



## Report from the UK Committee for UNESCO Global Geoparks – 2020

**Chair:** Kirstin Lemon ([klem@bgs.ac.uk](mailto:klem@bgs.ac.uk))

Geological Survey of Northern Ireland / British Geological Survey

### 1. Members

Chris Woodley-Stewart (Vice-Chair) – North Pennines UNESCO Global Geopark

Raymond Roberts (Vice-Chair) – Countryside Resources Wales

Laura Hamlet (Vice-Chair) – North West Highlands UNESCO Global Geopark

Melanie Border – English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark

Nick Power – English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark

Alan Bowring – Fforest Fawr UNESCO Global Geopark

Tony Ramsay – Fforest Fawr UNESCO Global Geopark

Grainne O'Connor – Marble Arch Caves UNESCO Global Geopark

Martina O'Neill – Marble Arch Caves UNESCO Global Geopark

Naomi Foster – North Pennines UNESCO Global Geopark

Rory Tallack – Shetland UNESCO Global Geopark

Margaret Woods – GeoMon UNESCO Global Geopark

Graham Worton – Black Country UNESCO Global Geopark

Colin Prosser – Natural England

Colin McFadyen – Scottish Natural Heritage

Michael Dempster – Northern Ireland Environment Agency

Huge Barron – Geological Society (Geoconservation Committee)

David Drewry – UK National Commission for UNESCO

Matt Rabagliati – UK National Commission for UNESCO

### 2. Aspiring UNESCO Global Geoparks

#### 2.1 Active applications:

- Mourne Gullion Strangford Aspiring UNESCO Global Geopark (Northern Ireland), application submitted in November 2019

#### 2.2 Interested territories:

- Antrim (Northern Ireland)
- Arran (Scotland)
- Jersey (Channel Islands)

### **3.0 Committee Activities**

#### **3.1 Meetings**

- The annual meeting of the UK Committee for UNESCO Global Geoparks took place virtually on 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> June. This was attended by all UK Committee members with representatives from the aspiring UGGps attending during the open session of the meeting.
- The UK Committee for UNESCO Global Geoparks continues to be actively engaged with the UK National Commission for UNESCO and has attended several meetings throughout 2020.

#### **3.2 Collaboration with UNESCO and the UKNC**

- All UK UGGps worked with the UKNC in the promotion of the National Value of UNESCO in the UK report, both nationally and locally. This seminal report used many of the UK UGGps as case studies to demonstrate the value of UNESCO to the UK. It will be an exceptionally useful document in highlighting the benefits of UGGps to new and aspiring areas.
- Detailed review of the updated self-evaluation checklist and explanatory notes as part of the UGGp application documents and a comprehensive response sent to UNESCO.
- In response to a request from the UKNC, the UKCUGG provided detailed comments to the UKNC on the Draft Recommendations on Open Science produced by UNESCO.

#### **3.3 International engagement**

- The Chair presented at a virtual workshop session organised by the Asia Pacific Geoparks Network (APGN). The presentations highlighted the structure and responsibilities of the UKCUGG as well as a summary on the impact of Covid-19 on all of the UK UGGps.
- The Chair presented at a meeting of the newly established Icelandic Geoparks Forum. The aim of this was to highlight how the UKCUGG functions and to provide some working examples of how the Icelandic Forum could potentially operate. A copy of the UKCUGG Terms of Reference was provided as a basis for their future development.

#### **3.4 Mentoring and advice for interested areas**

The UKCUGG is working with the Mourne Gullion Strangford Aspiring UGGp together with the remaining interested territories of Antrim, Arran and Jersey, all of whom have been assigned mentors from the Committee.

This year has seen an increase in interest in working towards UGGp status from a number of fledgling areas. Initial meetings have taken place with representatives from all of these areas. These are as follows:

- Charnwood Forest
- North Somerset
- East Yorkshire
- North Downs AONB

All of these areas are at a very early stage in their development but have taken the first step in contacting the UKCUGG to establish what is necessary to achieve UGGp status.

#### **3.5 International Geodiversity Day**

The UKCUGG has worked with the UKNC to support a submission to UNESCO to support the International Geodiversity Day initiative. This now has support from organisations all around the world, including 18 international geoscience or nature conservation organisations, 7 Regional Organisations, and more than 80 national organisations in 40 countries with all continents represented.