

GEOSUFFOLK TIMES



Newsletter 62
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Caroline Markham 21.07.24. Our Events page, GeoSuffolk Times archive, and more can be found at <https://geosuffolk.co.uk>

Welcome to Ipswich Geology

This summer we are working on a new 'Geolpswich' leaflet. Ipswich Museum and its geological collection is an obvious choice for inclusion - but it is closed (for redevelopment) for another year and a half. So, to include the Museum as somewhere to visit (if only to view) it will be represented by something timeless. The red brick building in High Street was built in 1880 by J B and F Bennett of Ipswich. The ornate detailing with terracotta panels includes festoons of fruit and flowers, fossils, with Newton and Hogarth in the gables. They are all easily visible from the pavement opposite (be aware of traffic), hopefully through the scaffolding. Look at the south annexe. A little below and left of Newton is a *Turrilites* spiral ammonite in terracotta. This and other fossils were chosen by John Ellor Taylor, the Museum Curator from 1872-1893.

To accompany we have a splendid gilt *Turrilites* on original green cloth on the spine of J E Taylor's book 'Geological Stories' published by Robert Hardwicke, London, 1873.
Bob Markham (RM)



Meet GeoSuffolk

On Heritage Weekend, Saturday September 14th at St Peters by the Waterfront in Ipswich – for the launch of GeoSuffolk's new leaflet on Ipswich Geology, plus a table of specimens. GeoSuffolk has been invited to an Ask the Expert event at Christchurch Mansion on October 31st. Keep an eye on our Events page for further information, including timings, of these events.

12th C Tournai Limestone font in St Peters, Ipswich

County Geodiversity Sites revisited

GeoSuffolk has recently completed its survey of our 29 CGS. Our county is fortunate in having so much land under public/semi-public (charitable institutions) ownership/management and GeoSuffolk designated, some 10/15 years ago, a series of CGS all of which have public access. In summer 2021 we began to revisit them, completing a condition monitoring form for each, and forwarding it to the Suffolk Biodiversity Information Service and to the landowner. Of the 29 CGS, 10 are geological exposures, 10 are landforms and 9 are built environment sites.

Geological Exposures

Many of these lie in the east of the county, within the area of the Suffolk and Essex Coast and Heaths National Landscape. Much of the geology here has SSSI designation, including cliffs north of Southwold, and most Coralline Crag pits. GeoSuffolk has sought to give some protection to other coastal exposures and pits.



In the south the Harwich Formation Cliffs at Harkstead (above) on the Stour estuary and Nacton on the Orwell are CGS. Further north the Norwich Crag cliffs at Thorpeness, Dunwich Heath and Dunwich are all CGS. The Coralline Crag pit in the Orford Castle fortifications (English Heritage), the Red Crag pits at Butley (Forestry Commission) and Newbourne (Suffolk Wildlife Trust), and the Norwich Crag pits in Westleton Common (Westleton Parish Council) and Westleton Heath (RSPB) are all CGS. CM

Landforms

Landforms in southeast Suffolk created by the juxtaposition of Red Crag (permeable) above Harwich Formation (impermeable) comprise four designated CGS. Newbourne Springs (SWT), Christchurch and Holywells Parks in Ipswich and Spa Gardens in Felixstowe all exemplify this landscape. Bridge Wood, Ipswich has the same geology, with landslides on the unstable strata. Much of the coast is protected (Orford Ness is an SSSI for example), GeoSuffolk has designated Thorpe Ness (below) a CGS. Most in need



of protection are our relic periglacial landforms – the splendid vegetation patterns at Knettishall Heath (SWT), the post-Anglian river terraces on Cavenham Heath, Buggs Hole naled in Thelnetnam and the ground ice depressions at Aspal Close in Beck Row.

Built Environment

GeoSuffolk has designated five churches as CGS. Wantisden and Chillesford for the Coralline Crag rock bed used in their construction, Sutton for the record of the local Victorian coprolite industry in its building stones, and Lakenheath church for its variety of West Suffolk stones, including clunch (below). The Dunwich



Church complex is designated for its evidence of coastal erosion. There are three 'big rocks' CGS – the sandstone erratic at Needham Lake, and the sarsen stones in Ipswich, in Christchurch Park and the Pocket Park on the Waterfront. Lastly, surveyed earlier this month, we have the Victorian well at Leiston Long Shop Museum, with its record down to the Chalk.

All CGS retained their GOOD status, (except for the Pocket Park sarsens, some defaced by graffiti). They are all worth a visit - there are grid references on the Geology and Sites page of our website. CM

Geology in the Sky



This splendid photo was taken on the night of May 10/11th in Ipswich by our neighbour George Bostock. The aurora, seen over much of Suffolk, was caused by electrically charged particles (from sunspots) encountering the Earth's magnetic field (generated in the nickel/iron core) and following it into the atmosphere where they hit gases, releasing energy to give light displays. Mike Such has a series of 35 photos, taken near Woodbridge, published in the Orwell Astronomical Society Newsletter, June 2024 www.oasi.org.uk RM

Auroch Skull

There is a photo of an Auroch skull, carbon-14 dated to around 4,300 BC, found during cable-routing near Woodbridge in 'EA3', by the late John Norman, in the Ipswich Society Newsletter 237 April 2024. Chair of the Ipswich Society for many years, John enabled our continuing GeoSuffolk contribution to Heritage Open Days. www.ipswichsociety.org.uk RM

GeoAnglia - Picking Flint

On a recent visit to the Mo Museum in Sheringham I was pleased to see a display about picking flint, including three photos. Flint, 'over 500 tons every winter' was removed from the beach in the 1930s and 1960s and sent to the Stoke on Trent potteries 'to grind into powder....to strengthen the clay'. I well remember sacks of flints on the prom at Sheringham in the 1960s. There is a chemical analysis of it in GeoSuffolk Times no.27. Another, Archant, photograph shows 'Sheringham flint picker William Grice picking a sample of flint for despatch to Canada'. Norman Peake and Jake Hancock record thirteen bands of flint in the Chalk eastwards from Weybourne Hope in 'The Geology of Norfolk', 1961 (and reprint 1970) – a good source for beach flints. Local councils remind us that 'removing natural materials from beaches is illegal under the Coast protection Act 1948. RM