

## UKGAP Theme 6: Sustaining resources for our geodiversity

### UKGAP Indicator 15: Funding - The source and value of grants received by local geoconservation groups

#### Introduction

Measuring the amount of funding being received for geodiversity activity could be a useful measure of activity; however, the 2011 report established that this was not easy to measure.

#### Methodology and data

The following grant giving bodies were researched:

##### [The Curry Fund](#)

Administered by The Geologists Association The Curry Fund exists to support a variety of causes such as facilitating geological publications, including film, video and television productions, geological conservation (for example the purchase, clearance and recording of sites), and other initiatives approved by the Council, including awards to individuals and limited assistance with travel costs for overseas visitors engaged in geological research.

The Curry Fund has long been a popular source of funds for museums, geological societies and other geodiversity related activity. Whilst the individual sums grants may not be large (up to £2000), they are often used for smaller scale projects or used to lever in other funding. Data was supplied for the review period by The Curry Fund, and is categorised in table 15a.

Table 15a Curry Fund Data

	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Publications</b>	£16,299	£8,216	£10,412	£14,467	<b>£49,394</b>
<b>IT/Websites</b>	£4,120	£1,720	£1,720	-	<b>£7,560</b>
<b>Conservation</b>	£13,260	£1,324	£3,667	£629	<b>£18,880</b>
<b>Interpretation Panels</b>	£6,500	-	-	£750	<b>£7,250</b>
<b>Public Events</b>	£1,052	-	£4,180	-	<b>£5,232</b>
<b>Exhibitions</b>	£5,840	-	£7,860	-	<b>£13,700</b>
<b>Site Works</b>	£1,692	£300	£1,050	-	<b>£3,042</b>
<b>Collections Reviews</b>	£4,500	-	-	-	<b>£4,500</b>
<b>Other Areas</b>	£406	-	-	-	<b>£406</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>£53,669</b>	<b>£11,560</b>	<b>£28,889</b>	<b>£15,846</b>	<b>£109,964</b>

##### [The PRISM Fund](#)

Administered by Arts Council England (ACE), the Preservation of Industrial and Scientific Material (PRISM) Fund awards grants towards the costs of acquisition and conservation of items or collections which are important in the history and development of science, technology, industry or related fields.

The PRISM Fund can offer grants of up to £20,000, or 90 per cent of the total project costs. The fund covers England and Wales. Corresponding schemes are administered in Scotland and Northern Ireland by National Museums of Scotland and the Northern Ireland Museums Council respectively.

PRISM is often used by museums looking to acquire or conserve geological and palaeontological material. Before being administered by ACE it was run by the Science Museum. Data on grants for this review period are available in annual reports via their website, with PRISM grouping their grants into subject area, to provide a headline figure for say conservation, as well as listing individual grants. For this report the headline figures for geology/palaeontology were compared with an analysis of individual grants given and a total calculated from this for any grant involving geodiversity. The figures for PRISM can be seen in table 15b. They reveal one of the challenges in this work, around the nomenclature used by granting bodies and how this influences reporting, this is not unique to the PRISM fund and is discussed later in this report.

Table 15b PRISM Fund Data

	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
<b>Headline</b>	-	£31,585	£3,500	-	£6,588	-	£3,500	£10,000
<b>Analysis of grants</b>	£7,500	£31,585	£9,212	£21,500	£34,395	-	£4,42	£21,623

#### [The Esmée Fairburn Foundation](#)

The Esmée Fairburn Foundation supports four main sectors: Arts, Children and Young People, Environment and Social Change. Across all their funding they aim to unlock and enable potential, back the unorthodox and unfashionable, build collective networks and catalyse system change. They have a long history of supporting museum projects that require a flexible approach and that do not fit other funding streams.

Data for this report was gathered from Foundation reports which can be searched by key word on their website. Again this revealed some challenges for gathering data, including the simple difference between the British and American spelling of 'palaeontology'. Keywords searched for those returning positive results are recorded in table 15c, these reports also highlight the difficulty of comparing grants over different timescales, especially with the often flexible nature of Esmée Fairburn funding

Table 15c Esmée Fairburn Data

	2009	2010	2011	2012
<b>Keyword Geology</b>		£55,225 (over 18 months)		£75,000 (over 36 months)
<b>Keyword Fossils</b>	£62,250 (over 36 months)			
<b>Keyword Palaeontology</b>			£82,785 (over 18 months)	
<b>Keyword Stone</b>			£31,704 (over 12 months)	

### [The Heritage Lottery Fund](#)

It is very clear that the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) is a major supporter of geodiversity work across the UK. This support takes many forms, and involves many of their grant schemes. It was beyond the scope of this report to analyse all the publically available data on HLF grants that benefited geodiversity, rather through conversation with the HLF it was possible to focus on a few areas, based on data the HLF were recording and able to provide to us.

Table 15d provides figures supplied from the following sources. As seen with Esmée Fairburn grants, these larger grants are usually split across multiple years, and in addition may include figures that are essentially an estimate based on work development work still being undertaken.

- Grants made under the Landscape Partnership scheme, which almost by definition are all under pinned by geology and therefore can be argued to benefit geodiversity.
- Grants made to museums where a geodiversity related term (geology, fossils, minerals and geodiversity all returned positive results) was recorded as part of the reporting process.
- The HLF record grants provided for 'Natural Heritage' (their term) projects. This data is tagged for various interests, including the term geodiversity. They also record the level of partnership funding the HLF money has levered into a project.

Table 15d Selection of HLF Data

	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>
<b>Landscape Partnership</b>	£12,160,500	£8,804,100	£9,690,700	£17,248,000	£19,888,400
<b>Museum Grants</b>	£129,600	£3,568,900	£1,360,300	£580,600	Not available
<b>Natural Heritage (HLF)</b>	£50,000	£1,254,950	£231,950	£2,698,700	Not available
<b>Natural Heritage (Partnership funding)</b>	£32,000	£783,010	£463,900	£1,932,977	Not available

### [The Arts Council \(England\)](#)

Arts Council England (ACE) was identified as an important funder of geodiversity in England at an early stage in the development of this report. They provide support to a number of organisations with very obvious geodiversity links, such as museums, but also to other projects such as artistic commissions working with geodiversity. Unfortunately, the available data did not allow this work to happen in the timescale for producing this report. This is partly due to the scale of work being undertaken by ACE, and also the lack of meaningful tagging of grants with terms that relate to geodiversity. In particular, the following areas could be important indicators of funding levels.

- Museum related funding - ACE provides support for museums at a number of different levels including in the form of direct funding for Major Partner Museums, various strategic grants for museums to build resilience and museum development support through a England wide network of advisors. In addition they operate Accreditation and Designation both of which underpin the development of the sector. It had been hoped to be able to look at levels of funding support for Major Partner Museums with Designated geology and palaeontology collections as at least some indicator of funding support for the more important geology/palaeontology collections in England.

- Grants for the Arts - This is the major open grant scheme operated by ACE, and there are a number of geodiversity related projects that have benefited from this funding. Whilst project descriptions and recipients are publically available, the recording of these makes it very difficult and in many cases impossible to identify those with relevant outputs.

### Discussion and future recommendations

The original thinking behind this indicator is clear, and the rationale is understandable. However, the report in 2011 and this work demonstrate the challenges presented in trying to produce a meaningful analysis of the data available. For that reason we have not attempted to analyse this data (or graph the information) as it may prove misleading or suggest trends that are in fact artificial. Instead, using the experience of gathering information for this report an overview of the challenges is presented and some recommendations for the future reporting of this indicator are made.

### Challenges

This work has barely scratched the surface of understanding the amount of funding being provided to geodiversity. This is a result of a number of issues, some of which might be overcome with more time and resources put into recording and analysing this kind of information, but others may be far more fundamental and require a rethinking of what the indicator is trying to achieve.

- The funding bodies chosen for this work are a reasonable cross section of geodiversity funders; however, it is clear that this still leaves some very large omissions that are known to fund geodiversity. For example, Local Authorities, charities (of all sizes, for example the National Trust), funding from central government (both direct and indirect), European funding, foundations and private sources of income.
- It is clear from the organisations looked at for this report (and it is very likely this would apply to other funders), that how funding is recorded and the description of projects etc, can have a large bearing on whether funding for geodiversity is being recorded. This is likely to be a combination of funders not understanding what constitutes geodiversity, and also their own recording systems being geared towards their needs, meaning that geodiversity will not be alone in not being recorded.
- The nature of grant funding often spanning more than one year, and funders recording this information in different ways (for example the whole sum may appear in the starting year, the year of completion or spread across the project) makes comparison difficult. This is exacerbated by different twelve month reporting periods, usually either calendar year or April-March financial year.
- If it had been possible to create some robust and meaningful datasets of funding the issue of what do with that data remains. It is not clear what would be a sensible measure to benchmark against; this could be against other subject areas, or simply against a nominal year of geodiversity funding levels. However both these approaches could be misleading and not provide useful data for geodiversity organisations or supporters.

### Recommendations

It is likely that some measure of financial support for geodiversity will be a useful indicator for the future; it is quite literally the bottom line for many organisations. However consideration should be given to how this indicator is taken forward, to both make it meaningful and also achievable within the likely level resourcing levels.

- Given the need for some solid figures around funding for geodiversity, consideration should be given to identifying a small number of funders who are able to support this data gathering. This is less of an

issue for the smaller funders (such as the Curry Fund and PRISM), but of the larger funders then the HLF would seem to be well placed to explore this further, with the added benefit of being a UK wide funder. Discussions with ACE would certainly be sensible for the England picture and if positive then working towards common recording terms, periods with HLF etc would be useful.

- Consideration should be given to measuring more about the economic impact of funding geodiversity. A number of toolkits exist to do this (museums often use the Association of Independent Museums toolkit), this would probably require the identification of a number of case studies that could be examined and then used as best practice examples by other geodiversity projects needing to demonstrate value to funders.
- Assuming that the UKGAP retains a financial support (and possibly economic worth) indicator then the process behind collecting this data should be reviewed. Whilst reports may only be needed every few years, the work of collecting the data would be much simpler if done on an ongoing basis.
- As part of any revised indicator then development of an agreed nomenclature for geodiversity should be considered, in particular to help support funders in tagging their data. This would probably require some training and support, but would also provide a very useful way of developing partnerships with those key funders.