

# *Geology and Landscape*

*of Gloucestershire and surroundings*

*A weekly field-based introductory course.*

*No previous knowledge of geology is assumed*

**Tuesday evenings (and two Wednesdays) 30th May to  
18th July 2017**

**Gloucestershire is one of the most geologically diverse counties in Britain.**

*The aim of this field-based course is to take you towards an understanding of local scenery. We will look at the components - the highly diverse rocks and their structure; and processes - weathering, slope forming and erosion - which have combined to produce this equally varied landscape - the materials from which the scenery has been sculpted and the processes that have acted upon them since the area emerged from the sea 65 million years ago (about the same time that the dinosaurs became extinct)*

*No special equipment is necessary, apart from stout footwear and possibly waterproofs - although we will hopefully have six balmy summer evenings! Meetings are held on Tuesdays each week, (apart from Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> June, and a break on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> June), meeting at 7.00 pm and finishing at 9.00 pm or later (whenever the party feels in need of refreshment !!) at the following meeting points (see over)*

**Cost: £50 for 7 week course  
or £9 per session**

*For further details see over or telephone*

*Dave Green on 01594 860858*

*Email [Davegeostudie@gmail.com](mailto:Davegeostudie@gmail.com)*

*Website [Geostudies.co.uk](http://Geostudies.co.uk)*

## *Geology and Landscape*

### **5th June Haresfield Beacon**

*One of the best known viewpoints in Gloucestershire, the beacon is an outlying spur of the Cotswold escarpment formed from the flat lying resistant middle Jurassic limestones overlying lower Jurassic sands and clays. The area has been extensively affected by the Ice Age.*

Meet at the roadside pull-in just before the steep descent towards Haresfield village GR SO 824 090

**NOTE BREAK OF ONE WEEK HERE – no meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> June**

### **14th June (WEDNESDAY) Purton, Wellhouse Rock and the old Severn Railway Bridge**

*One branch of the great Malvern fault system, that has moved many times over millions of years, crosses the Severn here, almost opposite Sharpness (note that this is NOT the Purton on the Bristol side!). Here it spectacularly affects beds in the lowest division of the Old Red Sandstone, the Raglan Mudstone; sandstones in which provided the foundations for the Severn Rail Bridge (1879-1960, demolished by 1970 after two barges crashed into it).*

Meet along the track (the old road to Purton Station), where there is parking on the verge at SO 669 045

N.B. IT IS ESSENTIAL TO BRING WELLINGTONS FOR THIS LOCATION ON THE NOTORIOUS SEVERN MUD!

### **21<sup>st</sup> June (WEDNESDAY) Kilkeny**

*Classic Cotswold country near the crest of the main escarpment above Cheltenham and one of the biggest gaps through it. Great views, the local Jurassic limestones have fossils in abundance, and how did the escarpment, gap and dry valleys form?*

Meet at the car park for the Kilkeny picnic site and viewpoint, GR SP 005 184, just off the A436 Crickley to Andoversford, just before the Kilkeny Inn

### **27<sup>th</sup> June Cinderford to Edge Hills and the Flaxley Valley (Linear walk)**

*The eastern flank of the Forest of Dean is formed from ancient rocks (of Old Red Sandstone and Carboniferous age) that have been pushed up to almost vertical from their original horizontal position. The hardest rock is the Quartz Conglomerate, forming the main rampart of the Forest and from which one of the most spectacular views in Gloucestershire can be seen. We will then, at Edge Hills, cross a succession of upturned beds, each forming a distinctive element in the landscape, and which each have been used by man in the past for different purposes.*

Meet on the roadside at the top end (eastern) of Cinderford GR SO 663 136. If approaching from Littledean, follow the hairpin bend round and turn right at the top of the hill

### **4<sup>th</sup> July Ashleworth, Staunton and Corse Lawn**

*This area, in the subdued topography of the Severn Vale to the north of Gloucester, shows considerable and surprising variations in relief, due to the influence of a few more resistant thin beds in the midst of a sea of weak mudstones and shales, of Upper Triassic to Lower Jurassic age. The resistant beds appear many times, partly due to gentle folding, and partly because of faulting; each time producing characteristic landscape. A further complicating feature is the presence of remnants of the former flood plains of the Severn, now dissected by erosion during and since the Ice Age*

Meet at the roadside (park on verge) at the junction between the Upleadon/Newent road with the B4211 at SO 800 280

### **11<sup>th</sup> July Penyard Park, the Coughton Meander, and the strange Weston “hollows”**

*Penyard Park represents the furthest extent northwards of the outcrop of the Quartz Conglomerate, the extremely resistant rock that forms the outer ramparts of the Forest of Dean. It has been isolated from the main outcrop (on Howle Hill) by a large valley with a strangely small “misfit” stream (the Coughton Valley) which is thought to be one part of a large meander of the River Wye, now abandoned like a huge ox-bow. We will climb to the top of the hill to see the evidence for this, and the reason for the existence of the hill.*

Meet at the rough (Church) car park just to the east of the Church in Weston under Penyard SO 632 232

### **18<sup>th</sup> July The Ledbury Hills**

*The Ledbury hills, although not as striking as their near neighbours, the Malverns, were formed as a result of the same set of earth movements, by folding of the Silurian rocks (approx 420 million years) from which they have since been carved. The rocks have varying resistance to erosion, forming ridges and valleys on an intimate scale, which are repeated by the effect of folding. A truly beautiful landscape. Highly fossiliferous limestones and mudstones*

Meet at the laneside around the church and school at Eastnor GR SO 733 373