

## A new LGS? Landpark Quarry

By Martin Whiteley  
LGS Manager

Group members, representatives from The Wildlife Trust and one unsuspecting non-geologist friend joined forces on 8<sup>th</sup> September to clear the Chalk face at Landpark Quarry near Whipsnade. This quarry had a long and chequered history, as plans to extend it and thus remove much of the surrounding ancient woodland were repeatedly defeated by the local council and residents. Now the ownership rests with The Wildlife Trust and our group has been invited to investigate the geological potential of the site.

A reconnaissance visit last year was sufficiently encouraging to prompt a proper clearance and we made short work of exposing half the face, deliberately leaving the other half in its partially obscured state in order to encourage the natural recolonisation of flora and fauna. During the course of the clearance we found spectacular examples of flint nodules and flint-filled burrows, as well as specimens of the bivalve *Inoceramus* and the sea urchin *Micraster*. Further research is planned at the site, starting with a detailed sedimentological log of the strata and an analysis of the fossils, more of which have subsequently been discovered in Bedford Museum.

This is an interesting Chalk locality which is both safe and accessible, so it meets all the criteria to be considered as a Local Geological Site in due course. Work will continue over the next couple of years and my suspicion is that there is still much to discover here.



Clearance project of Landpark Quarry in September 2010.



*Micraster* found at Landpark Quarry during clearance in September 2010.

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Edited by Bev Fowlston.

If you have any comment or wish to include an article in the next issue of this newsletter then please contact me on 01525 375353 or by email [bev.fowlston@gmail.com](mailto:bev.fowlston@gmail.com) Deadline for next issue is 25th March 2011.

I hope you enjoy reading on.....

# BGG News

## High-grading the LGS Portfolio

By Martin Whiteley  
*LGS Manager*

There are currently 25 important geological sites that are formally recognised in Bedfordshire. Five of these are working or disused quarries that enjoy SSSI status and the remainder are Local Geological Sites (LGS) of various types. The LGS portfolio has grown over the last six years and all the major landforms and rock types (with the exception of the Middle Jurassic limestones) are now adequately represented. More recently our focus has been on identifying and designating sites that are accessible and conservable. In short, we are trying to high-grade the portfolio to a point where it is informative, representative and manageable by a voluntary work force.

To illustrate this point we have just designated two new sites. The **Kensworth Nature Reserve LGS** preserves a Chalk face in an exposure that was retained during an early phase of the ongoing restoration of the enormous working quarry at Kensworth, near Dunstable. The area around the LGS has been designated a Nature Reserve and it contains re-created calcareous grassland and woodland habitats that are open to the public. An information panel at the site describes the stratigraphy (Upper Turonian Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation into the Lower Coniacian Top Rock) and it is possible to see three small faults, a large solution hollow with a rubbly chalk and flint nodule infill, and smaller solution pipes at the top of the exposure filled with red-brown Clay-with-flints.

The **Scout Hut Quarry, Potton LGS** is a superb exposure of the Woburn Sands Formation (known previously as the Lower Greensand). This site was formerly a sand and gravel pit that was virtually infilled during the early nineteenth century, but it has recently been rediscovered and cleared by the BGG to reveal a safe and accessible exposure of brown, cross-bedded sandstone with cemented and bioturbated horizons. It contributes to an understanding of the regional geology of the Lower Cretaceous and provides historical links with the local coprolite (phosphate fertilizer) industry.

A decision has also been made to de-select three medieval stone churches that were originally chosen to highlight the use of local rocks as building stone. This change of heart reflects the observation that any number of stone-built structures would serve the same purpose and the rocks (predominantly sandstone, oolitic limestone, flint, cobbles and clunch) can be seen in their geological context at various outcrops. Only the Middle Jurassic limestone is an exception here, because there are currently no exposures in the county. For this reason we have retained the impressive **Bromham Bridge LGS** to illustrate the wide range of limestones that are obscured by thick drift deposits in northern Bedfordshire. Our next challenge is to find a suitable locality where we can reveal the Middle Jurassic succession by excavation and thereby complete a representative suite of Bedfordshire's rock types.

## Bedford 6th Form College use BGG sites

By Anne Williams

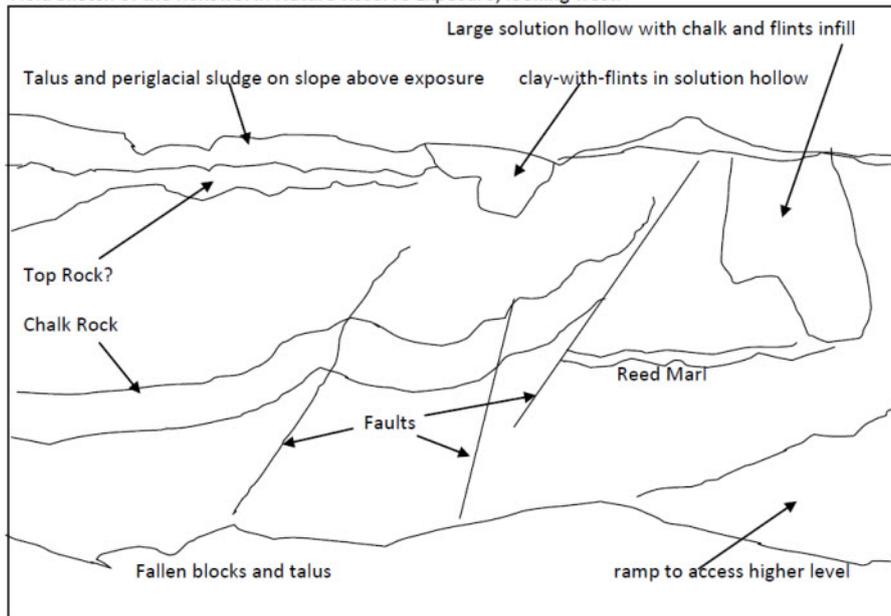
On 13<sup>th</sup> October, a party of A-level Geology students used the scrape in the Chalk at Kensworth Quarry to complete their field notebooks and lab coursework. This exposure was cleared in August by members of the BGG after the ravages of last winter, and although there has been some deterioration since then due to surface wash, it proved an excellent resource. The question the students are researching is how far the lithology and structure of the Chalk varies. In this one small exposure they were able to examine the hardground of the Chalk Rock, the Lewes Nodular Chalk and the Reed Marl as well as the solution residue of the clay-with-flints above the Chalk. It was also possible to see minor faults and flexures, and solution hollows infilled with periglacial sludge and flint nodules. Samples of the different layers were collected for examination in the laboratory; this involved microscope examination and the solution of the chalk in dilute hydrochloric acid to see the amount and type of insoluble residue.



6th Form students  
breaking rocks at  
Kensworth!

The same group used the exposure of Woburn Sands at Potton Scout Hut in May. They have to complete two separate investigations so it is thanks to the work of the BGG that they have had access to suitable sites. Now they only have to write it all up!

Field Sketch of the Kensworth Nature Reserve Exposure, looking west.



## Event reviews

### Geology Day at Marston Vale

By Bev Fowlston

Images by Mike Kingdon

On Sunday 3rd October, BGG launched their new look at an open day held at the Forest Centre in Marston Vale. Although the weather wasn't the best and probably kept many people away, we had a brilliant day. Many members came along and helped to man stalls and talk to the public about our wonderful Bedfordshire geology.



The Welcome desk at Marston Vale Forest Centre.

The new banner and posters as well as our wonderful new updated leaflet were on view. We had a laptop computer showing pages from the updated website which sparked much interest.

Children enjoyed the activities set out for them, as well as getting their rocks and fossils identified by experts in their field. Both small and 'big' kids alike enjoyed seeing all of the wonderful fossils and rocks set out throughout the room.



Tony Britten,  
our resident "fossil man",  
doing what he does best!

For more images, see the events report page on the new look website.

The committee would like to take this opportunity to thank all of those who helped on the day and for all the hard work carried out in the organisation and running of the Grassroots Project. A real team effort!

For more detailed reports on recently held events, go to the Events page on the website at <http://www.bedfordshiregeologygroup.org.uk/reports.html>

You can see written reports and images of some of our past events.

**Potton and Deepdale**  
**By Bev Fowlston**  
**Images by Bev and Steve Fowlston**

**On Sunday 7th November, a group of members joined forces** to help with the annual clearance of our educational site at Potton Scout Hut Quarry. With so many people on hand to help this task was over in a flash. It took half the time we had allotted and the work was very much less than anticipated.

The work carried out has left the outcrop once again in a pristine condition that was then enjoyed by an educational group led by Anne Williams the following week.

**The committee would like to thank everyone who turned out to help - another example of excellent BGG team work!**



Potton outcrop at the beginning of the clearance.



Potton outcrop at the end of the clearance.

Following a leisurely lunch the group, plus other members, met at Deepdale Quarry near to Potton. Martin Whiteley, described this wonderful exposure of Woburn Sands and explained some of the history of the quarry itself, which is now being run as a mountain bike trail. The owners have allowed us access to this beautiful outcrop and we are very much looking to the future with them in preserving some of the fascinating features seen at Deepdale.



Martin Whiteley, describing to the group the sedimentary features in Deepdale's Woburn Sands.

## Members' Page

Dear Editor,

I was surfing through the BBC news website and found this - an article about ammonites and Chris Andrew. Hopefully this will take you to the page:  
[http://news.bbc.co.uk/local/dorset/hi/people\\_and\\_places/nature/newsid\\_9225000/9225848.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/local/dorset/hi/people_and_places/nature/newsid_9225000/9225848.stm)

Regards

Lindsay Hiles

Membership Secretary/Treasurer

**Lindsay,**

*Chris Andrew was very much a part of the beginnings of BGG. He used to work for Bedford Museum but moved onto follow his passion of fossil collecting. It is wonderful to see him doing what he loves and I hope everyone joins me in wishing Chris all the very best in his future endeavours.*

Bev

Editor

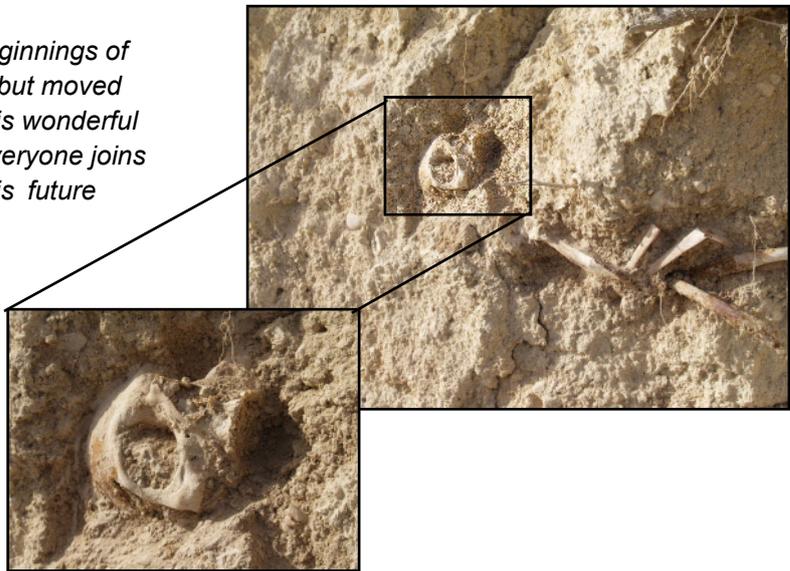
**Evolution by Langdon Smith**

Member, **Margaret Goose**, heard this poem recently and thought others may like to hear it. Follow the link below to hear an interesting recital  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4i96M0Ydfge>

Dear Editor,

Whilst on holiday on Cyprus, Val and I discovered some interesting "rocks"!

**Ray Piercy,**



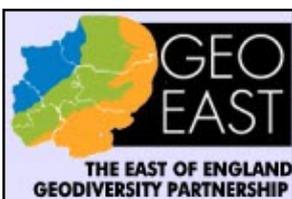
If you have any interesting images or just want to voice your opinion on a geological issue, events or how the group is run then this is your page. Just send your images, in jpeg format, or any letters or comments as a Word .doc document via email to the editor at [bev.fowlston@gmail.com](mailto:bev.fowlston@gmail.com)

## Regional News

### Geo East Update

By Martin Whiteley  
LGS Manager

I am pleased to report that Natural England has awarded us £2,000 to undertake geoconservation projects throughout the county over the next twelve months. The finances will be administered through the Geo-East partnership and the work will be carried out by our members. The projects will lead towards the designation of new Local Geological Sites in the Chalk strata around Harlington, Whipsnade and Luton.



Should you require more details about,  
or wish to get involved with Geo-East, please contact Peter Lally.

Look at their website at [www.geoeast.org.uk](http://www.geoeast.org.uk)

# Forthcoming Events and Contacts

**Don't miss the next event .....**  
Thur 9th December  
Annual Social Eve

## Dates for your diary

**Dec 9th - 7.30pm - 9.30pm**

Annual Social eve at Husborne Crawley  
Reading Rooms

**Jan** - no event due to potential travel/weather  
issues.

**Feb 10th - 7pm**

Talk on Shenley Limestone by Richard  
Hogg at Husborne Crawley Reading  
Rooms

**Mar** - Walk around Sandhouse Pits, near  
Leighton Buzzard

**Apr** - Kensworth clearance and chalk  
downland walk

**May** - Weekend trip to Derbyshire

**Jun** - Jurassic Day

**Jul** - t.b.a.

**Aug** - no event due to holidays

**Sep** - AGM

**A 12-month rolling programme of events is  
being organised - check the website for  
further details. Further events will be  
confirmed via email and in the next  
newsletter. Watch this space!**

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If there is an event you would like to see then please let  
Bev Fowlston know and she will aim to organise it.

**For more information on any of the events, please  
contact Bev Fowlston at the details below.**

## Membership information

Individual membership is £7.50 per annum.

Group membership is £25.00 per annum

(Available to organisations that have 4 or more employees or members  
wishing to join B&LGG)

To continue to receive this newsletter by email or post  
then you must renew your membership. This newsletter  
is not the only benefit of remaining a member of the  
B&LGG; all our events for members are **free of charge**,  
non-members must pay £2.00 to attend.

You can renew now by either:

1. Sending a cheque made payable to BGG
2. Requesting and completing a Standing Order form

Both available through contacting:  
Lindsay Hiles BGG Secretary, 4 Phoenix Close  
Leighton Buzzard, Beds LU7 3YW

*Remember without you - the members - this Group does  
not exist.*

*We need you!*

## A new committee? Or the same old faces?

**By Bev Fowlston**

**BGG's AGM was held this year at Wilstead Village  
Hall.** The new committee was voted in but it was still  
the same hard-working people that have served BGG for  
a number of years, for details please below. The AGM  
was very well attended and a short presentation on  
climate change in the past was given by members, Bev  
Fowlston and Frances Maynard. Chairperson, Peter  
Lally, gave an empowering speech about the Group's  
achievements this year which were many. These  
included receiving and fulfilling the grant received from  
Grassroots, continuing work with Bedford Museum and  
the myriad of events that have been organised  
throughout the year since the last AGM.

## Committee Members 2010 - 11

Chairperson

Secretary

Treasurer/Membership Secretary

RIGS Manager & BNHS representative

Events Coordinator

Chalk Downs rep/Events Organiser

Beds CC & Biodiversity Forum rep

Events Organiser

The Greensand Trust representative

PR/Promotions/Fundraising Officer

Committee member

Peter Lally

**Vacant**

Lindsay Hiles

Dr Martin Whiteley

Bev Fowlston

Janet Munro

**Vacant**

John Wong

Malcolm Oliver

**Vacant**

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