Geology Trust which will look at building stones used in this beautiful village, situated at the base of the chalk escarpment. A locally-quarried hard chalk stone has been used in several of the older cottages, together with rough sarsen stones and brick. It features in the Diversity in Stone leaflet.

### Saturday 7 October 2023

10:30am Wargrave Chalk Pit & St Mary's Church led by Lesley Dunlop

Meeting point - The car park by Wargrave Chalk Pit OS: SU 78806 78304; Lat,Long: 51.4981945, -0.8661139; **Note: Approach the car park from the northern end of Braybrooke Road. The southern end between the chalk pit access road and High Street is private.**

This event celebrates [International Geodiversity Day](#). The walk starts at the Wargrave Chalk Pit ([LGS 18](#)). The chalk in this quarry is amongst the youngest preserved in Berkshire, the topmost layer having been removed by erosion. It represents the only accessible exposure of Upper Chalk in the area and has some distinctive flint layers. Fossils such as echinoids, corals, bivalves (oysters) and crinoids have been collected from the site, although we are unlikely to find any on this walk.

After the quarry, we'll walk to St Mary's Church, which has a very interesting brick tower dating from 1635. The Church is first mentioned in a document of 1121, and the North Door is the main surviving feature of this period. Apart from the tower and north wall, most of the church was destroyed by fire in 1914 and hence most of the present building dates from its rebuilding in the 20th century.

### Saturday 4 November 2023

**Until Sunday 5 November 2023**

10:30am Festival of Geology - UCL, Gower St, London WC1E 6BT

Entrance free, BGG Stand on the Saturday. Field events on the Sunday. See [Geologists' Association Festival](#) for details.

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### **Saturday 11 November 2023**

**10:30am Nettlebed: Puddingstones, bricks, clay and gravels led by Lesley Dunlop and Bill Horsfield**

Meeting point - The Nettlebed bus shelter on the A4130, OS: SU 7017 8679; Lat:Long: 51.5756213, -0.9888077 Parking is available nearby.

A joint meeting with Oxfordshire Geology Trust. A walk around Nettlebed Common looking at remnants of beds overlying the chalk.

### **Saturday 25 November 2023**

**10:30am Building Stones of Slough**

Meeting point - Slough Station Entrance (south side) OS: SU 9783 8016; Lat,Long: 51.5119170, -0.5916101;

A walk looking at some of the building stones of Slough led by Terry Hackwill and Roger York.

### **Saturday 13 January 2024**

**10:30am Building Stones of Reading**

Meeting point - Queen Victoria Statue in Town Hall square. OS: SU 7164 7356; Lat,Long: 51.4565595, -0.9701736;

Ross Garden will lead a walk circling Reading town centre examining the building stones.

### **Saturday 10 February 2024**

**10:30am Walk around East Ilsley**

Meeting point - By the pond in East Ilsley village GR: SU 4937 8109; Lat Long: 51.5266001, -1.2896821. There is ample parking around the central triangle in East Ilsley bordered by Church Hill, Broad Street and High Street.

Lesley Dunlop will lead this walk of just over 3 miles which will take in the church at East Ilsley. We will walk up onto the Downs, giving a good view over the surrounding countryside. We will return into the village looking at some of the buildings on the way. The footpaths are good, although may be muddy at this time of year.

Geologically we are on Chalk all of the way but will see many features including dry valleys etc. East Ilsley itself had a whitening works which we will go past on our return to the village.

On the way we will look at St Mary's Church which has its origins in the 13th Century with 19th Century additions. The churchyard is also very interesting. The village itself has hosted sheep and cattle fairs historically and we will see the ancient racetrack on the

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hillside.

An old rhyme about the village goes as follows:

"Ilsley remote amid the Berkshire Downs,  
Claims three distinctions o'er her sister towns,  
Far famed for sheep and wool, tho' not for spinners,  
For sportsmen, doctors, publicans and sinners."

### **Saturday 9 March 2024**

#### **10:30am Walk around Wellhouse, near Hermitage led by Clive Edmonds**

Meeting point - Car Park in woods on south side of Marlston Road, close to junction with Wellhouse Lane. SU 51641 72354; Lat,Long: 51.4478301, -1.2582600  
W3W:///sized.inferior.certainty ; Nearest post code:RG18 9UD

The walk, circa 3 miles in length, will be led by Clive Edmonds to look at the local landforms developed upon the Lambeth Group deposits and especially at the margins crossing onto the Seaford Chalk Formation. Local hills capped by London Clay drain down onto the Lambeth Group deposits and the streams/drainage often sink into the surface at the interface to produce swallow holes and sinkholes. The landscape exhibits karstic weathering influences and demonstrates the geomorphological development through geological time. The walk starts and finishes along short stretches of road but will mostly follow paths and tracks. Given the weather in recent times expect sections of paths to be wet and muddy in places.

### **Sunday 7 April 2024**

#### **10:30am Coombe Gibbet Down and Bungum Lane, Inkpen**

Meeting point - Coombe Gibbet car park SU 3701 6204 (51.3562448,-1.4698552)

Led by Roger York this walk is about 4 miles taking about 4 hours. We will start on Chalk at Gibbet Down and progress down through the Chalk strata, ending up in the Greensand. There will be stratigraphy, lithology and geomorphology to be examined and possibly fossils to find.

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### **Saturday 11 May 2024**

10:30am Lambourn Valley, including the Fognam area and a field of sarsens.  
Led by Lesley Dunlop

Details to follow

### **Saturday 8 June 2024**

10:30am Emmer Green and Clayfield Copse. Led by Ross Garden.

Meeting point - Clayfield Copse Car Park, Caversham Park Road GR: SU 7258 7678;  
Lat:Long: 51.4853346, -0.9560866; W3W: ///using.sparks.echo

Clayfield Copse in Emmer Green is the only outcrop of London Clay north of the Thames in Berkshire. It is surrounded by clays and sands of the Reading Beds (Lambeth Group) which unconformably overlie the Upper Chalk (Seaford Chalk Formation). The outlier occurs in a N-S oriented down faulted graben adjacent to a horst of uplifted chalk which separates Emmer Green from the hamlet of Dunsden Green to the east.

Exposure is poor, but by looking at drainage and spring lines we can approximate the formation boundaries. The walk will take us across the Clayfield Copse graben and the Littlestead Green horst and down to the Henley Road where fractured Seaford Chalk is well exposed in a roadside quarry. The return will take us through Dunsden Green where we will see All Saints parish church where Wilfred Owen was a lay assistant to the parish priest before the First World War. The church is made from Reading Beds bricks and we will walk up and through the former Emmer Green (Rose Hill) brickworks and past the 89th Reading Scout Troop hut which is the site to one of the entrances of a chalk mine used for brick making.

The objective of the walk is to discuss the style and controls on faulting in this part of Berkshire and the impact on the economic geology.

### **Wednesday 12 June 2024**

7:00pm Annual General Meeting

Meeting point - Woolhampton Village Hall, Bath Rd, Woolhampton RG7 5RE,  
SU 5708 6681

Details to follow

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### **Saturday 20 July 2024**

#### **10:30am Hermitage area walk led by Clive Edmonds**

Meeting point - Hermitage Village Hall car park GR: SU 51121 73992; Lat/Long: 51.4626028, -1.2655170; w3w: ///breathed.bearings.nametag; Nearest post code RG18 9WL

Using footpaths we will visit the site of an historical chalk mine that caused construction problems for the M4, recent residential development problems in the village, then venture to Oare with a chance to view building stones and grave yard at St Bartholomew's Church, before crossing up onto Oare Common (formed of gravel capped Palaeogene sequence above Chalk) and going downhill again towards Doctor's Lane to view a series of sinkholes and return via a quiet lane to Oare viewing an old brickworks site on the way with its former shaft entry chalk mine as well. Finally returning to the start – a walk of about 3 miles or so.