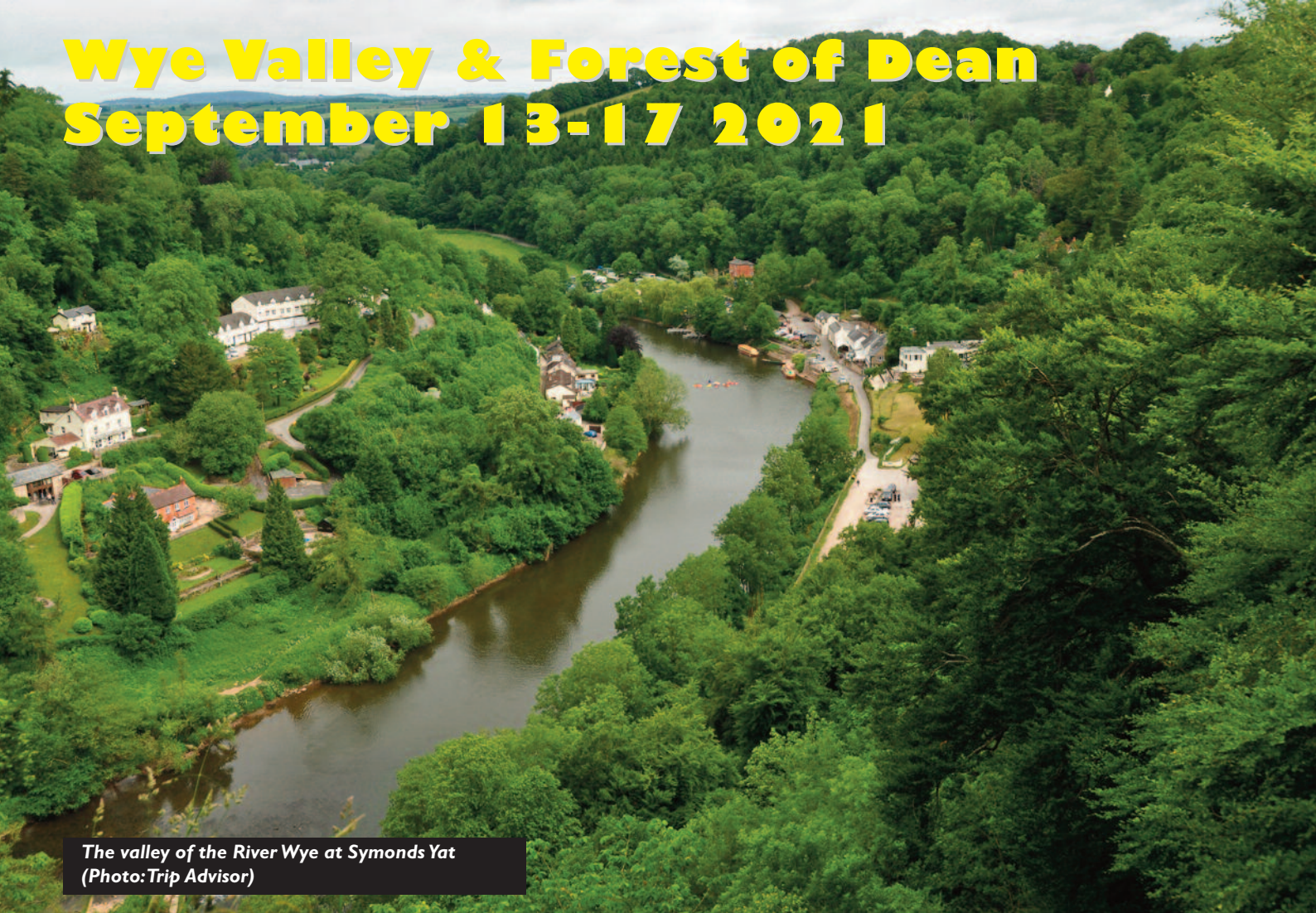




Down to Earth

"Earth science learning for all"

Wye Valley & Forest of Dean September 13-17 2021



The valley of the River Wye at Symonds Yat
(Photo: Trip Advisor)

A word from your leaders...

When you consider the range of places that we've visited over the past fifteen years on our field trips, it seems amazing that we have never offered a residential in the Wye Valley and Forest of Dean area. The reason for the late appearance of this brochure has been the difficulty in finding suitable accommodation in the immediate area of the Forest of Dean.

We have solved the accommodation problem by looking a few miles westwards, to the historic Welsh town of Chepstow. This has the added advantage that it has a railway station with Sunday trains and is very handy for locations in the beautiful Wye Valley as well as being fairly close to the ancient Forest of Dean.

The area boasts superb geology and landscape mainly in rocks of the Devonian and Carboniferous. We'll also glimpse some older rocks at Huntley Quarry in Gloucestershire and younger rocks at Aust Cliff beside the River Severn. We'll travel to all our locations in a hired minibus driven by Colin. As this is an area where the geology is fairly straightforward and simple it is suitable for people of all levels of ability and geological knowledge, including beginners.

As this is an area that we have never before visited, we expect it to book up quite quickly. Early booking is strongly advised.

Chris Darmon & Colin Schofield
Course Organisers/Leaders

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Getting to and from Chepstow

Chepstow railway station has Cross Country services on the Nottingham-Cardiff line that also calls at Derby and Birmingham. There are also local GWR services from Gloucester. By road, Chepstow is quite close to the M4 and M5 and is served by the A48 trunk road.

Getting around on the trip

For this trip we will have the use of a hired 17-seater minibus. This will be driven by Colin Schofield who will ensure we are safely and comfortably

transported around the area. Users of the minibus will be required to wear face coverings, unless you are exempt. You are also welcome to use your own car on the day excursions, none of which will be far away from our base. It is also possible that we will use local bus or train on one day.

Walking

Everything should be within the capabilities of all of the party. We will always try to get as close as possible to the sites, but this will still mean that there are some walks of a couple of miles, to see the best exposures. There may be some short sections of steep cliff ascents and descents. However, if at any time you wish to 'opt out' that will be fully acceptable and understood. In view of the uncertainties of the weather you are strongly advised to bring all waterproofs and walking boots – particularly as you will be walking over rough ground.

Why the Severn Valley & the Forest of Dean?

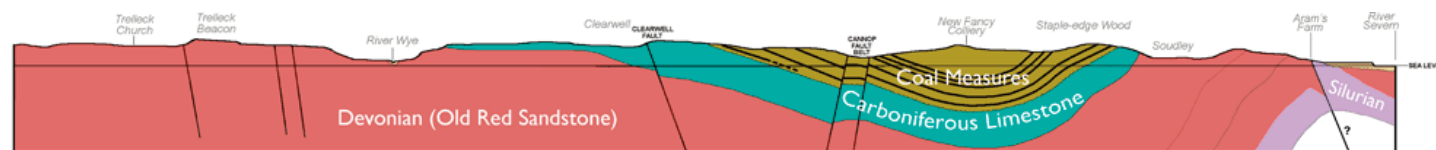


The oldest rocks of the area outcrop in small exposures in Gloucestershire where they occur close to the major fault known as the Malvern Line. These rocks date from the Silurian period.

The overlying Devonian, Old Red Sandstone and Carboniferous rocks have been folded during the Variscan Orogeny into simple anticlines and synclines. The Forest of Dean syncline is the dominant element in the landscape of that area. The historic forest is also home to the legendary 'free miners' who have a right to mine coal by dent of where they live. Even today there are several working coal mines. We are hoping to visit one of them during our trip.

Further to the west, the Wye Valley is dominated by the Carboniferous Limestone which locally forms a deep gorge. There are excellent exposures of the limestone in places like Symonds Yat and in Chepstow itself.

The youngest rocks of the area belong to the Triassic and Jurassic. The most famous exposure is that at Aust Cliff beneath the Severn bridge. Here we are able to see the succession across the boundary between the two periods, including the bone bed with its phosphatic fossils.



The landscape of the area is largely down to erosion by the two main rivers, the Severn and the Wye and the deep valleys that they have cut in the rocks. With the help of Colin, we'll be able to appreciate how they were formed and the influences of melt waters and ice.

Accommodation & Food

Good food and a good night's rest are important elements to our trip. For this trip we've chosen a family run guesthouse, called 'The First Hurdle', close to the centre of historic Chepstow. Single accommodation is available, but is limited and subject to a modest supplement. We are happy to help anyone looking for someone to share a twin bedded room - simply indicate on the booking form.

Evening dinners will be taken at different restaurants in Chepstow, including the pizza restaurant next door, owned by the same people as our accommodation.

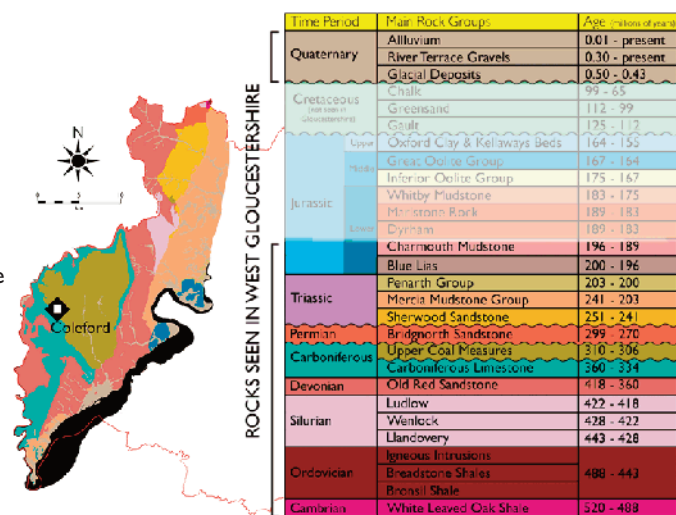
Packed lunches, will be taken for each full field day purchased from a local bakery.

Itinerary

The following is not intended to be prescriptive, but to give you an idea of what we hope to cover during this trip. It may also be altered or amended due to Covid restrictions:-

- The basement rocks at Huntley Quarry, Gloucestershire.
- Devonian Old Red Sandstone rocks of the Forest of Dean.
- The iron and coal mines of the Forest of Dean.
- Visit to Hopewell Colliery with underground tour (subject to conformation).
- The geomorph at Fancy Mine.
- The Carboniferous rocks of Symonds Yat and the Wye Valley.
- The Triassic and Jurassic rocks of Aust Cliff, River Severn.

We will finish no later than 12.00 on the final day, close to Chepstow, allowing everyone time to get home.



Cost

For 2 people sharing a double or twin room, the cost of the 4-night trip will be £525.00 per person; for single occupancy, the cost will be £650.00 per person and is limited to a maximum of 3.

If you are willing to share, but don't have a companion, just indicate on the form and we will try to help you.

What's included in the cost?

- The services of Chris Darmon and Colin Schofield who will be available to you at all reasonable times
- Accommodation and meals as specified here
- The cost of all transport used during the trip
- Admission to any attractions, as visited by the group

Bixslade Quarry where the building stone, the Pennant Sandstone is extracted, in the Forest of Dean.



What's excluded from the cost?

- The cost of travel between your home and Chepstow
- Travel insurance
- Incidental expenditure

Booking



Please fill in and return a completed booking form.. Your booking will be confirmed upon receipt of either a deposit of £250.00 per person or the full payment. The balance of the brochure price will be due by July 31st. 2020.

This trip will run provided a minimum of 12 people have booked by May 31st. 2021.

Geomap in the Forest of Dean

Your money...

Upon receipt, all monies paid for these trips are placed in a specific 'client trust account' where it cannot be drawn by us until after completion of the tour. This is in accordance with EU Directives and ensures that your money is safe in the unlikely event of corporate failure by Geo Supplies.

What happens next?

As soon as we are in a position of confirming that the trip will run - pretty soon judging by the number of people who have shown an interest already - we will let you know. You will then be free to start making your own travel plans and to take advantage of early deals.

Please don't make any such arrangements until we have been in touch with you.

Please also see information contained in our 'Residential Field Trips 2020/21'

**If you have any questions or queries - contact Chris Darmon as follows:-
Email: downtoearth@geosupplies.co.uk • Tel: 0114 245 5746 • FAX: 0114 240 3405**