

THREAT TO THE COAL BALL SITE ON TODMORDEN MOOR

In mid-December 2014, the West Yorkshire Geology Trust heard of a planning application for a forest track at Todmorden Moor LGS. The route would take the track right through the site of a disused spoil tip and then follow an old mine tramway. There had been no consultation with local organisations or with WYGT.

The spoil tip and the tramway contain mining waste from the unique Union coal seam, which contains 'coal balls' with perfectly preserved plant fossils. This is probably the only remaining site for such fossils in the UK and is therefore of international importance. A geological trail with interpretation boards on geology and mining heritage, was established on Todmorden Moor in 2013. The trail is popular with geology groups and local people and WYGT has produced an 8-page leaflet available on the WYGT website.

Only ten days remained before the planning application closed. A local resident had organised a petition with more than 100 signatures and this was presented at a public meeting of Todmorden Town Council, who recommended that the planning application should be refused. I got in contact with geologists from local and national organisations who responded magnificently. There were more than thirty objections, including the Geologists' Association and the main geological societies in the north of England.

In early February I heard that the planning application had been withdrawn. If a second application is planned, we hope that groups such as WYGT, Calderdale Countryside Services and local people will be consulted, as it could be possible to remove the fossil material to a safe place so that it could be used for research, while allowing the forestry track to go ahead.

IMPROVEMENTS AT ELLAND ROAD CUTTING LGS

Elland Bypass A629 [SE 103 215] exposes 25m of Namurian Rough Rock in a 700m long cutting. There is a detailed account in *Yorkshire Rocks and Landscape* p98, which gives an explanation of the structures in the river delta system. The exposure has become very overgrown with young birch and oak trees and pedestrian access has been limited on the busy road. However, a new cycle way at the foot of the cliff makes it possible to walk along the cutting from roadside parking on Exley Lane, just off the A6025 Elland to Brig-house road [SE 106 215]. Calderdale Countryside Services has cleared some of the trees so it is possible to see mudstones and siltstones at the base of the sequence and two or three channel sandstones which lie above them.

The best location to see the full sequence is at SE 102 214, but there are interesting exposures at road level along most of the cycle way. The main hazard now is not falling rocks but fast-moving cyclists!



WEST YORKSHIRE GEOLOGY TRUST NEWSLETTER 18 SPRING 2015



CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

We have been busy with Local Geological Sites this winter. The threat to the Todmorden Moor Local Geological Site is explained in the newsletter. Strangstry Wood LGS, which is a disused brick clay pit called Calder Quarry, will be filled in and re-stored. There has been full consultation with mineral planners and the engineering consultants, so that the significant section of the Lower Coal Measures shales and sandstones can be available for research. Calderdale Council has removed trees from the Elland Bypass LGS, so that the rocks can be clearly seen from the new cycle way. The photo below shows Thorner Quarry near Leeds, where we hope to see improvements soon. My thanks go to committee members who have helped with all this work and are continuing to monitor other important LGS. Walks and activities are planned for this spring and summer and details are available in this newsletter and on the website.

Alison Tymon



Thorner Quarry

THORNER QUARRY, LEEDS

Plans to improve the overgrown Thorner Quarry LGS near Leeds are being discussed by the site's owners and Thorner Parish Council. They are applying for a grant to create access to the quarry and provide information about the rocks, the quarrying industry and the old cottages which were built after the quarry became disused. WYGT is involved in consultations and we look forward to being able to visit the site in future.

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Newmillerdam, Wakefield

Saturday 28th March 11.00 – 1.00

Meet Tony Felski at the car park opposite the Fox and Hounds (SE 332 157) for a 2 mile circular walk. Stout footwear recommended for slopes and footpaths.

Wakefield Council

Geology and Quarrying on Ilkley Moor

Friday 10th April

Bradford Countryside Services

Meet William Varley at 10:30am at Cow and Calf car park, Hangingstones Road, Ilkley Moor for a walk looking at the landscape, geology and industrial archaeology of Ilkley Moor. Circular 7 miles (11.2km) Bring a packed lunch.



Hebden and Yarnbury - leats, flues and fossils

Wednesday 15th April

Bradford Countryside Services

Meet William Varley at 10:30am at Hebden Old School Tea Room, Hebden, North Yorkshire for a look at the landscape, geology and industrial archaeology of this once important lead mining area. Circular 7 miles (11.2km) Bring a packed lunch.

Rocks and Landscapes of Todmorden Moor, Calderdale

Calderdale Council

Saturday 18th April 1.00 – 4.00

Meet Alison Tymon for a 3 mile walk on the Todmorden Moor Geological Trail to see old coal mines and quarries, with a chance of finding coal balls and other fossils. Park on the road near Sourhall Cottages, Sourhall Road, Todmorden (SD 917 247) Todmorden Moor is high and exposed so bring waterproofs, wear good shoes or boots. Bring a magnifying glass to see the fossils clearly.



Coal ball containing plant fossils from Todmorden Moor. These are found in coal seams and are not made of coal!

YORKSHIRE GEOLOGY MONTH

Yorkshire Geology Month is being launched on April 25 at the National Coal Mining Museum near Wakefield and heralds six weeks of interesting and different geological events in May and early June. Full details of all the events will be available on the Yorkshire Geological Society website at www.yorksgeolsoc.org.uk

Yorkshire Geology Day - Geology and your Health

Saturday 25th April 2015 10.00 - 5.00

National Coal Mining Museum, Wakefield WF4 4RH

Organised by the Yorkshire Geological Society

All day - Identification desk, so bring your rock, mineral and fossil specimens to be identified by experts. Geological exhibits and poster displays from geological companies, local societies and mining groups. Sales of geological leaflets

Morning - Short talks by experts on various subjects for the general public. Underground walks into the drift mine to be booked on the day at the NCM Reception. Be prepared for a long and steep descent so wear walking boots. Short guided geology walks on the Museum site.

2.00 to 5.00 - Yorkshire Geological Society lecture programme session on the theme of 'Geology and your Health'.

The event is open free of charge to all members of the public.

www.yorksgeolsoc.org.uk

Addingham Moorside – Millstone Lumps and Beyond

Thursday 7th May

Bradford Council

Meet William Varley at 10:30am at the Memorial Hall, Addingham for a walk looking at the landscape, geology and industrial archaeology of Addingham High Moor. Circular walk of 7 miles (11.2km). Bring a packed lunch.



Addingham Edge



Shales and siltstones have been eroded by the river in Roundhay Gorge. Sandstones are found in small quarries on the valley sides.

Rocks and Fossils of Roundhay Park, Leeds

Friends of Roundhay Park

Saturday 9th May 1.30 – 4.00

Meet Bill Fraser outside the Mansion House Visitors Centre, LS8 2JL, (SE 330 383) in Roundhay Park. A guided walk of approximately 2.5 miles around a marked Geological Trail taking about 3 hours, with stops for discussion. Features seen are shales and several different types of sandstone (some of which contain fossils), as well as sedimentary and tectonic structures. Footpaths are graded for easy walking but can be muddy in wet weather.