



Chair: [Ray Pratt](#)



The WMRG has an affiliation of over 1000 people from Aberystwyth in the west to Northampton in the east, from Stoke to Gloucester. We endeavour to keep in touch with our membership through bi-monthly emails. We make use of our webpage, Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn to advertise our events. In addition to our own events we update frequently Facebook with events organised by other groups and organisations which we think may be of interest to our members. Despite this only around 3% of our members participate in our events and support sessions that we organise. From discussions with other regional chairs the same level of involvement seem to be prevalent around the country.

We are aware that members outside the city of Birmingham can find it difficult to participate in our evening events. Most of our field meetings are held at a weekends and we would encourage all, particularly those outside the city of Birmingham, to come along, enjoy a day out and take the opportunity to network with your colleagues.

A concise report of each of our past lectures and trips can be found on our webpage, posted as a resource to all our members wherever they are in the country.

Unfortunately we have not been able to make inroads into streaming or recording our meetings. We have, and will continue, to press the society to use webinars for the meetings in London where the facilities are in place to provide this service. In this way, Fellows can participate in events of interest. Many Fellows are unaware that the society has a [YouTube](#) channel with a lot of talks recorded and posted online. I have found this to be such a valuable resource.

We are working alongside other geological groups in our regions in order to build up a network of support for our members. All of these groups hold lectures and field meetings which our members can take advantage of. A regularly updated list of these events can be found on our webpage under the [Geoscience Events Poster](#).

Our webpage contains lots of information and is updated frequently. We are looking to keep the page fresh. If you have a photo you think would be suitable for our page then please forward it to Sebastian Drew our webpage editor.

I would like to thank all of the WMRG committee members for their efforts and contributions enabling the group to fulfil its roles and obligations as set out by The Geological Society of London. Every one of the committee has taken responsibility of an activity and has performed with excellence. Committee members names and responsibilities are listed on our webpage. I am pleased to say that all of the committee have agreed to carry on for 2020. A big welcome to Jonathan Pickerden who has joined our 2020 committee. He will take care of Public Relations.

Please engage with your committee. Tell us what you want out of your Regional Group and we will do our best to accommodate.

<https://www.geolsoc.org.uk/Groups-and-Networks/Regional-Groups/West-Midlands>



Secretary: [Elisabeth Andrews](#)



It has been an exciting year for the WMRG. We have had a full and varied programme of talks and six field excursions. Thank you to all our speakers and field excursion leaders for volunteering their time and sharing their knowledge with the Group. We did not arrange anything specific for Geo Week 11-19 May 2019 but we did promote the 5 events arranged by The Warwickshire Geological Conservation Group.

Ray Pratt and Andrew Harrison arranged 3 events for Earth Science Week 12-20 October 2019. We also promoted 2 other events organised by The Earth Heritage Trust of Hereford and Worcester. The purpose of this week was to introduce geology to the wider public and encourage students to engage with geology. Everyone in the society is encouraged to become proactively engaged in these two annual events. Please get in touch if you have ideas and need some direction of how to go about it.

We held the schools challenge this year at the Lapwath Museum, which proved to be, an excellent venue for this event. We look forward to using the same venue next year. We are currently promoting our Colin Knipe Early Careers Competition and invite young professionals to enter this very rewarding event.

Please visit and follow the WMRG social media pages to ensure that you are kept up-to-date on events that may be of benefit to you.



Treasurer: [Stephen Preedy](#)



The costs over the last year, (as in previous years), mainly relate to the running of technical meetings, (room hire, refreshments and speakers' costs). In 2019 we commenced holding additional meetings specific for Chartership events for which we also incurred costs.

We incur award costs associated with the Colin Knipe Early Careers Award, and for Schools Challenge. In addition, the committee has continued to reward the speakers with a small gift. We have noticed that since introducing the speakers award claims from speakers for travel has fallen.

In an effort to reduce expenditure we changed our evening meeting venue from the Birmingham and Midland Institute (BMI) to the Birmingham Parish Church (BPC) St Martins in the Bullring, saving of approximately £110 per meeting.

Burlington House continues to support the Regional Groups with an Annual Grant for 2019 of £1565. It is anticipated that a similar or slightly larger grant for 2020 will be requested, to avoid a deficit materialising during 2020.



*St Martins in the Bullring*





**Education Champions:  
Louis Brazenell & Oliver Hutton.**



*Worcester 6th Form College winners of our 2020 regional heat (Oliver Hutton far right).* We continue to struggle engaging with schools. Very few of the emails we send to schools actually generate a response. Despite this we did get 4 schools express an interest in participating in our competition, with three teams participating. Our event was held at The Lapworth Museum at the University of Birmingham.

The students posters were exhibited on boards by the exhibits. Several staff and others were able to enjoy these posters and commented on how good they all were. In addition to the competition the students were given short presentations from university lecturers and society members on careers for geologists. The curator of the museum, Aeron Moore, gave the students a quick tour of the main exhibits in this award winning museum.

Lunch was provided by the WMRG and travel costs were sponsored by the WGCG (Warwickshire Geological Conservation Group).

In October Ray Pratt and Oliver Hutton participated in a STEM meeting on Heat Networks for the schools of Solihull. This was organised by Solihull council and held at Solihull College. Ray Pratt of the WMRG gave 1 of 3 talks to the participating A level students of the town.



*Presenters and organisers of the STEM presentations at Solihull College*

The students were also invited to participate in careers advice being held in the foyer among the poster displays we had erected for the event.



*Society handouts and posters (above and below) at Solihull College*



Through the society we can offer schools and universities support on **talks, field trips and careers advice**. Please take this message to your local school and to the teachers in your circle of friends.



## Mentoring and Chartership Champions:

[Alex Deltenre](#) and [Nick Watson](#)

**Chartership: A mountain to climb or a stroll in the park? Nick Watson**



The WMRG is planning more self help Chartership meetings for professional geologists in 2020. This year's meetings have proven to be increasingly popular, starting with 5 aspiring applicants in June and increasing to 20 at a joint get together with Midland Geotechnical Society in November.

Those seeking Chartership have taken the opportunity to raise questions about the process and practice their presentations. Geologists who went through the process recently also told of their experiences. We intend to hold more meetings in 2020 along these lines, and in particular provide help and support to those members submitting their applications later on in the year.

Other topics being considered include mapping out the application process, discussing the documents to be submitted, CPD generally, and hearing the views and experiences of sponsors and scrutineers.

The 2020 Chartership programme will be updated early in the new year and circulated to members. The meeting timings and topics will also be added to the WMRG website <https://www.geolsoc.org.uk/wmrg>. The meetings will be held between 17-18:00 hrs about 4 times a year at the same venue and

just prior prior to the monthly meeting. In addition, Shaun Richardson, the new Geological Society Chartership officer, will be giving his presentation on the process on 14 July 2020.

Should any member wish to suggest further topics, or have an issue they would like Shaun to address at his presentation, then they should get in touch with [Nick Watson](#)

## Colin Knipe Early Careers Award - Alex Deltenre

To recognise the work of geoscientists in the early stages of their careers, The Geological Society runs the Early Career Geologist award. This competition is open to all Fellows with less than 10 years postgraduate experience, who might be working towards [Chartership](#). There are many benefits for participants of this competition of which there are no losers. Some effort is required to put a presentation together but if done in conjunction with Chartership then it simply becomes an additional benefit in achieving your goal.



*2019 Colin Knipe Early Careers Award winner Sam Hazell addresses the WMRG*

### Key dates:

Tuesday 7th January 2020. Closing date for entries.

Monday 13th January 2020. Chosen applications will be notified.

Monday 20th January 2020. All presentation should be sent to [Alex Deltenre](#) by close of business.





## West Midlands Regional Group News Letter - December 2019

Tuesday 21st January 2020. West Midlands Regional Heat will take place at Atkins in Birmingham.

Friday 24th January 2020 The winner will be announced .

20th February 2020. National Final at Burlington House.

If you need mentoring or Chartership support then please get in touch with Nick or Alex.

**Website Editor:** [Sebastian Drew](#)



I am pleased to report that the webpage has been reasonably stable during 2019 and the issues that plagued us in 2018 seem to be resolved. We try to keep the information on our site up-to-date and consequently we update our site frequently. Here you will find among other things;

**Our Events.** An up-to-date listing of talks and field outings for 2020

**Geoscience Events Poster.** A listing of local geoscience groups and their advertised events for the next 6 months or so.

**Newsletter:** The plan is to update this twice a year (following each formal committee meeting)

**Committee listing:** Names, roles and email addresses of the committee

**Latest Tweets:** Updated each time an email to members has been sent.

**Field Excursion Summaries:** Write up for each of the WMRG excursions.

**Abstracts and Meeting Notes:** Here you will find the abstracts and slides for each of the meetings we have held during 2018 and 2019

If you have any good photographs taken within our region then we would like to see them. We are always on the lookout for material we can use on our website.

**Programme Co-ordinator:**  
[Rob Meredith](#)



Ten evening meetings were held with 15 speakers in total. The programme was varied and the talks were all to a very high standard. We ended **The Year of Carbon** with our AGM talk on Carbon Capture and geological Storage, a brilliant talk that attracted an audience from as far afield as Nottingham, Shrewsbury, Stoke and Warwick. All talks were geological and the majority were aimed at our membership, most of which are in the geotechnical civil engineering and water sectors.



*Dan Roberts addressing the WMRG*



We ask all our speakers to prepare an talk of 1 hour duration. All our speakers are made aware of the interests of their audience and usually adapt their talks accordingly. We have a full and diverse programme already scheduled for 2020. At first glance some of the talks may not seem appealing to our members, but look again, e.g., 2020 is **The Year of Life**. Our first speaker on this theme (February) will be Dr Haydon Bailey a micro palaeontologist, who will enlighten us on the applications of this science on a number of geotechnical projects as well as other more diverse applications. In May we have a speaker from X-Ray minerals who will introduce us to the applications of FTR (Fourier Transform Reflectivity) and Spectroscopy in the civil engineering sector.

We look forward to seeing you at our meetings in 2020. For a full listing of our talks programme visit our web page

### **Field Trip Co-ordinator: [Andrew Harrison](#)**



The field trips have continued to be well supported and well received. The 3 day excursion to Dorset was a huge success with something for everyone; structural geology, tectonics, landforms, geomorphology, landslips, coastal erosion and deposition. We were also treated to a guided tour of the Etches Collection in Kimmeridge, by Sir Steve Etches himself, before heading off to Kimmeridge bay for a spot of fossil hunting. Having classic Indian Summer weather in this

lovely part of the world was an added bonus. Write ups of this and our other trips can be found on our webpage.

We are currently working on the 2020 programme. The first field meeting of 2020 will be held 25th April in conjunction with the BCGS at The Wrens Nest using the newly written Geo Explore guide for this SSI. This is free software for your smartphone or tablet. You and your children will love this. We will meet at the wardens office in Fossil lane at 10:30 hrs. After the trip we are invited to visit nearby Dudley Archives, home of the Dudley Geological Collection, where we will be given a guided tour.

If you have and desires to visit a specific area or lead a trip then please get in touch.

### **Geo-Conservation**

Local societies such as The Black Country Geological Society (BCGS), Warwickshire Geological Conservation Group (WGCG) and The Earth Heritage Trust - Hereford and Worcester, actively work to preserve outcrops of significance for the benefit of all, particularly budding geoscientists and students. Without these efforts our inland sites would quickly become overgrown and forgotten. The Geological Society [Curators Group](#) is involved with the documentation and preservation of Geological Sites. In the WMRG region we aim to support and get involved with other local groups involved in these efforts

The Earth Heritage Trust has a number of teams looking after specific sites. These teams all called Geo-Champions, e.g. The Lickey Hills Geo-Champions work with the Lickey Hills Rangers to look after and preserve the geological exposures in the Lickey Hills country park.





*Lickey Hills Geo-Champions maintaining an exposure at Barnt Green Quarry.*

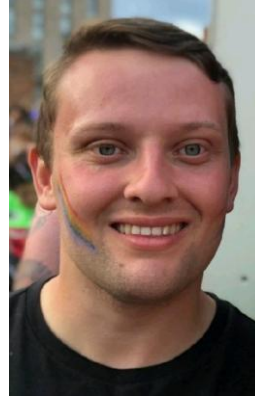
The more people that get involved the more work that can be achieved. Not only is it physically rewarding but involvement allows a study of the geology in great detail and complexities can be discussed with peers allowing a far greater understanding than would normally be achieved on a guided field visit.

The groups are always looking for additional help. If you would like to become a **Geo Hero** with a local group please get in touch and we will try to line you up with a group near you. You will be made to feel very welcome and it is extremely rewarding to boot.



*Geo Heroes clearing scrub at Barrow Hill, Dudley. 3 GSL Fellows were involved in this BCGS event.*

**Public Relations: [John Pickerden](#)**



The goal is to look at how to better bring to members attention all the meetings, field trips, seminars, competitions, webinars and other events of interest that are going on in our region. The plan is to make greater use of

the various social media sites as well as via email and our webpage . Other avenues will be explored.

**The WMRG objectives are to:**

- hold meetings and other activities of interest to Members.
- inform Members and Friends of the Society resident within the WMRG area, of the activities of the Society and to promote co-operation between geoscientist individuals and groups along with other kindred professions and organisations;
- bring to the notice of the Council opinions and proposals designed to promote the interests of the Society and advise Council on matters of local interest or concern;
- provide Fellows seeking Chartership with help, advice and information to assist the process in support of the Society's Chartership Officer including, but not limited to, support for identification of suitable mentors;
- actively support Members in the formative stages of their careers.
- foster relations with primary, secondary and tertiary education establishments within the region in order to raise the profile and interest in the geosciences.
- maintain (in association with the Society's Education Committee) details of the speaker network for schools and proactively support the Schools Affiliate scheme.