

SSG Meeting Earth Science Centre, Radstock

Presentations were given by;-

Adel Avery who gave a review of SESC activity over the past year. She reminded us that the centre was built 17 years ago to give social value back to the environment and community from the quarrying of the Silurian Andesite at Moon's Hill and quarrying across the Mendip Hills. There are 3 workers at the centre who provide: -

Educational Visits at the only working quarry in the country that provides trips to see rock extraction. This facility is also extended to Home Education Groups as well as to other school groups. They are also assisting in Clark's Village conservation work on the Ichthyosaur collection; we were told that entry to the museum gives you a free pass for the car park valid for a year!

Community Work provided by the Centre includes drop in events on Saturdays and school holidays and also engaging with conservation of donated geology collections, saving them from the skip in some cases! They have worked with the Mary Anning Exhibition at Bristol Museum – celebrating women in GeoScience.

Mendip Rocks annual Festival takes place from 1st to 24th of October.

13 new story boards are being planned for each geological time period and they will be on display outside the Centre.

Garry Dawson presented the new SGG poster reminding us that the SGG goes back to 1984 and that the files from those early meetings have now been digitised.

He spoke of 2 new Local Geological Sites (LGS) – Easton Cutting

-Triscombe Combe Quarry

And 5 LGS on the Strawberry Line. A leaflet is being produced by Garry working with Strawberry Lane staff for Easton Cutting LGS and he hopes to have leaflets for all five sites with interpretation boards eventually.

The Building Stone Survey of Somerset began in 2015 and it is hoped it will be completed in 2027. More than 40 types of building stones have been identified as well as roofing material and non-stone walls.

Geoff Rowland, Ham Hill Countryside Ranger, recommended the excellent coffee and cakes at the new circular Ham Hill visitor centre, which has many other facilities and attractions! He reminded us that Ham Hill has Iron Age connections to quarrying and that it is the oldest Hill Fort in Britain. The 2026 Exhibition includes displays of: -

Deep Time; Somerset – the cradle of Geological Science and the Yeovilian geological substage of the Toarcian; Earthquakes and faults related to the quarry; Waters of Life – Ham Hill as a watershed; Periglacial processes and Geoheritage in the form of dry-stone walls.

Geoff has a Curry-fund grant to use photogrammetry to produce a 3D model of the deep quarry to show its geological detail, and he is in the process of setting up the information on the Ham Hill website.

Geoff has produced a video of Somerset geology showing continental movements from Ordovician times - the earliest rocks in Somerset are Silurian as seen at Moon's Hill.

Andy Gordon – has worked with Garry on the websites for Historic England and English Heritage, adding building stone information so volunteer guides can be more informed about the churches and historic buildings.

Town Trails - Taunton and Yeovil are on the SGG website and SGG members are working on trails for Wells, Glastonbury, Milborne Port and Frome.

Fieldtrip to the new Andesitic Exposure at Stoke St Michael, part of the Moon Hill Quarry complex was held after lunch.

Jennifer Tellez

10th October 2026