



Progress in implementing the London Geodiversity Action Plan 2019-2024 as at April 2022

This report details progress during the year 2021-22 made by the London Geodiversity Partnership in implementing the London geodiversity Action Plan 2019-2024, including the activities of individual Partners. Note that site activities and public walks have been severely limited due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

Objective 1: Increase our understanding of the geodiversity of London

- 1.1 No new RIGS or LIGS have been assessed in the period although proposals to investigate potential sites for the Shepperton Gravel in Hillingdon have been proposed as well as a possible multi-strata site at Gunnersbury Park, and our PS of Ingrebourne Valley.
- 1.3 Several new potential SGIs were recognised in 2020-21: two sarsen sites, one in Harrow and the other in Ruislip have been written up; the Whetstone (sarsen) and Whetstone Griffin Pub (variety of building stones) have also been identified; possible inclusion of ferricrete nodules in the Great Barn at Harmondsworth; the Jurassic tree stump in Finsbury Park has been identified – the area is being redeveloped and there is the possibility of an explanation board, with maybe a second board about the marine fossils visible in the clambering rocks beneath. There may be a further site or two emerging from recent work in the Harrow and Hillingdon area.

Objective 2: Manage and conserve the geodiversity of London

- 2.1 The Site Assessments for all 71 GLA sites identified have been revised and added to LGP website under Publications: **Revised Site Assessments for London's Foundations (2021)** *These will be a major part of an updated London's Foundations Supplementary Planning Guidance for the London Plan (adopted March 2021).*
One RIGS was deleted because it is no longer accessible or visible from a distance.

Appropriate local authority and land owners still need to be notified about the revisions/additions.

LGP have been involved with a project to reinstate the Branch Hill Pond, made famous by paintings of John Constable, as part of a scheme to reduce flooding in the area and to provide an added ecological niche on that corner of Hampstead Heath. An exhibition was held in Burgh House in Hampstead about the project, in which the LGP were heavily involved. Dee McLean provided the Artwork for 14 panels. The exhibition ran for a week and was well attended, giving opportunities to talk to the residents about the underlying geology (the panels are on the LGP website, see: [Information Boards and Leaflets – London Geodiversity Partnership \(londongeopartnership.org.uk\)](https://londongeopartnership.org.uk)).

A questionnaire invited a show of interest for the proposed Geotrail along the route of the Westbourne and 103 visitors (89%) volunteered an interest. We opted to wait until the weather

was warmer to fix a date and will run the walk during summer 2022 with a possible repeat for the GA Festival of Geology in early November.

As an offshoot to the exhibition Diana Clements was invited to lead a Geowalk on Hampstead Heath for the Heath and Hampstead Society. The date for that is fixed for 3 July 2022.

LGP has worked with the Parks Development Officer at Springfield Park (GLA 43) to reinstate geological interpretation with the aid of their HLF grant. Details for a new board, the *Springfield Park Geotrail* booklet have been completed, which will be printed and available in the park. LGP has requested to add the geotrail to LGP website. There will be a launch of the newly-refurbished park on the Queen's Jubilee Bank Holiday on 2 June 2022 and LGP will have a stand and feature London Clay and its fossils as well as having an activity. We will lead the geotrail around the park.

LGP has worked with the Estates Manager at Lesnes Abbey Woods on a leaflet describing the geology and palaeontology. To this end, following a talk delivered in March 2020, the proposed public geotrail was finally delivered in July 2021. The leaflet is completed by LGP but has stalled with Abbey Wood/Bexley.

Beckenham Place Park has had major investment which included installation of a geological interpretation board. LGP assisted with information for the board.

2.2 The following SSSIs, RIGS or LIGS were visited:

GLA 1 Abbey Wood SSSI	GLA 46 Summerhouse Lane RIGS
GLA 3 Beckenham Place Park RIGS	GLA 52 Bromley Palace Park
GLA 8 Dog Rocks RIGS	GLA 61 Spring Park and Three Halfpenny Wood RIGS
GLA 14 Gilbert's Pit SSSI	GLA 62 Sipson Lane Gravel Pit RIGS
GLA 22 Keston Common RIGS	GLA 64 Waterlow Park LIGS
GLA 26 Riddlesdown RIGS	GLA 65 Old Gravel Pit (Vanbrugh Pits) LIGS
GLA 32 High Elms Dene Hole LIGS	GLA 67 Summerhouse Lane LIGS
GLA 34 Harefield Pit SSSI	GLA 71 Hollow Ponds LIGS
GLA 38 Chalky Dell RIGS	GLA 74 Springwell Farm LIGS
GLA 44 Highgate Wood/Queens Wood RIGS	
GLA 45 Bedfords Park RIGS	

Natural England (NE) drew up a Management Plan for Harefield (GLA 34) in 2019 and was visited by them and LGP. Geoconservation work was approved but a further visit by NE will be required three months before work is undertaken. NE commissioned a visit from an auditor who consulted with LGP about our plans for geoconservation. Unfortunately there has been more evidence of badger habitation and so any geoconservation work will have to be delayed indefinitely.

Geoconservation work at Riddlesdown (GLA 26) took place October 2021, and at Gilbert's Pit (GLA14) both in July 2021 and February 2022. An attendee on the Green Chain Walk in September, went back and tidied up Dog's Rocks (GLA 8).

The eroding ridge at the top Gilbert's Pit (GLA 14) was inspected in 2019 with a view of making a bridging structure; a quote was received but work has been unable to proceed. It is hoped this may be done in 2021/22. Engineering students from London South Bank University commented on the proposals. New quotes will be required and an updated specification to include the comments from students will be given.

Examples of rocks and fossils for the local primary school, with suggestions on how to use them, have been prepared but not yet delivered as the original contact has not responded. The specimens were used with the students from London South Bank University for an exercise in describing rocks and another on drawing fossils.

Following giving advice to Wimbledon Museum on a geology display in 2018 and a reconnoitre of a Wimbledon Common Geotrail in 2019, contact was made by the museum to say that the renovations are near completion with a launch due in Spring 2022. A geotrail was offered but to date this has not been taken up.

London Views were put together for the *Overground/Underground* meeting in 2018 and will form the basis of a future publication on the LGP website; a new view was recognised from the City. Additional views are continuously being added but no further progress has been made towards publishing them. In 2021-22 Stanmore Country Park was recommended.

Bus pass geology continues to be researched and the following are still in progress:

- 1) Geology on the route from Chelsea to Harrow and Hillingdon is nearly completed but not yet on LGP website.
- 2) Work was postponed on the SE London route(s).

NB Bus Pass Route 1, *Around the southern limits of the Anglian Ice Sheet* (Avenue House, Coldfall Wood, Highgate and Queens Wood and Alexandra Palace), is on the LGP website. See [Geotrails – London Geodiversity Partnership \(londongeopartnership.org.uk\)](https://www.londongeopartnership.org.uk) for all geotrails.

Objective 3: Deliver sustainable social, economic and environmental benefits for London

- 3.1 The geotrail around Kensal Green Cemetery write up is now on the LGP website, having been delivered to HOGG in May 2021 and the GA Festival of Geology in November 2021.

A new geotrail: A Walk in Walthamstow Forest: Geology and Building Materials on Forest Road and Leyton Flats by Ruth Siddall was trialled at the GA Festival of Geology in November 2021 and is now published on the GA website.

The Green Chain Walk Geotrail was led in reverse for Inspiral London ending in an Art exhibition near the Thames Barrier. This included a display of material from Thames Tideway.

Several new geotrails are in preparation: Wimbledon and Putney Commons (for 7 May 2022), Wandsworth Common (for June 2022), Chalk and Art Geotrail around Kenley and Riddlesdown (April 2022), Bedfords Park and a Hillingdon Trail Geowalk (in conjunction with the Harrow & Hillingdon Geological Society). These will be added to the GA website once they are fully written up.

Geological talks on the Geology of London and the Importance of LGP sites in Harrow & Hillingdon have been delivered via Zoom. Further talks on Abbey Wood (for local U3A) and Lost Rivers for (LOUGS) are in preparation.

Three days of tuition on geology were given to engineering students from London South Bank University at Gilbert's Pit (GLA 14). It included basic training on describing rocks and sketching the section as well as an exercise on the criteria for constructing a bridge over the eroding Blackheath Beds at the top of the pit. Feedback from their comments will be used when giving specifications for a new quotation. £900 was received from LBSU towards the construction of the bridge.

Public events run by the Partnership and those of Partnership members (e.g. Geologists' Association and the Amateur Geological Society) have been advertised on the LGP website.

3.3 LGP continues to attempt to get some geological interpretation into the legacy plans of the Thames Tideway project. Through LGP connections, their geologist, Tim Newman was invited to give a talk about the geology of the Tunnel to the GA Virtual Festival of Geology. His talk is available on the LGP website. Tim has now left the project and LGP have given support for his samples to be incorporated into the Museum of London Collections. We have also suggested that a temporary exhibition on the project could be mounted at the MoL Docklands with a more permanent exhibition on the Geology of London within the new MoL being created at Smithfield. Some of Tim's cores are stored by an LGP member and material from these is available for art projects. It was also added as a 'News' item on LGP website. Samples and a section have been provided from the Chambers Wharf site who have been extremely helpful and provided material for the art exhibition near the Thames Barrier in summer 2021 and will also be included in an exhibition in Wandsworth related to the Arts Festival in June 2022. The display will be in the Climate Hub in the Wandsworth Shopping Arcade.

LGP shared a stand with the GA at the Essex Rock and Mineral Society annual Show with a display of Woolwich Shell Bed fossils and comparing to modern estuarine fossils.

LGP contributed to a paper comparing the Tejo River in Portugal with the Thames through London in terms of the deposited gravels and their archaeology and have been instrumental in editing it for publication.

LGP receive queries, comments and references through our website:

- A correspondent from USA is finding potential London Clay exposures on the internet, some of which may turn out to be productive.
- The Willesden Local History Society wrote to request publishing details of our SGI 4 Grange Brick & Tile Works, Willesden Green in their journal. They also requested a talk about the geology of the area.
- A new book *London Clay* by Tom Chivers quotes LGP reports on the Rockingham Anomaly.
- Details of what we do was sent to a Research Project on Geoconservation at Portsmouth University.

Advice and help was given to the Ruislip Woods Management Area group

Objective 4: Promote and care for London's Geodiversity

4.1 SSSIs, RIGS and LIGS, potential LIGS and SGIs are now separately identified on map in *Guide to London's geological sites*. The additional six candidate LIGS have been posted on the website. The previous grey flags have been assigned to appropriate green (RIGS) or blue (LIGS). The texts

for the later additions (GLA 60-79) have been revised and the revisions for the earlier sites (1-59) are near completion.

- 4.2 Information on all aspects of London Clay was sort by an art group, via Nikki Edwards HGS, who gave them a talk on information supplied.

Another artist was put through to us from the Angela Marmot Centre in the Natural History Museum. She acquired London Clay from an archaeological site and was keen to learn as much as she could about it before creating her artworks. She was experimenting with different temperatures of firing.

Objective 5: Sustain geodiversity activities in London

Included in other objectives

Objective 6: Influence London-wide and borough planning and environmental policies

- 6.1 The assessments for all sites in Objective 1 will form part of a revised *London's Foundations*, supplementary planning guidance of the London Plan. The revised London Plan came into force on 2 March 2021. Work has begun by the GLA on revising planning guidance but a date has not been set for revising *London's Foundations*. However, the GLA has developed a revised format for SPG and the LGP needs to work on making *London's Foundations* conform to this new format.
- 6.2 Meetings of the London Wildlife Sites Board (LWSB) at the GLA and the GiGL Advisory Panel (GAP) began again later in 2021/22. The LWSB met online in January 2022, the first time since October 2019. GAP has begun to meet online, with the last one in March. GiGL have drawn the new maps for the revised *London's Foundations* and the new sites will be included in their register.
- 6.3 LGP responded to the request to lobby for the Learned Societies in 2021 (including the Geological Society of London) to remain in Burlington House) but nothing further has been reported.