



**Down to Earth**

*"Earth science learning for all"*

# English Riviera Global Geopark South Devon October 8-15 2025

Long Quarry Point (Photo: English Riviera Global Geopark)

## A word from your leaders...

My association with the South Devon goes right back to the early 1970s and my undergraduate days at the University of Hull. I well remember the late Prof. Michael House and his laid back approach to fieldwork, not to mention his field dress code, plus fours, jacket, shirt and tie! I won't be copying him or expecting you to as we enjoy the splendid rocks and scenery of what is now the English Riviera Global Geopark. We last visited this area back in 2021 with my colleague Colin.

Despite the fact that we are visiting in October, the weather should be pleasantly warm to enable us to get out and about to see some of the amazing coastal and inland scenery of the area. In terms of periods of geological time, this area doesn't offer the kind of range that many other areas do, but what it lacks in periods, it makes up for in rock variety! There's a wide range of Devonian sediments, including fossiliferous limestones, sandstones and shales, which are now slate. Add in some volcanics and also dolerite intrusions. The famous Permo-Triassic red cliffs of Teignmouth will also be seen. To add to the variety, there's also the most westerly outcrop of the Cretaceous Greensand in the Haldon Hills near Exeter. Finally, the area is noted for its folds and faults, the results of the Variscan orogeny - making fabulous coastal scenery!

Our base for this trip will be the highly rated Hotel Balmoral in Torquay which offers friendly and comfortable accommodation and excellent food, serving us with both our breakfasts and evening meals. We will use a variety of transport to get around including local buses and trains. We will also be taking in a couple of boat trips along the River Dart and around the coast. If that wasn't enough we also hope to take a trip along the heritage railway from Paignton to Kingswear.

**Chris Darmon & Colin Schofield**  
Course Organisers/Leaders

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## Getting to Torquay

Torquay station has good connections via Great Western Railway from Paddington and is a short taxi ride from our hotel. The town is also served by local trains from Newton Abbot that connect into regular cross country trains from the Midlands and north of England. If you book tickets around 12-weeks in advance, you should be able to take advantage of the best priced advance fares.

## Getting Around

We'll be making use of the excellent local bus and trains services, so if you have one, bring your English National Bus Pass so that we can take advantage of free travel during the week. We also plan to take a trip on the steam train to Kingswear and combine that with a river boat trip up the River Dart to Newton Abbot. You can also expect a boat trip in Torbay, to see the coastal rock structures, up close and personal weather permitting.

## Walking

We won't be tackling difficult terrain, although there will be places where we will make modest ascents and descents to access some shore sections, in many cases this will involve steps. We'll get you as close as possible to the relevant sites and will, in almost every case, involve minimal walking distances. Everything therefore should be within the capabilities of all of the party. 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 may be walking over rough ground.

## Why South Devon Geopark?

The primary rocks of the Geopark belong to the Devonian period and they provide us with some of the classic localities that Murchison used when he named the Devonian period back in 1839. Many of the sub-divisions of the period are also defined here. Our main talk will be to deduce the geological story that the rocks tell, including periods of shallow marine coral seas, deep seas and even local volcanism. We'll also tell the later story of flash floods and deserts, volcanic lavas and even the curious tale of the Cretaceous Greensand.

We'll also include the story of how the rocks became crumpled in the Variscan orogeny and are, even today, being subjected to weathering and erosion along this dramatic coastline.

## Itinerary

*At this stage, this is meant to be indicative of the course content. Final details will be worked out in accordance with the wishes of the group and the prevailing weather. Changes may be required due to Covid restrictions.*

- Devonian sediments of Torquay, folding & faulting
- Kent's Cavern visit
- Rocks of Paignton & Brixham
- Limestones of the Ashburton & Buckfastleigh areas
- The New Red Sandstones of Teignmouth & Dawlish
- Kingswear and the valley of the River Dart

## Accommodation & Food



### Cost

**For 2 people sharing a double or twin room, the cost of the 7-night tour will be £1195.00 per person in a standard room or £1295.00 per person in a deluxe room; for single rooms (max. 5) the cost is £1450.00.**

### What's included in the cost?

- The services of Chris Darmon and Colin Schofield as tutors who will be available to you at all reasonable times
- Accommodation and meals as specified in the brochure
- The cost of any transport used during the trip
- Admissions to museums, caves etc. as visited by the whole group

### What's excluded from the cost?

- The cost of travel between your home and Torquay and return



Good food and a good night's rest are important elements to our tours and we have worked hard to bring you good value in local accommodation. On our previous visits to the area we stayed at the Clifton Hotel in nearby Paignton, however that hotel has changed hands and the new owners do not provide evening meals. So we have chosen the highly rated Hotel Balmoral in Torquay which is highly rated and is also family owned and run.

They can offer a range of different ensuite rooms to suit all requirements. They will be providing us with both breakfasts and evening meals. Single rooms are limited and subject to a modest extra charge. We are happy to help anyone looking for someone to share a twin bedded room – simply indicate on the booking form.

- Travel insurance
- Incidental expenses
- Lunchtime food on the final day

## Insurance

Everyone booking a place and paying a deposit is strongly advised to take out holiday insurance. This can cover you against loss of money in the event of cancellation etc. Cover is often included in with your credit card or bank account.

## Booking

Please fill in and return a completed booking form.. Your booking will be confirmed upon receipt of either a deposit of £300.00 per person or the full payment. **The balance of the brochure price will be due by July 31st 2025.**

***This trip will run provided a minimum of 12 people have booked by May 31st 2025.***

## 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 if previous trips are anything to go by - we will let you know. You will then be free to start making your own travel plans and to take advantage of any early deals on train tickets.

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

***Also see information contained in our 'Residential Field Trips 2024/5'***

