



Vanessa Banks
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The Geologists' Association

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Dear Local and Affiliated Societies,

Firstly, on behalf of us all, I would like to thank Nick Pierpoint, our new Senior Vice President. During his Presidency Nick travelled extensively to present to, and support, our local and affiliated groups, which I know has been very well received. For anyone that wonders who I am, my current working role is as: a karst hydrogeologist/ head of shallow geohazards at the British Geological Survey with research interests in the geology in hydrogeology and the hydrology of geohazards. As you will appreciate, regional geological understanding is fundamental to these research interests.

During the current period of social distancing the Geologists' Association Council have been thinking about how best to serve the membership. We are writing to you, as a Local or Affiliated group, to draw your attention to a couple of the initiatives that have come out of this:

- (i) To bring geology into the homes of our membership, please see: <https://geologistsassociation.org.uk/sofageology/#latest> where you can find a range of: podcast lectures, online resources and virtual field trips. This has received some very positive feedback. 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.
- (ii) Rather than cancel the annual Festival of Geology, which is a popular event we would like to capture its spirit in the *virtual world*, so we are seeking your help to generate a Virtual Festival for 7 and 8 November 2020. This will include: the popular series of engaging invited public lectures; activities for children; sales of rocks and fossils; the display of the photographic competition, and, if you are willing, presentations from the Local Groups and Affiliated Societies. If Government Guidance allows, we will arrange some real, socially distanced field visits for the Sunday; if the technology allows, virtual meeting space will provide an opportunity for members to catch up with friends and former colleagues.

We would be very grateful if you could inform your membership about the [Geology from your Sofa](#) website opportunity. Please could you also advise the organising committee whether you would like to support the Virtual Festival of Geology with a presentation or digital poster to represent your group? Should you have any queries or require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact us. We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours Sincerely,

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