



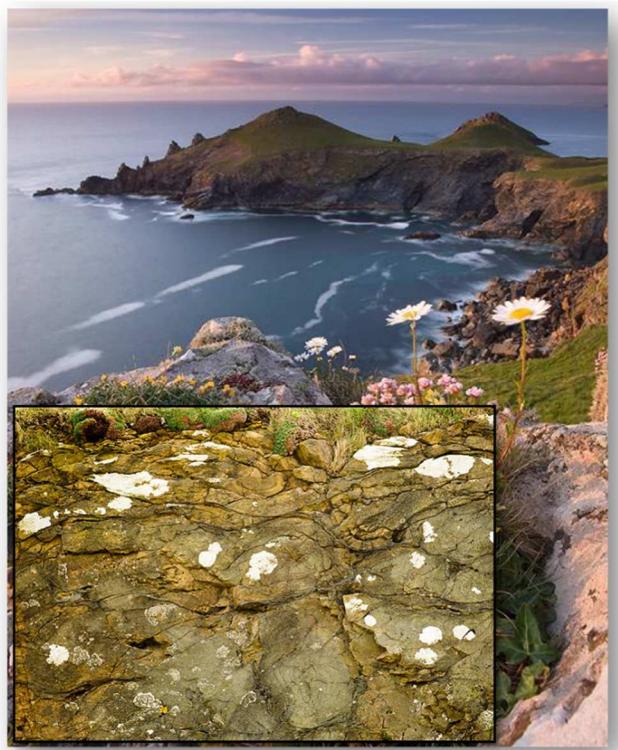
Ussher Society

Newsletter – Winter

2020



From the Secretary



Pentire Headland, Wadebridge, Cornwall

View looking northeast from Pentire Point, towards Rumps Point.

The cliffs along this stretch of coast display several outcroppings of a distinctive bulbous rock form, the remains of Pillow Lavas (Insert image).

Images are from
www.southwestcoastphotos.com

Andrew Green - MSc Integrated Petroleum Geosciences / MSc Petroleum Geochemistry

Secretary for the Ussher Society -
secretary@ussher.org.uk

Dear Membership,

I hope this finds you well and healthy. I appreciate that this year has been very unprecedented with the COVID-19 pandemic hitting the UK particularly hard. In these times it makes us think what is precious to us and something we are all not far from is the outdoors, stunning landscapes and some great local geology and wildlife. I hope that both during the lockdowns and during the summer, you were able to get out and rejuvenate your spirits.

A positive that has emerged from this year is the range and variety of online learning resources (www.futurelearn.com) now available to us and the adaptation of societies to move online which is making this more assessable to its members. The Ussher society is no different, and we aim to host an adapted AGM, including our annual Scott Simpson lecture online in January 2021. See the AGM/Conference section in this newsletter for more details.

One online resource that I've enjoyed during lockdown was discovering David Evans photographic tour of the southwest coastal path (www.southwestcoastphotos.com) split into sections, many of the

subsections come with a geology collection of photos. It was while virtually touring North Cornwall that I discovered the presence of volcanic pillow lavas preserved in the cliffs of the Pentire Headland, Wadebridge.

Volcanic lavas will commonly display pillow and vesicular structures when formed as a result of an underwater eruption. The molten rock emerges from a volcanic vent and upon contact with the water, the lava immediately gains a solid crust which then cracks and oozes additional pillows as more lava emerges. As the pillows grow in size, they flatten under their own weight. This leads to the formation of globular masses of lava which, when piled one on top of another, take on the appearance of a pile of pillows. Their upper surfaces normally convex whilst their lower surfaces conform to the shape of the pillows below. The pillows have highly vesicular cores. This Youtube video shows how lava pillows form today in our oceans (<https://youtu.be/OeI9fZ44Jno> - Watch from 3min)

The 70 meter pillow lava section around the Pentire Headland, Wadebridge are upper Devonian in age and display a clear vesicular structure, formed originally by gas or steam bubbles but which has subsequently been filled with a secondary mineral (Amygdales).

With best wishes, I look forward to meeting many of you online in January 2021 for our society AGM and short lecture series.

Chair's Chat – David Roche

I am pleased and honoured to take on the role of Chair of the Society although the Coronavirus pandemic has been an untimely and unwelcome complication.

I'd like to give a big thank you to Andy Fleet, previous Chair and organiser of the 2020 conference in Exeter which was very successful and enjoyable.

The Covid threat to our annual conference and AGM provides the opportunity for a video event in January 2021 and details are given below. The committee met on Zoom in September and decided to postpone our previous plans, but hopefully we can revert to a normal event in 2022.

Ussher Society Annual Conference / AGM

January 15th 2021 - Online

The Ussher Society annual AGM meeting will be held virtually online Friday January 15th using Zoom.

The AGM will begin at 2 pm and will be followed by a series of 3 online talks, the last of which will be the annual Scott Simpson Lecture which will be given by Prof. Doug Stead, from Simon Fraser University, British Columbia, Canada (also an honorary visiting professor at Exeter University CSM).

Planned schedule (January 15th 2021)

14:00 - 15.30: Ussher Society AGM

15:40-16:10: Talk 1 – TBC [25min+Q's]

16:20-16:50: Talk 2 – TBC [25min+Q's]

17:00-18:00 – Scott Simpson Lecture: Prof. Doug Stead [50mins+Q's]

A copy of the minutes from the last 58th AGM is attached at the end of this newsletter.

**Ussher Society Annual Conference - Saunton Sands Hotel
Postponed until January 2022**



The Ussher Society committee has decided due to the current COVID-19 situation and in the interest of our members' health that there will not be a physical in person annual conference in January 2021.

The original plan to meet at the Saunton Sands Hotel, North Devon has been postponed by a year until January 2022 when hopefully we will be able to meet once again to discuss and enjoy oral and/or poster presentations from those interested in geoscience topics relevant to the South-west England.

New Website (created in wordpress –
Image is the Home Page)

Key Features:

1. Clean website banner menu with relevant photo
2. Website pages with smooth drop-down menus
3. A Home button, so wherever you are on the website you can easily return to the website home page
4. 3 x focuses: emphasis is given to 3 things which are active in the society (these can change during time)
5. Single Contact us form (removes the need for email address throughout the site)
6. Live social media Twitter feed

Pages on the website are:

Home,
About us -> History & The committee,
Conferences, News & Events,
Journal -> Catalogue,
Funding Opportunities, Membership

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Ussher Society website. Feature 1 is the large banner at the top showing a coastal landscape. Feature 2 is the 'Home' button in the top navigation bar. Feature 3 is the 'About us' dropdown menu. Feature 4 points to three main content boxes: 'ANNUAL CONFERENCE', 'GEOSCIENCE IN SOUTH-WEST ENGLAND', and 'FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES'. Feature 5 points to the 'Contact us' form at the bottom left. Feature 6 points to the 'Tweets by @geoscienceSW' section on the right.

Society Website

The Ussher Society is pleased to announce that at this AGM we will be launching the new Ussher Society website. Below is a preview of some of the new sites key features.

Ussher Committee Changes

At the 58th AGM January 6th 2020 held at the Devon Hotel, Andy Fleet welcomed David Roche to the position of society Chair, while he steps back returning to Vice Chair for his second stint in this role.

Kate Smith relinquished the role of treasurer, passing the position on to Peter Frost. Peter has previously held this role. Kate has kindly agreed to act as auditor to the society's accounts moving forwards.

The committee thanks both Andy and Kate for their service and commitment to the society over the years, while welcoming Peter back onto the committee.

New Opportunities to Join the Society Committee:

At the upcoming AGM January 2021, to be held online via Zoom, there will be several committee positions which will become available. If you are interested in and are willing to contribute to the society then please consider standing for one of the following:

Website manager: The society in January will launch its new website. This new site has been built using an online website building service which makes managing the website moving forwards much more sustainable. With a pre-created site template the new website manager will be in charge of updating content which will be fed to them.

An additional role is to look after our social media Twitter account. A lot of useful local news is reported and the role will be to re-tweet interesting news to the society members.

Geological Editor: The role of society editor has changed over recent years with the decline in our ability to publish the Journal GiSWE. Moving forwards, the role will be to manage conference abstracts and produce a record of material presented at our annual conferences. If publishable material is provided to the society the editor will work with the website manager to get the material up online.

Committee member: we are always looking for new members to join the committee. The role here is to attend 3 meetings a year in which the upkeep and running of the society is discussed. New committee members are needed to inject new ideas for member activities and initiatives the society should support.

If you have a desire to be involved in the society and have an aspiration to assist in its running then please **let me know by the end of the year**. If you would like any more information on what is involved in being a member then please contact me on: secretary@ussher.org.uk

Change of Treasurer's Address

Please note that the Treasurer's address with immediate effect is:

Treasurer
Mr P. Frost
Ussher Society (Hon Treasurer),
18 Treneulos
Frogpool
Truro
TR4 8RT
UK.

Society Membership Fees

At the 57th AGM, Paignton, Devon it was agreed by all that the subscription rate for society members should be set at £30.

As of January 1st 2021 renewal of your society membership will be due.

Please send your cheque, made out to the Ussher Society, to the address above or through your bank (the society's bank account is HSBC, Ussher Society, sort code 40-20- 30, account number 91039059). Should you wish to discontinue your membership, please inform the Secretary (secretary@ussher.org.uk) and Treasurer (treasurer@ussher.org.uk) as soon as possible.

The current subscription rates are as follows:

- Full membership rate is £30
- **Retired membership is £30**
- Student membership is £12

It would be helpful if the few members currently not paying by Standing Order would do so and a link to the Standing Order form can be found on the Ussher society website Membership page.

Society Member Details

If over the past year any of your personal or contact details have changed, please inform the Secretary by visiting the Ussher society website Membership page - send it to secretary@ussher.org.uk

Somerset Building Stones

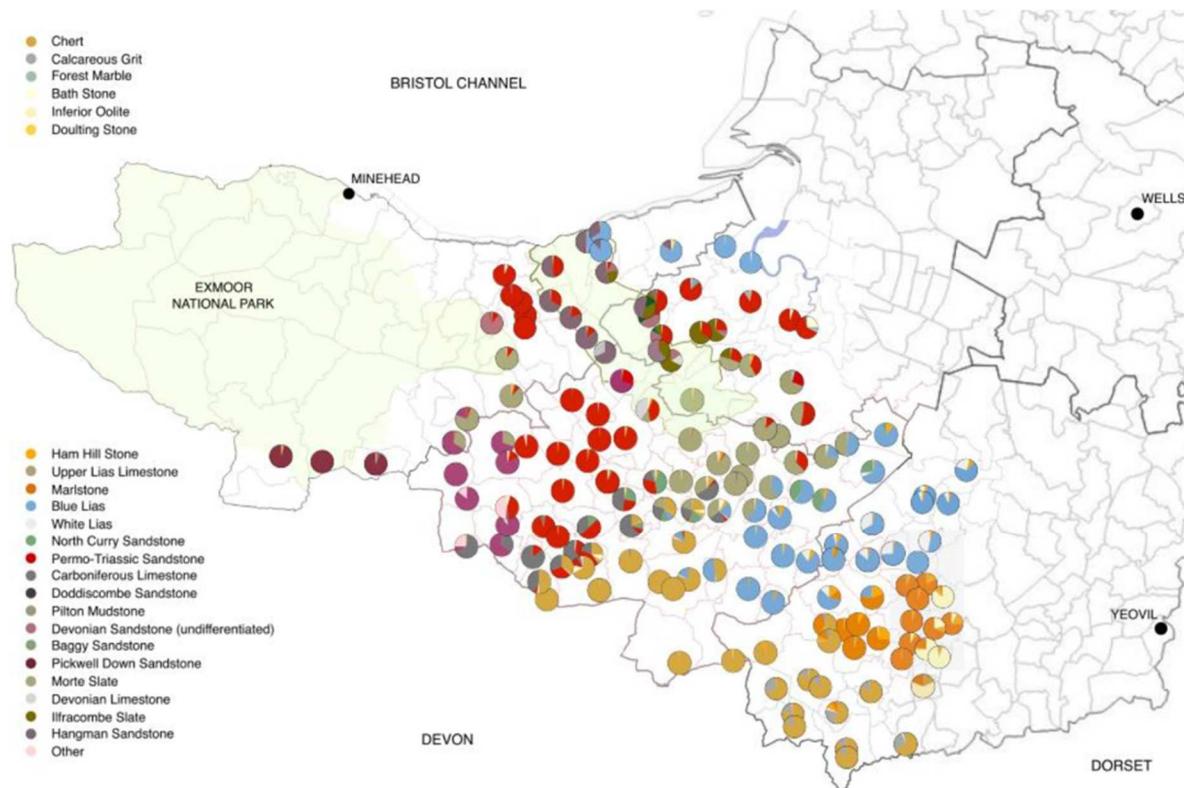


Image: Regional map showing the extent of the survey 2015-2019

Ussher member Garry Dawson and friend Peter Wright have over the past five years been researching the use of traditional building stones in Somerset. Their work demonstrates a tight correlation between the wide variety of building stones in Somerset and the bedrock below.

Since retiring Garry and Peter have committed over 1,550 hours surveying 146 historic settlements containing 5,432 buildings, 148 churches and 1,407 boundary walls across Somerset.

To date, their research has covered the Borough of Taunton Deane, the Quantock Hills and surrounding settlements, and the western half of the District of South Somerset up to the River Parrett. Further surveys are underway in west and south Somerset.

The report in its entirety can be found and downloaded from the Somerset Heritage Centre's website:

<https://swheritage.org.uk/historic-environment-service/built-heritage/traditional-building-stone-research/>

The page also holds links to Dr Mike Barr's Building Stone Inventories for Devon and part of Somerset and Dorset and a previously unpublished list of Somerset Church Building Stone compiled by Hugh Prudden.

Members: If you have material you would like to see in your newsletter, please send it to me.

Geology from Your Sofa

The Geologists' Association (Ussher Society are an Affiliate) have set up a fantastic website, full of freely available resources to explore from the comfort of your sofa/office chair.

<https://geologistsassociation.org.uk/sofageology/#latest>

Here you can find a range of resource from:

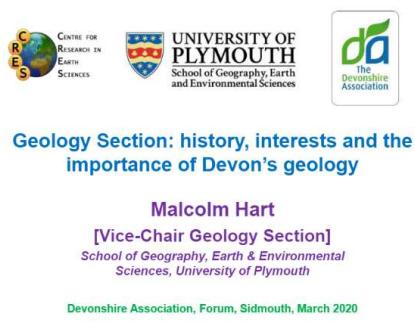
- YouTube and podcast lectures
- online courses
- virtual field trips
- GeoFun

Do allow time to explore and reap the benefits, but do not limit yourselves to a single visit, because the content is regularly updated with new material.

Some highlights are:

- 1) A link to Malcolm Hart's presentation entitled (with PDF download): Geology Section: history, interests and the importance of Devon's geology (2020)**

<https://devonassoc.org.uk/devoninfo/geology-section-history-interests-and-the-importance-of-devons-geology-2020/>



- 2) Professor John Marshall (Uni of Southampton) as part of the Festival of Geology which took place November 7th**

UV-B radiation was the terrestrial killer at the Devonian-Carboniferous boundary (55mins)

<https://festivalofgeology.org.uk/lectures-and-break-out-rooms/>

- 3) Dr Anjana Khatwa Where on Earth Do You Live? YouTube Series
4. Exeter (great for the Younger viewer)**

<https://youtu.be/3Pa3QHFjOGQ>

Fact: Exeter's gothic-inspired cathedral is said to contain the varied geology of any cathedral in Britain with stone sourced from 20 local quarries.

Past Members

The Ussher Society is sad to report the loss of several of its members during the first half of 2020.

All will be remembered.

Desmond Donovan

Desmond was well respected in the world of palaeontology

Brian Selwood

Brian was one of the editors of the first edition of the Geology of Devon

Colin Morey

A contributor to the societies Geoscience in South-west England journal

Peter Fookes

Peter was described as the "father of engineering geomorphology" and was a pioneer in the application of geology to civil engineering

Society Events

Friday January 15th 2021

Ussher Society Online (Zoom) AGM and Mini-Conference series

Regional Events

MIREU project webinar

Registration is now open for all three sessions on the MIREU website.

<https://mireu.eu/events/mireu-webinar-series>

- **Wednesday November 25th – 9:00 – 12:00 GMT**

The soft skills approach to responsible mining and metallurgy: education as a key ingredient for society-wide SLO

- **Wednesday December 2nd – 13:00 – 12:30 GMT**

Funding and investment conditions: how to attract money but also to trigger innovation and build expertise in Europe

- **Thursday December 3rd – 13:00 – 16:00 GMT**

Network of Mining and Metallurgy European Regions – joining our resources and giving the regions a voice

**Draft Minutes
of
The Ussher Society
58th Annual General Meeting
held at the
Devon Hotel, Exeter, Devon
on
Thursday 6th January 2020 at 5.00pm**

Committee Present: Andrew Green (AG), Andy Fleet (AF), David Roche (DR), David Allen (DA), Richard Scrivener (RS), Malcolm Hart (MH), Kate Smith (KS), Danny Clark-Lowes (DCL)

1 Apologies were received from:

Phil Gibbard, Alistair Ruffell, Chris Yeomans, Sam Hughes, Peter Fookes, John Merefield, Kevin Page, Gerard Duddridge

2 Minutes of the 57th Annual General Meeting held on 3rd January 2019

The Minutes were deemed to be a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.
Proposed by: Jenny Bennett and Ramues Gallois.

3 Matter Arising (other than those in the Agenda items)

None

4 Items brought forward by the Chair

None

5 Secretary's Report

AG: Recounts the current membership status to the AGM: 174 paid members (142 contactable by email & 32 postal members)

AG: Notifies the membership that society membership fees are now due and notification has gone out to society members, initially in the Autumn newsletter and again as an email reminder on the 2nd January 2020.

AG: Informs society members of the current society membership rates, as agreed at the last AGM (Ordinary members £30, Retired members £30, Students £12), and encourages that all bank standing orders are amended accordingly.

AG: Welcome goes out to 3 new members who have joined the society over the past year: Hester Clarridge, Beth Colgan, Steven Harker.

The society has seen the loss of 2 members (as of Jan 2020) who have not renewed their membership: Andrew Lane and John Cuttleback.

AG: Encourages members to ensure their contact details stage up to date, informing the society of any changes through the change of detail form available on our website.

AG: The society has over the past year produced a single newsletter (prepared and sent out in Autumn 2019). The society aims to return to 2 newsletters in 2020 (Spring & Autumn). AG promotes membership participation in supplying material (both news, event information etc.) to be included in the newsletter.

AG: Informs members that based on the accepted proposal taken at the last AGM "to not produce a printed journal, but instead to convert all submitted conference abstracts to PDF and publish online following the meeting", we are responding to contact by institutional members honestly and subsequently not invoicing them.

AG: Informs the membership of a generous donation that the society received from Chris Cornford following his death, amounting to £2000. AG: informs members that the committee has discussed ideas as to the most appropriate course of action to send/invest the money. However, if the members have any ideas as to its use, please feel free to contact the society secretary. Secretary@ussher.org.uk

6 Treasurer's Report

KS: Presents an overview of the audited society accounts for the financial year: Aug 2018-July 2019. In Appendix.

KS: Thanks the current Auditor Dee Edwards DE) for her time and efforts in looking over the accounts.

DE: Informs the society that her review of the accounts is based on the Excel sheets that she's been sent and based on these the figures add up. DE comments that she has not had the opportunity to check figures against those that appear in cheque and paying-in books.

DE: Explains that the role of society auditor is to "see that numbers fairly reflect the current financial situation of the society" and to this end, she is satisfied.

KS: Encourages the membership that when making BACS payments to the society that they ensure the stated reference at the point of payment transfer is as meaningful as possible. Please include a 1st initial and surname followed by either a "C" for payments related to conference or "M" for payments related to membership.

KS: Comments that overall the current financial situation of the society is healthy. It is noted that this year there was no expenditure associated with producing a physical journal (estimated @ ~£4500 based on previous years). If this was factored into the income vs expenditure figures, we would have made a small loss.

However, it was reiterated that as per the last AGM, the society is heading down a new path to recording the contributions made to society technical meetings. This will see different associated costs which at present are estimated to be less than those linked to a physical journal).

7 Editor's Report

MH: Summarises the current state of submissions to the societies GiSWE journal; 1 paper in the past 3yrs.

MH: Reminds attendees of the decision taken at the Jan 2019 AGM to revert to publishing just the abstracts connected to our conferences.

MH: Confirms he has received and prepared the abstracts from the Falmouth, Paignton and Exeter (this) conference + 1 paper ready to be sent to a typesetter for formatting before publishing online on the society website.

MH: Informs the AGM that the cost of typing setting the abstracts will be between less than £1000 and given the current membership fee the society committee feels this is an

appropriate amount. The yearly cost going forward will be less as we will only be asking for typesetting to be done on abstracts from 1 conference, not 3.

MH: Asks the AGM for their abstract formatting preference. Would members prefer:

- A) The abstracts from a single Ussher conference to be formatted into a single PDF file with individual abstracts spread across a 2 column layout (as presented in the PDF from the Saunton Sands Conference Vol 14 Part 2 2017 for those abstracts not converted to full papers – http://www.ussher.org.uk/Ussher_Society_Journal17.htm)
- B) The abstracts from a single Ussher conference to be formatted into individual PDF files (one abstract per PDF file)

CY: From the perspective of an author wishing to take their conference abstracts and post them on online academic profile, e.g. ResearchGate, then option b is preferable. This would also allow authors to properly reference their work through certain online sites and the use of digital object identifiers (DOI).

SH: Seconds CY comment for an individual PDF per abstract

RS: Comments that there is freely available software which enables users to split a PDF apart. Therefore a single PDF with all abstracts relating to a single conference would be more appropriate and suited to our society website, removing the need for lots of folders. However, for this solution, we would have to ensure that the typesetter does not protect the PDF and that the single-column format can be used to break apart individual abstracts cleanly.

RS: Asked for the inclusion of conference and society information in the headers and footers of each page.

Action: MH will investigate the options associated with the typesetter producing either a single abstract per PDF vs a single PDF of abstracts in a single column format.

MH: Starts a discussion about what the minimum amount of author personal/affiliation information, appearing at the top of a given abstract, should be.

DCL: Strongly feels the minimum information should be author name and their affiliation, so the reader knows from where the work has come. If the Author wishes to add additional information, e.g. email then this would be optional, and their choice.

8 Acting Web Manager's Report

CY: Provides a summary of decisions made follow on from last years AGM.

CY: Confirms that since the last meeting he did review available options to the society for updating the society website, and on presenting these options to the committee it was agreed that we should go ahead and create a new website.

CY: Informs the meeting that since the decision to go ahead with a new website was taken, life events (new job, new house etc.) have so far prevented progress happening.

CY: Provides a new timeline that sees a new website being created in the first 2 quarters of 2020 ahead of the summer.

CY: Presents some detail on the involved cost of a new website. Currently, as stated in the Treasurers report, we pay ~£160/yr. This it transpires is towards the top end of what a website in today's time should be. Moving to WordPress (committee preferred option)

should cost us between £80-£150, and so depending on the subscription package the society picks we should be maintaining or even reducing our current expenditure on the website.

CY: Reports to the AGM on his other role as social media officer, which is maintaining the societies Twitter account and feed. The number of followers our Twitter has grown by 74 from 224 – 298 followers. This has been achieved primarily through the re-tweeting (taking a post from another Twitter account and advertising it our follower) geological projects and development occurring in the South West, England.

CY: Ask the society that if any member has news, they wish to share either in the website or on our Twitter account then to please email him on: web@ussher.org.uk

CY: Informs the AGM that this will be his last year as society web manager. Having held the role for 5yrs, and he would like to hand over the new website to someone who can inject new energy to take it forwards. CY adds that it would be ideal if someone is identified and in place prior to the end of the year so that they are able to follow the transition of the website as it happens.

AF: Requests that anyone interesting in the role, please get in contact with the society and if you know anyone who might be interested let them and us know.

9 Conference 2020

AF: Apologies for not managing to organise a conference field trip.

AF: Thanks DR for finding the hotel

AF: Invites comments from members, good or bad which the committee can usefully use when organising annual meetings going forwards. None put forward at the meeting.

10 Conference 2021 and other events

AF: Comments that the committee has been discussing the venue for the 2021 conference and the general feeling is that the location should be in North Devon.

AF: Invites the AGM attendees to comment over the date of the next conference, noting that once again, despite holding the conference slightly later than usual, we have had some difficulties with technical submissions and attendees due to timing clashes with other organisations (VMSG and MDSG).

CY: Comments that date clashes with other organisations has impacted the overall attendance of this years conference and notes that many of Day 1 speakers are not going to be present on Day 2.

AF: Responds that the timing of the conference has led to a split conference programme with very thematic days, which is undesirable.

KS: Suggests if we were to move the conference to the spring, we would likely have better field trip weather and long daylight hours.

JM & MH: Both comment that the discussion of conference timing reoccurs every year and is a balance between cost (cheaper in January) and the aim to get in before the academic year starts.

SH: Proposes investigating dates towards the end of January, in which hotel cost should still be low, but does recognise that you are into the academic year by that time.

AG: Suggests we try better communication with VMSG and MDSG in terms of conference dates.

CY: Acknowledges this comment from AG, but informs the meeting that attempts to do this during the organisation of the Falmouth meeting did not work. Unfortunately, certain organisations and people look down on societies like Ussher and are unwilling to work with us on the issue of dates.

DR: Suggests we hold a show of hands over potentially moving the date of the conference to the end of January.

AF: Proposes the vote question: Who is in favour of maintaining the current date after New Year and before the start of the university academic term? Who is in favour of investigating conference dates towards the end of January?

Result: The majority vote to keep the conference after New Year and before the start of the university academic term.

AF: Invites suggestions of people who are willing to organise the 2021 conference.

AG: Comments that being based in North Devon, he can coordinate with prospective conference hotels and work alongside one in charge of the academic programme. AG observes that with the hotel under his responsibility, the organiser of the academic programme is not restricted by location.

The following assignment of a conference academic programme organiser took place after the AGM meeting.

Sam Bicknell (SB) has offered to act of the conference academic programme organiser for the 2021 Ussher society conference and work alongside AG.

11 Forthcoming Ussher Society events and/or other events of interest to the membership

AG: The society committee has expressed an intent this year to hold a summer field trip.

AG: Informs the AGM attendees that a set location for a field trip has yet to be decided and if any society member has any ideas outside of North Devon, then please get in contact.

AG: Reiterates that there are now a host of online geologically themed courses available, which might be of interest to members. One provider of online courses online is www.futurelearn.com.

12 Election of Committee Members and Officers

AF: Leads proceedings in the election of committee members and officers. For those acting officers who are standing down, AF extends his gratitude for their time and effort put into their roles.

The meeting approved the following committee with specific proposals as noted below:

David Roche: To become society Chair

Andy Fleet: Returns to being Vice Chair after 2 years as society chair

Peter Frost: To become Treasurer Proposed: Kate Smith
Seconded: Sam Hughes

Andrew Green: To continue as Secretary

Malcolm Hart: To continue as Editor

Chris Yeomans: To remain Web Editor, for one more year
Danny Clark-Lowes: To continue as a committee member
Richard Scrivener: Re-elected as a committee member
Sam Hughes: Re-elected as a committee member
David Allen: Re-elected as a committee member
Beth Colgan: To continue as a committee member

13 Appointment of Auditors

Dee Edwards (DE) Indicated that she would not undertake the role of society auditor for the coming year. AF thanked DE for her service as auditor to the society over the past 3 years.

KS: Announces that she is happy to be elected as auditor of the society for the coming year covering the accounts from 2019/2020. The membership approved this appointment by a show of hands.

AF: Called for any member who wished to act as a second auditor for the society, but no one volunteered. The committee will endeavour to find a second auditor for the society accounts during the year.

14 Any Other Business previously notified to the Chair/Secretary

MH: Informed the society, that due to his health, Peter Fookes has decided that he will be unable to attend any future Ussher Society events. He sends his best wishes to the society.

AF: Send best wishes to Peter from the society

MH: Informed the society Desmond Donovan sadly passed away in December 2019. He was well respected in the world of palaeontology. There will likely be a memorial event in Spring/Summer 2020 in Somerset.

JM: John Renouf, one of the founding Ussher members, regrets he couldn't make it to the meeting due to the health of his wife.

AF: Send best wishes to John from the Society

15 Date and Venue of next AGM

Next meeting will be held on in January 2021 with the venue and time to be confirmed.

The meeting closed at 6.10 pm.

Summary of Ussher Society audited accounts for the financial year: August 2018-July 2019

Ussher Society community account 31/07/2018: £3,212.95 31/07/2019: £8,474.33

Expenditure 18/19: £6,041.57

Conference	£4,881.15
Field bursaries	£518.00
Geological Association (insurance+)	£211.36
Expenses	£266.80
Internet	£158.26
Bank charge (foreign cheque)	£6.00

Income 18/19: £11,302.95

Please note the change
in membership fees for
2020. Thanks.

£30 - retired
£30 – working
£12 – student

Conference fees	£4,782.00
Membership	£3,892.08
Chris Cornford Bequest	£2,000.00
Publishers licensing	£255.87
Not sure (membership or conference)	£373.00

For BACS payments it would
be helpful please members
could include a 1st initial &
surname followed by either a
'C' or 'M' for payments
related to conference or
membership in the reference.

Ussher Society savings account

31/07/2018: £6,614.24 31/07/2019: £6,626.39 (Interest £12.15)