

Keep in touch with GeoSuffolk Times. Welcome to issue number 14 of our newsletter - for those who value Suffolk's geodiversity. Caroline Markham 08.10.12 [www.geosuffolk.co.uk](http://www.geosuffolk.co.uk)

## High Voltage Electricity Cables

In response to National Grid's proposals for pylons and/or undergrounding high voltage electricity cables between Bramford and Twinstead, Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils (East Anglian Daily Times 03.07.12) and Suffolk County Council (EADT 04.07.12) are reported as saying that the entire line of new cables should be placed underground. Tim Passmore, Leader of Mid Suffolk, was reported as saying, "they have not taken a holistic approach to the damage to the industries and tourism which are important in Mid Suffolk and Babergh, we want it all underground".

Whilst pylons and overhead lines have visual impact, undergrounding is environmentally destructive of ancient soils, original land shapes and surfaces. Ground investigations will though give information on underground geology and, hopefully, on Suffolk's deep biota, important for its part in the biogeochemical cycle.

And why are some landscapes special? Are they to conform to nostalgic visions or to certain social ideals? Would Anglo-Saxons regard their forests full of wild boar as special, but not our present-day fields, hedgerows and water meadows? And is present-day preservation being used as a means to put pressure on our children, and will it interest future generations?

Bob Markham (RM)

## Corton Cliff

A spectacular visit to Corton by two GeoSuffolk members during the September 21-23 storm is worth reporting. Whilst the new sea defences were protecting the village well, the cliffs to the north were being subjected to active marine erosion, with fresh exposures of Pleistocene sands visible. Access is, even at low tide, only from the north (i.e. Norfolk!) along the beach. We were pleased to note a plaque by Waveney DC, Mackley Construction and Halcrow in the cliff top viewing area created at the top of Baker's Score. It describes the sea defences and is set in a large block of the Norwegian Larvikite rock used for the rip rap. CM



## Notes on A Celebration of Suffolk Geology

Page 30: the lump of coal came from Bentley Pit, Doncaster, and weighed 24.1 cwt, i.e. just over one ton (see photograph above).

Page 387 (Havergate Island): Dr Martin Pickford, NERC post-doctoral research fellow at Queen Mary College, University of London, on fossil mammal faunas of East Africa, was also Captain Pickford (geologist) in the Territorial Army Volunteer Reserve, in which role in the 1970s he undertook a hydrological and groundwater survey at Havergate Island. Martin also gave two lectures on his Miocene fossil apes research to the Ipswich Geological Group in 1976 (Kenya and Pakistan) and 1979 (Kenya specimens). RM

## Mount's Pit, Brandon

This 19thC chalk pit area on the south side of the B1107 Thetford Road in Brandon is worth a visit. It was backfilled and housing built in 2010-12, but there is still a small exposure of Turonian Chalk visible. The Chalk was used for lime, the kiln being infilled for safety reasons in 2011. However, a plaque explaining the industry and including an 1880s map of the pit and surroundings has been erected by the developers, Bloor Homes. CM

Visit us at the GeoSuffolk stand at the Festival of Geology on November 10th. This event, run by the Geologist's Association <http://www.geologistsassociation.org.uk/Festival.html> is at University College, London.

## News: Geodiversity Providers and Owners

10 New County Geosites for Suffolk

GeoSuffolk has given maps for 10 public CGS to the Suffolk Biological Record Centre to be included in their GIS database. These sites are:

- Aspal Close, Beck Row
- Lakenheath Church
- St Helena's Walks Pit, Dunwich
- Dunwich Church complex
- Longshop Museum Well, Leiston
- Thorpe Ness
- Harkstead Cliff and Shore
- Orford Castle and Coralline Crag Pit
- Christchurch Park springs and sarsen stones
- Stoke Bridge Pocket Park sarsen stones.

They are all important sites with public access and well worth a visit. Where appropriate, the landowners have been sent a copy of the map and site record. Natural England has been informed via the Geology Trusts, and also Suffolk County Council for inclusion on the Single Data List 160. GeoSuffolk will be carrying out condition monitoring on these sites during the next few months.

This brings the total number of Local Geodiversity Sites (includes RIGS and CGS) in Suffolk to 31. CM

Fossil Plant Day at Ipswich Museum

On Saturday November 24<sup>th</sup> 2012 in the Geology Gallery at Ipswich Museum, from 10-12 and 2-4. GeoSuffolk will be helping to show some of the Museum's collection of fossil plants, including: *the first forests; the food of dinosaurs; today's fruit and nut snack!* RM

Earth Heritage e-Magazine

Last May's Pliocene Forest open day has been reported in *Earth Heritage 38 Summer 2012*, the online geodiversity conservation magazine edited by GeoConservationUK, Natural England and the Geologists' Association. Take a look at the website <http://www.earthheritage.org.uk/> and add it to your favourites. As well as *GeoSuffolk's Paradise Lost is Discovered at Open Day* by Caroline Markham, issue 38 includes an excellent 3-page article - *Geology Thrives in Essex* by Gerald Lucy and Peter Allen. CM

Needham Chalks Ltd

This business was featured in the East Anglian Daily Times 21.08.12. As well as their Needham Market pit, quarrying chalk for farming and industrial purposes, their Barton Mills pit near Mildenhall is also in Suffolk. Needham Chalks was also mentioned in GeoSuffolk Times no 4. David Smither, who died in 2011, was always helpful to visiting geologists. RM

Felixstowe Spa

Felixstowe's Spa Pavilion has been in the news recently, so this piece from *GeoSuffolk Notes* no. 37 should be of interest.

The water came from below the London Clay, and about 177 feet down in a borehole. It contained dissolved sodium chloride, calcium carbonate, magnesia, iron, sulphur and phosphates. Magnesium sulphate is perhaps better known as Epsom Salts. In the 1890s the water was described as a 'capital medicine for anyone suffering from depression, aches, pains or overwork'. Do not confuse this water with that from the springs at the Red Crag – London Clay junction in the cliff (as has sometimes been done in modern times). RM

Have you read...?

Field Guide to the Harwich Formation and Pleistocene deposits of Harkstead Suffolk by W H George.

Harkstead cliff on the north bank of the Stour estuary has just been designated a County Geosite (CGS) by GeoSuffolk. It has full public access and a visit would be enhanced by this excellent field guide in *A Celebration of Suffolk Geology*. Bill George gives access details and a summary of previous research, followed by vivid descriptions of the current exposures:

- The Harwich Formation ('London Clay') in the 5m cliff has a mudstone bed (the Harwich Stone Band) at its base and about six creamy-brown ash bands in the clay strata above this. The clays from this ancient sea (into which the ash fell) have yielded fossils aplenty, with photos of shark teeth, fish palates, bird bones, a turtle carapace and more included. Pyroclastic (ash) material from the North Atlantic Igneous Province dates from 62-53 million years ago.
- Pleistocene brickearths exposed at the south end of the cliff and on the shore have yielded vertebrate fossils, including recently the lower jaw of a mammoth with two teeth and tusk fragments. Occasional finds of Palaeolithic flint implements may also be associated with this deposit. CM

A Celebration of Suffolk Geology.

Visit [www.geosuffolk.co.uk](http://www.geosuffolk.co.uk) for a list of contents of GeoSuffolk's new book.

It can be bought:

- for £20 at Ipswich Museum, the Reg Driver Centre in Christchurch Park and the Tourist Information Centre – all in Ipswich.
- for £24 at Woodbridge Books, Woodbridge
- for £28 you can order by post - enquire at [info@geosuffolk.co.uk](mailto:info@geosuffolk.co.uk)