

London Geodiversity Action Plan 2019-2024

Progress May 2022 to April 2023

This report details progress during the year 2022-23 made by the London Geodiversity Partnership in implementing the London geodiversity Action Plan 2019-2024, including the activities of individual Partners.

Objective 1: Increase our understanding of the geodiversity of London

- 1.1 One new LIGS has been assessed in the period which is Gunnersbury Park in west London, site of several different strata. It still needs to be properly written up and added to the website. Proposals to investigate potential sites for the Shepperton Gravel in Hillingdon have so far not been identified. We still need to investigate our PS of Ingrebourne Valley.
- 1.3 Work continued to investigate the SGIs previously recognised: two sarsen sites, one in Harrow and the other in Ruislip have been written up; others are the Whetstone (sarsen) and Whetstone Griffin Pub (variety of building stones), possible inclusion of ferricrete nodules in the Great Barn at Harmondsworth and a Jurassic tree stump in Finsbury Park – 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. Identification of the sites of the 20 Millenium Rocks around Bromley is near completion along with a description of the Jurassic fossil tree in Regents Park and some recent stone sculptures. Osterley Park for Taplow Gravel has been recommended for further investigation along with Alperton Sri Sanatan Hindu Mandir temple, Dinosaur footprints in the City and the Millennium Stone Circle ant Hillyfields. . Previous possible SGIs for further consideration are: Harrow-on-the-Hill, NHM Carboniferous Tree (NHM gardens currently being converted into a Geological Time line), Coronation Stone Kingston, and Streatham Waterworks.

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.
- 2.2 Appropriate local authority and land owners still need to be notified about the revisions/additions.
- 2.3 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. In 2022 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)). The pond was dug in August 2022 and immediately filled by a summer storm. Two walks have been led down the route of the Westbourne, primarily aimed at the residents, one prior to digging the pond, the other after.

- 2.4 LGP has worked with the Parks Development Officer at Springfield Park (GLA 43) to reinstate geological interpretation with the aid of their HLF grant. A new board detailing the geology is positioned at the view point, the *Springfield Park Geotrail* booklet have been completed, which was printed in time for the launch of the newly-refurbished park on the Queen’s Jubilee Bank Holiday on 2 June 2022. The LGP had a stand, assisted by members of the Open University Geological Society and featured London Clay and its fossils as well as having an activity highlighting extinctions. The geotrail around the park was fully booked for both sessions. Unfortunately there are some errors in the booklet which still need to be sorted out.
- 2.5 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 some complication with the map needed a revision and it is still not published.
- 2.6 LGP became an Affiliated Member of the Geologists’ Association.
- 2.7 Beckenham Place Park has had major investment which included installation of a geological interpretation board installed. LGP assisted with information for the board.

The following SSSIs, RIGS or LIGS were visited:

GLA 1 Abbey Wood SSSI	GLA 44 Highgate Wood/Queens Wood RIGS
GLA 3 Beckenham Place Park RIGS	GLA 45 Bedfords Park RIGS
GLA 7 Crystal Palace	GLA 46 Summerhouse Lane RIGS
GLA 8 Dog Rocks RIGS	GLA 48 Thames Foreshore, Isleworth RIGS
GLA 14 Gilbert’s Pit SSSI	GLA 52 Bromley Palace Park LIGS
GLA 18 Harrow Weald Common SSSI	GLA 54 Sundridge Park LIGS
GLA 24 Eliot Pit	GLA 55 Trent Park LIGS
GLA 26 Riddlesdown RIGS	GLA 64 Waterlow Park LIGS
GLA 32 High Elms Dene Hole LIGS	GLA 65 Old Gravel Pit (Vanbrugh Pits) LIGS
GLA 34 Harefield Pit SSSI	GLA 67 Summerhouse Lane LIGS
GLA 38 Chalky Dell RIGS	GLA 71 Hollow Ponds LIGS
GLA 42 Hampstead Heath RIGS	GLA 72 Monken Hadley Common LIGS
GLA 43 Springfield Park RIGS	GLA 74 Springwell Farm LIGS

- 2.8 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 has been delayed but progress is being made with NE to at least clear access.
- 2.9 Geoconservation work at Riddlesdown (GLA 26) took place autumn 2022, and at Gilbert’s Pit (GLA14) in April 2023.

- 2.10 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. This needs urgent attention
- 2.11 LGP has been working with the Harrow & Hillingdon Geological Society to gather more information on the nature and timing of the Stanmore Gravel on Harrow Weald Common (GLA 18, SSSI). A Geotrail is in the process of being written up for the GA London Guide with assistance from LGP.
- 2.12 Also, for the GA London Guide, the deposits at Wansunt Pit SSSI (GLA 35) are being described with the assistance of LGP.
- 2.13 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.
- 2.14 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 not taken up. A visit to see the new displays is overdue.
- 2.15 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. Additional views are continuously being added but no further progress has been made towards publishing them.
- 2.16 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.

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

- 3.1 A Riddlesdown & Kenley Chalk and Art trail was led in April 2022. At the moment there are no plans to write it up. A Geotrail around Wimbledon and Putney Commons (presented 7 May 2022) is in the process of publication. This was a joint venture with London Natural History Society to coincide with GeoWeek.
- 3.2 A Geotrail in the Wandsworth area was presented June 2022 in conjunction with the Art & Geology display in the Climate Hub in the Wandsworth Shopping Arcade. At the moment there are no plans to publish it. Gail Dickerson's Artworks featured material from the Thames Tideway excavations, presented to her by the Geologist, Tim Newman. The LGP display featured 'Our Planet and the changing layers of Climate of Wandsworth'. An article about the project was written for the GA Magazine. Several other 'Climate Hubbs' were visited with the idea of doing something similar, but none were appropriate.
- 3.3 A Hampstead Heath Geotrail was led for the Hampstead Heath for Heath & Hampstead Society in July 2022. This came out of a walk down the Westbourne, looking at Branch Hill Pond (also on Hampstead Heath).

- 3.4 For our Earth Science Week in October, Ruth Siddall repeated her Geology & Urban Geology in Walthamstow Forest geotrail. It is already published by her and is on the LGP website.
- 3.5 A Geotrail around Queens Wood for Friends of Queens Wood was led by LGP with assistance from a local archaeologist. The walk was advertised within the wood and amazingly about 50 people showed up. Most stayed until the end.(19 March 2023).
- 3.6 Sadly the LGP Treasurer died in January 2023 and in his honour we agreed to re-run his Springs and Spas in South London Geotrail, which we will present for Earth Science Week in May 2023. In the meantime, the original write-up is in the process of updating and we will hope to put it on our website soon after the event.
- 3.7 Several other new geotrails are in preparation: 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.
- 1.8 LGP visited Gunnersbury Park in August 2022 and decided to make it a LIGS: there are 5 different geological strata, a Museum with ornamental stone fireplaces etc, an archaeological display with a video history of the area, and 3 ponds, the lower one dug for Brickearth that supported a ceramic industry. It was felt it was probably not interesting enough for a Geotrail as no actual exposures were encountered but we discussed the possibility of providing a leaflet about the geology and adding the details to the LGP website.
- 3.9 Geological talks on the Geology of London were delivered: Abbey Wood U3A on the geology of Abbey Wood, and a Lost Rivers talk for the London Branch of LOUGS, and Amateur Geological Society, repeated to Croydon U3A with an emphasis on the lost portion of the Wandle through Croydon. A talk on the Geology of Muswell Hill is under preparation.
- 3.10 LGP continues to attempt 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 no longer available on the LGP website, but we are trying to reinstate it. 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. A sample section was displayed on the floor of the Climate Hubb as part of Gail Dickerson's Artworks (see 3.1 above)
- 3.11 LGP shared a stand with the GA at the Amateur Geological Society annual show in Finchley. Several members attended and took the opportunity to visit the nearby Whet Stone with a view to creating an SGI.
- 3.12 LGP shared a stand with the GA at the Essex Rock and Mineral Society annual Show with a display of London Clay fossils (particularly Crabs and Lobsters donated by Jeff Saward).

- 3.13 LGP had contributed to a paper comparing the Tejo River in Portugal with the Thames through London in terms of the deposited gravels and their archaeology. After final editing it was finally published.
- 3.14 LGP receive queries, comments and references through our website:
- An artist, Jeffrey Miller who was trying to obtain London Clay for a project to create tiles from tunnelled clay and glaze from tube train dust. He invited us to his winter show at Central St Martins where he presented a video on the London Clay at Sheppey; we had recommended he visit.
 - A perspective OU student interested in going on walks etc.
 - Permission sought to use one of our images

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 texts for the later additions (GLA 60-79) have been revised and the revisions for the earlier sites (1-59) are near completion. The longer versions for London's Foundations are complete and on the website.
- 4.2 Artist, Maja Quille, continued her research about London Clay. A second artist, Kathryn Maquire, recommended to LGP by the Angela Marmot Centre in the NHM was interested to learn about the geology of the Thames. Projects developed later in the year. She was on a Residency at King's College and brought her students and their tutor to the NHM for a workshop in the Angela Marmot Centre, using rock samples from LGP and fossils from AMC.

Objective 5: Sustain geodiversity activities in London

- 5.1 Geoconservation was carried out at Riddlesdown Quarry in November 2022 and at Gilberts Pit in April 2023 in conjunction with the London Branch of OUGS (see 2.1).

Objective 6: Influence London-wide and London 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 in March 2021.
- 6.2 Meetings of the London Wildlife Sites Board (LWSB) at the GLA and the GiGL Advisory Panel (GAP) are currently in abeyance. The LWSB has not met since October 2019 and GAP last met online in November 2020. GiGL have drawn the new maps for the revised *London's Foundations* and we have sent them the new sites to be included in their register.