



Protecting Geoheritage – Geodiversity Charter for England

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The Geodiversity Charter for England, launched in 2014, sets out the clear vision that England's 'geodiversity is recognised as an integral and vital part of our environment, economy and heritage that must be safeguarded and managed for current and future generations'.

England is privileged to be among the most geodiverse places in the world with 700 million years of geological history revealed by our rocks. The white cliffs of Dover, honey coloured Cotswold limestone, granite Dartmoor Tors, are examples of this geodiversity.

To maintain and enhance our geodiversity it is important to recognise its role in:

- the understanding of England's geological history and global geosciences
- natural heritage, both terrestrial and marine, and landscapes in all their diversity
- supporting habitats and species and the many essential benefits they provide for society
- adaptation to changes in climate and sea-level through sustainable management of land and water and working with natural processes
- sustainable economic development
- the history, character and cultural development of our society through intellectual growth and creative expression alongside industrial and technological development
- public health, quality of life and national well-being and connecting people with the natural environment including active promotion of geotourism.

Geodiversity, however, is an often overlooked environmental asset.

The vision of the Charter and the work of the English Geodiversity Forum is to encourage good practice and to act as a focus in order to:

- raise awareness of the importance, value and relevance of geodiversity to our economic prosperity and comfort and its wider links with the natural environment, landscape, cultural and historical heritage and sense of place
- encourage a sense of pride through education and learning, promotion and interpretation
- promote careful management of geodiversity through conservation and enhancement of its special character and qualities across the country and the continued development and sharing of good geoconservation practice
- encourage a sustained legacy through maintenance and conservation of museum geology collections and archives and support initiatives to reach a wide audience
- integrate geodiversity into relevant local and national policies, guidance and advice ensuring a sustainable and integrated approach to the management of our natural environment for the wider benefit of England's people, environment and economy
- carry out research to improve our understanding of the role of geodiversity in providing benefits to ecosystems and people, leading to better decisions about managing our natural environment
- secure resources to support the delivery of these goals from a local to a national level through existing organisations and funding provision and continue to encourage the provision

The Geodiversity Charter encourages determined action from all sectors of society to fulfil the vision set out above. There are a number of actions can be taken to achieve this ambition and sections within the Charter to explain how individuals, groups, industry, land owners and local government etc can become involved and a case study approach is used to highlight good practice.

The Charter provides an opportunity to engage with organisations and to highlight the importance of the England's geoheritage using the clear objectives set out as guidance.

English Geodiversity Forum, (2014) Geodiversity Charter for England, Keyworth, UK