



Down to Earth

"Earth science learning for all"

The Sussex Coast & South Downs

June 20-26 2027



The magnificent cliffs of Beachy Head
(Image: Fairfield Farm & BGS)

A word from your leaders...

Why has it taken us so long to visit to the fabulous Sussex Coast with its fabulous chalk cliffs? Back in 2019 we made a visit to the Hastings area but since then nothing! This time we are basing ourselves in the popular seaside town of Eastbourne close to some of the finest chalk exposures in places like Beachy Head.

We'll take a look at the coastline both east and west and will take in some fine fossil collecting localities, including Fairlight Cove, Rock-a-Nore, Severn Sisters, Beachy Head, and Seaford. We'll also visit some inland locations in the South Downs National Park. Taken together, they'll cover a wide range of different Cretaceous rocks and landscapes. There are also some interesting faults to be discovered along the way.

We'll make use of local buses and trains to get about and may also make use of a hired vehicle on a couple of days. Most of the geology is pretty close by enabling us to get the most out of this 6-night stay. We've chosen an established hotel, the Queens which is a 3-star establishment on the seafront as our base and know that we will be well looked after by the staff at this Leisureplex owned hotel.

As this will cover some new locations for us, we expect a good level of interest, so early booking is advised, especially if you are looking for a single room.

Chris Darmon & Colin Schofield
Course Organisers/Leaders

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Getting to and from Eastbourne

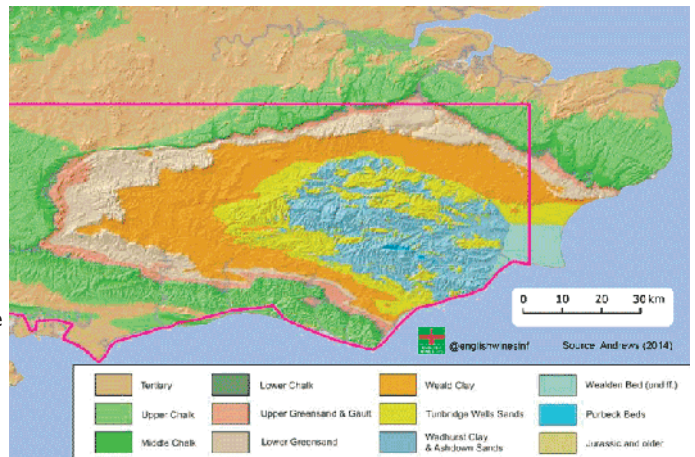
There are good train services from London and across the Southeast of England. If you are travelling from elsewhere in the country you will probably be routed across London. For those arriving by car, there are good roads that will take you directly to Eastbourne. From the railway station our hotel is a 15 minute walk away, or there are buses and taxis.

Getting around on the trip

For this trip we will use a variety of different forms of travel, including local bus and railway services (bring your bus pass if you have one) as well as also making use of a hired small coach.

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 will 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 Sussex Coast and South Downs area?

Some of this area is covered by a geological map at a scale of 1:25 000. These only cover areas that are deemed to be 'Classical areas of British geology', so what more can we say? This comes from "The South Downs National Park":

"Imagine the South East as a shallow tropical sea – between 75 and 90 million years ago that is exactly what covered this part of the UK. The distinctive chalk ridge of the South Downs often described as the spine of the South Downs National Park was formed at this time after layer after layer of marine deposits were laid down. These deposits once formed a huge dome of chalk stretching across to Surrey and North Kent. Weathering and erosion during the last ice age sculpted the landscape into its valleys, distinct hilltops and ridges.

The chalk acts like a giant sponge, and stores water. This huge underground reservoir (or 'aquifer'), feeds water from springs into streams and rivers. It also provides over 1.2 million people living in and around the National Park with fresh drinking water.

The distinctive Greensand ridge shares the same 'scarp' and 'dip' slope landform as the chalk hills. It was also formed from deposited sands and clays when this part of Britain was under the sea. The chalk layer over it however, has been worn away by weathering and time to leave the complex geology of lower and upper greensand, and gault clay.

There are also areas of an iconic local chalky sandstone 'Malmstone', which can be seen in villages and towns across the East Hampshire and West Sussex areas of the National Park"

With the encouragement of your leaders, Chris and Colin, we'll help you to interpret the rocks, fossils, structures and landscape for yourself.

Accommodation & Food



Good food and a good night's rest are important elements to our trips. So, for this trip we will be staying at the 3-star, Queens Hotel on the seafront in the heart of this seaside resort. It offers comfortable accommodation, a warm welcome and the attentive staff at this Leisureplex establishment which is employee owned. All main meals will be taken in the hotel restaurant. Packed lunches will be taken for each field day.

All rooms are en suite. Single accommodation is available, but is limited to a maximum of 5 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.

Itinerary

The following is not intended to be prescriptive, but to give you an idea of what we hope to cover during this trip:-

- **Geology of the Hastings area** - fabulous coastal landscape and fossil collecting from the Lower Cretaceous.
- **Bexhill on Sea** - Gault Clay of the Lower Cretaceous
- **The Weald** - inland exposures of the High Weald, including the Tunbridge Wells sandstones
- **Fairlight Cove** - a prized fossil locality in the Lower Cretaceous rocks along with erosional features.
- **The Chalk of Beachy Head and the Severn Sisters** - amazing landscape features and excellent chalk cliffs
- **Seaford Head** - chalk cliffs, faults and landslips.

Cost

For 2 people sharing a double or twin room, the cost of the 6-night trip will be £1095.00 per person; for single occupancy, the cost will be £1250.00 per person and is limited to a maximum of 5.

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 museums, exhibitions etc. as visited by the group

What's excluded from the cost?

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

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

Your booking will be confirmed upon receipt of either a deposit of £300.00 per person or the full payment and a completed booking form. The balance will be payable not later than March 31st, 2027.

The trip will run subject to a minimum of 15 people signing up by January 31st 2027.

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 we will let you know. You will then be free to start making your own travel plans and to take advantage of any early train 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 2026/7'

It can be found on our website: www.geosupplies.co.uk

Fairlight Cove

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