

Annual Report for 2022

For presentation at the 2022 AGM



www.geocurator.org

The Geological Curators Group is a UK-based membership organisation and charity (no. 296050), founded in 1974 to improve the state and status of geological collections and curation. The Group is run for its members, by volunteers elected from the membership. It is affiliated to the Geological Society of London as a Specialist Group, and recognised as a Subject Specialist Network by Arts Council England. Our constitution is available [here](#).

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. View from the Chair | <i>Dr Sarah King</i> |
| 2. Accounts | <i>Robert Lowther</i> |
| 3. Membership and networks | |
| 3.1. Membership and reach | <i>Cindy Howells</i> |
| 3.2. Correspondence and networks | <i>Emma Bernard</i> |
| 4. Events and participation | <i>Zoë Hughes</i> |
| 4.1. SPPC | <i>Lu Allington-Jones</i> |
| 4.2. Marine Reptiles Conference | <i>Dr Emma Nicholls</i> |
| 5. Publications | |
| 5.1. <i>Geological Curator</i> | <i>Lu Allington-Jones</i> |
| 5.2. <i>Coprolite</i> Newsletter | <i>Lu Allington-Jones</i> |
| 6. Collections Support | |
| 6.1. Collections monitoring | <i>Dr Mike Howe</i> |
| 7. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion | <i>Meghan Jenkinson</i> |
| 8. Online | |
| 8.1. Website | <i>Simon Harris</i> |
| 8.2. Blog | <i>Dr Emma Nicholls</i> |
| 8.3. Social media | <i>Emma Bernard</i> |
| 8.3.1. Facebook | |
| 8.3.2. Twitter | |
| 8.4. JISCmail | <i>Emma Bernard</i> |
| 9. Outreach and profile | <i>Emma Bernard</i> |
| 10. GCG – SPNHC Rep | <i>Andrew Haycock</i> |

GCG information

Previous years' Annual Reports can be found at:

<https://www.geocurator.org/events/156-49th-annual-winter-seminar-and-agm>

1. View from the Chair

Welcome to the GCG Annual Report for 2022. The good news this year has been that we now have our new CIO up and running. The number is 1198339, and more details can be found [here](#). Once our new bank account is set up, we will begin to swap our activity over in earnest and will be able to start winding down the old charity. We are of course still in a transitional period, so do bear with us as things work themselves through. If one thing has become clear over the last few years, it's how much work it takes to keep GCG running. Unlike many other [Subject Specialist Networks](#), we don't have any paid staff to speed things through, so it will take a little time for everything to line up.

Other great news is that at the very end of last year, the DiSSCo (Distributed System of Scientific Collections) UK project finally sprang into life, requesting information from natural science collections in order to get a feel for the number and state of objects, and their requirements for a mass digitisation programme. A total of 83 collections were able to respond in the short timeframe available, and you can see the results [here](#) (also a less detailed page [here](#)). Here you can also download the booklet giving their initial findings. The good news is that they are still accepting responses for their database, so do please get in touch with them so that they can build a fuller picture of geological collections in the UK. This is great progress after many years of planning, and I hope that the momentum will be maintained in order to make real headway into mass digitisation of natural science collections in the UK at last. They have even begun to collect [workflows](#) for various types of collections, so do keep an eye out for more news from them.

It's been another challenging year for the sector and all of us as the effects of the pandemic are still being felt, alongside steeply rising costs, political instability and war in Ukraine. Over the summer, the Royal Cornwall Museum announced that it may have to close after Cornwall Council unexpectedly pulled a large portion of their funding. The Museum houses the internationally important Rashleigh mineral collection. In recent days, an [agreement has been reached with the council](#) for a £100,000 grant in order that the Museum can review its business plans and find new strategic partners, but clearly there is a difficult road ahead. I send them all my best and hope that GCG can support the Museum if and when the need is there.

This is of course my last year as GCG Chair. It's been an enormous privilege to be able to contribute to the shape of the organisation, and I hope that with the new CIO, GCG will be in a strong position to move into its 50th year and beyond. Looking back over the last few years, we have made tremendous progress as a committee, and I would like to thank the whole committee, past and present, for this. We have an excellent new website, which not only serves as an archive for GCG events and resources, but also a vehicle for day-to-day business and events. I thank Simon for the enormous amount of work he has done, and continues to do, here. Pip Brewer transformed *Geological Curator* while she was on committee, and Lu is doing a fantastic job of building on this work, and alongside Simon, indexing the journal archive and adding DOIs, which will massively improve its reach and appeal to authors and researchers, and I thank all three here. Running events during the pandemic has been challenging, but Zoë has run a series of mostly online events which have allowed more people to attend, and attracted a whole new international audience. I thank her for her work here. As the only organisation of its type in the world, events allowing international participation offer a great opportunity for GCG to grow its membership base. In a similar vein, I thank Lu, Emma N and Nigel for organising a series of very successful online and in-person SPPCs

(Symposium of Palaeontological Preparation and Conservation), and I look forward to seeing how this develops in the next few years.

The last few years have brought unforeseen challenges, meaning I haven't been able to settle in as many new ideas as I had planned, but before I leave the committee, I will pass on a brand new set of bye laws to underpin the new constitution, and some ideas as to how to grow and develop GCG's finances and audiences. GCG has always been run by its members, for its members, and I encourage you all to keep in touch and to consider getting more involved. There are lots of opportunities on committee and wider committee, and new ideas are always invited. I have every confidence that Emma Nicholls will carry GCG from strength to strength, and I hope you will all join me in welcoming her as the new Chair.

Dr Sarah King

2. Accounts

This year has been a reasonably standard year for the GCG financially. Our main income streams have been Membership subscriptions and the joint events we have run this year. Our main outgoing expense is related to the publication of the *Geological Curator*.

This year we had the opportunity to support a number of events either financially, such as this year's Earth Science Teachers Association (ESTA) event, Progressive Palaeontology (Prog Pal) or administratively, such as the 11th International Symposium on Cephalopods Past & Present. Details on these events are reported elsewhere in this report.

With the setup up of the new CIO, the Geological Curators Group needed a new bank account. The decision was made to set up an account with CAF Bank. This account was chosen due to the features offered that will aid not only the Treasurer but the wider committee at a reasonable cost. For online website payments we are staying with PayPal, although once the CAF Bank account is finalised a new PayPal account will be set up to accompany this. The current bank and PayPal accounts will be wound down over the next few years as we move to using these new accounts.

I would also like to give a big thanks to Rachel Walcott for her continued support over the last year as we get our new financial accounts set up.

Geological Curators' Group

49th Annual General Meeting, Online

2022 Accounts

28/10/2021 - 27/10/2022

Income	This year	2020-2021	Expenditure	This year	2020-2021
GCG AGM: 2021	£230.00		GCG AGM: 2021	-£9.70	
GCG AGM: 2022	£198.00		GCG AGM: 2022	£0.00	
GCG-hosted: ISCPP	£9,518.15		GCG-hosted: ISCPP	-£9,306.34	
GCG-hosted: Marine Reptiles	£225.00		GCG-hosted: Marine Reptiles	-£76.80	
Events & Workshops Total	£10,171.15	£30.00	GCG-event: Games Night	-£5.00	
Subscriptions	£5,473.77	£5,536.20	Events & Workshops Total	-£9,397.84	-£30.00
Donation	£30.69	£15.88	Geological Curator Production	-£2,479.88	-£3,455.62
			Bank Fees	-£400.07	-£64.89
			Committee Meeting Expenses	-£559.39	£0.00
			Equipment	-£129.87	£0.00
			Publishing Fees	-£202.43	£0.00
			Sponsorship	-£375.49	£0.00
			Web Hosting Fees	-£470.05	-£256.79
			JISC GB/3D payments	£0.00	£0.00
			Brighton Medals [£1,214.86 in fund]	£0.00	£0.00
			Subscription - Duplicate Refund	-£15.00	£0.00
			Other	£0.00	-£924.41
2022 Income	£15,675.61	£5,582.08	2022 Expenditure	-£14,030.02	-£4,731.71
Treasurer:			Closing Balance as at 27/10/2021	£21,867.55	
Robert Lowther	08/11/2022		Closing Balance as at 27/10/2022	£23,513.14	
Auditors:			2022 Profit	£1,645.59	
Sherri Donaldson	24/11/2022				
Mike McDonagh	29/11/2022				

Thanks go to Sherri Donaldson and Mike McDonagh for auditing the accounts.

Robert Lowther

3. Membership and networks

3.1 Membership and reach

Once again, museums and curators have had a difficult year in many ways, with some institutions still only just recovering from lock-down, and museum staff partially working from home. This is reflected in our membership figures for 2022.

We have welcomed 14 new members for 2022 (16 in 2021, 29 in 2020), and hope that these people will enjoy the benefits we have to offer them, and we look forward to meeting some of you at face-to-face meetings during the coming year, along with others we haven't seen for far too long.

We have unfortunately lost 21 members during the year, and at least the same number again have failed to renew this year despite reminders, and so they will be removed from our lists imminently. I would urge you all to take notice when a payment reminder email comes through from us, as it is very discouraging when people simply don't respond. Please contact membership@geocurator.org if you wish to cancel.

For 2023, we are implementing the new membership rates that were circulated earlier in the year. The basic rate will cover electronic access to the journal, with an optional extra £5 which can be added if you wish to receive the printed copy. This is due to the vastly increased cost of printing and postage. Further details which were presented to membership last year, can be found on our [website](#). These changes will become live on our website soon. With the new bank account, we will be encouraging people to sign up for Direct Debit membership payments. This cuts down a lot of work for us, and gives better protection for members in case there are any problems with the payment. PayPal is also easy for us, and Standing Orders will continue to be accepted. Cheques are also possible.

We can count members from 21 countries, including: Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Columbia, Denmark, Faroe Islands, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, Switzerland, USA, and the UK.

Breakdown of membership figures for this year (October 2021 – October 2022)

Full individual members paid to date	172 (141 UK, 31 OS)
Concessionary members paid to date	30 (27 UK, 3 OS)
Honorary members	8
Institutional subscribers paid to date	42
Total	252

	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
Personal UK	167	159	169	173	175
Personal Overseas	35	45	39	34	28
UK Institutions	24	19	26	37	38
Overseas Institutions	18	16	19	20	21
Honorary	8	8	8	7	7
Total	252	247	261	271	269

As always, I thank those who pay promptly each year, and also those who let me know when their address, email, or place of work changes. I love to hear from members, and especially when you write offering an idea, a talk, an article, or offer of a meeting venue. Do continue to promote GCG to your colleagues. GCG is relevant to anyone who deals in any way with geological collections, whether you be a student, volunteer, curator, conservator, illustrator, preparator, dealer, photographer, collections manager, or any of the other types of geological roles that professionals and amateurs work within. The membership email address is membership@geocurator.org.

Finally, I'd like to thank Rachel and Rob for their hard work during the year to ensure that the bank accounts run smoothly and helping me with identifying payments that have no reference codes!

Cindy Howells

3.2. Correspondence and networks

As Secretary I attend several external meetings with affiliated groups such as the Geological Society of London each year where I represent the GCG, alongside the Chair.

I attended the Geol Soc's Specialist Groups AGM in June. This is a good opportunity to meet (virtually) representatives from other affiliated and Specialist Groups. Dr Jenni Gilbert is the new Science Committee Chair and updates were given about the future of Burlington House where they are looking seriously at whether they need to relocate. Further details are on their [website](#). Dr Duncan Murdock continues to be our Science Committee Rep.

I have also attended a few meetings of the [Subject Specialist Network Consortium](#) during the past year. This network has representation from all SSN's similar to GCG (e.g., NatSCA). A few emails have come through via the SSN Consortium and I have passed these onto the relevant parties. There continues to be discussion about holding a SSN Consortium conference and hopefully further details will be announced next year.

Most of our correspondence is by our general JISCMail list (see point 8.4 below). A few direct emails arrived in the inbox. As usual these have been for advice on how to get into the sector, assistance with identification, requests to post items to the JISCMail list and information about the journal. Queries are either answered by myself or re-directed to the most appropriate person.

I have also been involved in developing policies and forms to cover sponsorship requests, to ensure the process is clear and organisations asking for sponsorship tie in with [GCG's mission, objectives and values](#). It is important to note, that GCG is itself a Charity and finances are tight, so we are unable to fund all requests, likewise we look for sponsorship opportunities for ourselves.

We need to acknowledge that a lot of work goes on behind the scenes within the GCG committee throughout the year outside of our three regular committee meetings, which is not always seen by our members – lots of emails, meetings, and reports. I want to thank all committee members for their hard work and dedication, especially to Sarah King for providing support, Simon Harris for helping me navigate the back end of the website. Keeping me right about the website and updating emails, and to Lu Allington-Jones for taking minutes and noting actions at each meeting, making my role much easier.

After 10 years, I have decided to stand down from committee. I'm sad to leave, but I think the time is right to allow others to come on board and it will allow me to concentrate on other things. I am passionate about geological collections and museums, so I will still be an advocate for the Group and will be involved with some GCG related work (watch this space)! During my time on committee, I have made some great friends and it has allowed me to meet a diverse group of people and it has provided me opportunities to participate in events I wouldn't normally have had the chance to.

If you are passionate about geological collections and want to give something to the community, I would encourage you to join committee, it is a rewarding experience.

I want to thank everyone who I have worked with over the last 10 years to push GCG forward where we have been able to develop a clear governance structure and improved ways of working. I wish my successor all the best and I will be happy to assist in the transition.

Emma Bernard

4. Events and participation

I am a little sad that I will be stepping down as Programme Secretary, however, I'm very excited to see what my successor will plan. To aid someone stepping into my role, this year I have focussed on the "behind the scenes" elements of the role. I have created a suite of documents which will aid in the planning and running of both in person and online events. This includes task lists, timelines for carrying out each task and forms for all elements of event planning. This will ensure that the new Programme Secretary can jump straight in following the guidance.

Meghan Jenkinson kindly created an extensive document collating all elements of inclusivity we should consider when looking for a venue for in person events. While it may not be realistically possible to achieve all elements, it is great to have an outline of what we should strive for. If you are interested in hosting an event at your institution (or online), please get [in touch!](#)

This year we have had some excellent events, we supported the online Marine Reptile conference organised by Emma Nicholls and Nigel Larkin which had rave reviews. There were 55 registered delegates who attended from five countries.

Last year's annual seminar was the [GCG World Tour 2021](#). We had an excellent selection of talks exploring the global projects brought to life primarily during the pandemic. There were 59 registered delegates from six countries, from four continents.

With another of my hats on I must thank the GCG with the support of a conference I organised at the Natural History Museum; the 11th International Symposium on Cephalopods Present and Past. The GCG hosted the ticketing, so without the GCG this event would not have been possible. Many thanks to Emma Bernard who attended to publicise the GCG to delegates.

I have informed committee that I am happy for the new Programme Secretary to contact me should they need any guidance or advice.

Many thanks to the committee and members who have made my tenure as Programme Secretary a valuable and fun experience!

Zoë Hughes

4.1. The Symposium on Palaeontological Preparation and Conservation (SPPC)

The 31st Symposium of Palaeontological Preparation and Conservation took place on 21st of September at the Natural History Museum London UK, immediately preceding the 68th Symposium on Vertebrate Palaeontology and Comparative Anatomy (SVPCA).

The morning consisted of SPPC platform presentations, with six talks of 15 minutes each, plus five minutes for questions and handover. Six posters were displayed in the refreshment area. One speaker was unwell and could not make the event so extra time was allowed for questions to the other speakers. The afternoon consisted of tours of the Conservation Centre and collections highlights. Please see report in [Coprolite 102](#) for more details. Posters and talk abstracts are available on the [GCG website](#).

A total of 44 external people registered for the SPPC meeting, plus ten internal NHM conservation staff. At least one additional delegate appeared without paying because they had registered with SVPCA. External delegates were charged £24 morning only and £29 whole day (£5 discount for GCG members). This covered refreshments, badges, hand sanitiser, etc. Approx £100 profit was generated for GCG.

The event was co-hosted by Lu Allington-Jones and Kieran Miles. During the welcome address before the SPPC platform presentations, GCG Committee member Emma Bernard advertised upcoming GCG events and the benefits of membership. There was also a stand and poster advertising GCG in the refreshments area.

A few issues arose from being associated with SVPCA, such as confusion with websites and payments, timetabling issues as a result of an additional SVPCA presentation session. The committee will be looking into opportunities to resolve some of these issues for future meetings.

Lu Allington-Jones

4.2. Marine Reptiles Conference

The Marine Reptile Conference (MRC) took place [online](#) in May 2022 as a one day 'mini' conference. There were six oral presentations, followed by six poster presentations accompanied by a dedicated Q&A session. It was very well attended, with 55 delegates from five countries. Feedback received on both the talks and the running of the conference was excellent.

The MRC committee would like to extend a huge thanks to the GCG committee, in particular Simon Harris and Sherri Donaldson, for their time, enthusiasm, and support.

Dr Emma Nicholls

5. Publications

5.1. Geological Curator

11(6) March 2022

This issue was released electronically in March and printed copies were distributed in June. Contents included:

21st Century Rex: maximising access to a privately owned Tyrannosaurus rex skeleton in the digital age by Nigel R. Larkin, Steven Dey, Adam S. Smith and Rachael Evans

Preserving the Nieuwdonk collection, a hidden Pleistocene mammal assemblage from the Flemish Valley (Berlare - Belgium) by Anthonie Hellemond, Shana Van Hauwermeiren, Kevin Nolis, François De Bock, and Sven Van Uytfanghe

Megamammal collections from the Pampean Region (Argentina) in Europe: past and present by Karina V. Chichkoyan 370 The Louis De Pauw Award—A first recognition for citizen scientists in Belgian palaeontology by Anthonie Hellemond

'Found in all parts of the known world': Global connections in the collection of John Woodward (1665–1728) by Alice Rose Whitehead

Book review on "River Planet: rivers from deep time to the modern crisis" by Jill Eyers

11(7) December 2022

Dr Jeff Liston is the guest editor for a special ethics edition. Four manuscripts have been released electronically on the journal webpages. Contents include:

Publication pressure threatens the integrity of palaeontological research by Nussaïbah B. Raja and Emma M. Dunne

"Missionary lizards" - Palaeontological exhibits and the creationist agenda by Glenn W. Storrs

[Creative compliance, neutralization techniques, and palaeontological ethics by Donna Yates](#)

The politics of palaeontology: the creation, reduction, and restoration of Grand Staircase–Escalante and Bears Ears national monuments by P. David Polly

DOIs (Digital Object Identifiers)

The Webmaster and Editor have been working on registering DOIs for all articles. A DOI is a persistent identifier or handle used to identify digital objects uniquely and will serve to increase the value of the journal articles. 870 articles have been assigned DOIs and these have been added to the landing pages. Some items were not assigned DOIs: 535 (Lost and Found, Collections Information Network: Geology (CING)) from volumes 1-6 (1974-1998). These are nevertheless still available online, and plans are underway to contract-out the task of assigning DOIs to them.

Editorial Team

Many thanks to the team this year: Lu Allington-Jones (Editor); Jeff Liston (Guest Editor on special ethics issue); Dr Chris Dean (Associate Editor, Palaeontology, particularly Vertebrate Palaeontology); Nicolas Baird (Production Assistant); Emily Carlisle (Production Assistant); Hannah Bird (Production Assistant).

Submitting a manuscript

All submissions should be sent to journal@geocurator.org and should follow the [Instructions for Authors](#). They should be in English, appropriately structured, clear and concise and fully referenced.

Please carefully read through our [Journal Policies and Guidance](#) before submitting a manuscript for consideration.

Issues of Geological Curator

The most recent three issues can only be accessed by current members through logging in to the website. Issues older than 2 years are made freely available via the website. Back issues of some printed editions are also still available [here](#).

Editorial vacancies

Editor; Associate Editor History of Science; Associate Editor Mineralogy; Associate Editor Micropalaeontology. If you are interested in potentially fulfilling any of these posts, please contact: journal@geocurator.org

Lu Allington-Jones

5.2. Coprolite newsletter

Featured articles

Issue 99, December 2021: John Ruskin's Mineral Collection Returns to Brantwood by Howard Hull, Director, Brantwood

Issue 100, March 2022: Unlocking Lapworth's Legacy by Rachel Brown, Project Archivist, Lapworth Museum of Geology

Issue 101, June 2022: There and back again - a geology collection's curational journey by Christina Byrd, Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, and Laura Wilson, Sternberg Museum of Natural History, Fort Hays State University, Hays, KS

Issue 102, September 2022: Phil Phillips awarded an MBE by Tony Morgan, Education Demonstrator at National Museums Liverpool; and the SPPC 2022 conference report by Kieran Miles, Fossil Preparator, The Natural History Museum London

Many thanks go to all of the contributing authors. All issues are available on the GCG website [here](#).

If anyone has anything they would like to see included in the newsletter, or would like to volunteer as the next editor, please get in touch with us at coprolite@geocurator.org.

Lu Allington-Jones

6. Collections support

6.1. Collections monitoring

2022 has been a challenging year for Collections in the UK, with plenty of disturbing news, but also progress in possible solutions.

Although the [Museums Association redundancies tracker](#) was discontinued on 30th March 2022, there are unfortunately numerous ongoing threats to museums and collections. Please note that redundancy tracker covers all roles in museums, not just curators or natural history museums.

	Institutions announcing redundancies	Total Redundancies
November 2020		3600
15 December 2020	59	3997
28 April 2021	65	4100
5 August 2021	74	4690
14 December 2021	77	4780
30 March 2022 (Final update)	81	4824

Current concerns include:

Royal Cornwall Museum. In July, Cornwall Council announced that it would no longer provide a grant to the Royal Cornwall Museum, and its future is therefore under threat. Since then, the Museum has investigated the £23.6m investment promised by the government to boost investment, trade and tourism in Truro, but at a Russell Society meeting on Wednesday 21st September, it became clear that none of this was likely to come to the museum.

Stoke-on-Trent Museums. Plans announced at the start of the year to cut back the museums service met tremendous local opposition and were softened, although cuts in opening hours were still planned.

The ongoing replacement of specialist subject curators by generalists is extremely worrying. The Royal Cornwall Museum no longer has a geology curator – or even a natural history curator. They have been replaced by such posts as “learning engagement officer”, “communications and interpretations manager”, “operations manager” and “trainee curator”. Probably consequent on this, and with nobody to champion the world-famous Rashleigh Mineral Collection, plans for a new geology gallery (Making Cornwall) are graphics rich and specimen and content light. At the New Walk Museum in Leicester, academic requests to examine the geology collections are being turned down because no “suitably qualified persons” are available. This trend means that the expertise of

subject specialist networks such as the GCG is increasingly important, and there may be a growing need for freelance peripatetic natural science curators.

Partly to probe the current level of curation in the UK Collections, and partly to improve the [GCG Collections Map and Database](#), GCG intends to run a State and Status Survey in 2023, as it is now 22 years since the last one.

With the continued reduction and turnover of curatorial staff, the days when curators could recognise the labels of many of the major collections have long gone. To help combat this GCG has introduced a [“Lost, Stolen, and Strayed” Section](#) on the Collections page, which the Webmaster, Simon Harris, has populated from past issues of *The Geological Curator*. The format allows the flexible inclusion of images, documents and spreadsheets, and it is the intention to extend this to lists of specimens for disposal. In parallel, the Collector and Dealer labels section on the Resources page is being extended to include Museum numbers and labels. A page for the British Geological Survey (BGS) Collections is available, and I would ask everyone to consider whether a page for their institution’s collections could be beneficial.

Over the Summer, DISSCO-UK launched their [website](#) and published their “Blueprint for the UK” : [Harnessing the Power of Natural Science Collections](#).

DISSCO-UK also launched the UK Natural Science Collections [dashboard](#).

Any collections not yet included are encouraged to join by contacting dissco-uk@nhm.ac.uk. For many museums, this could be the first step in opening their collections for international study, and a good way of engaging with science and research at a time when the Museums Association is encouraging museums to move towards co-curation and reinterpretation.

Dr Mike Howe

7. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

The Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator (EDI) is a new role on the GCG committee, therefore much of the year has been spent on how the role can be used to support all of GCG’s outputs and activities. Attention has been focused on recognising areas where greater support is required, as well as on initiatives to increase diversity within the collections sector.

Early in the year, an eight-page accessibility and inclusion checklist for in-person events was produced to support event organisers. This is a live document available on our website.

Manuscripts submitted for the upcoming ethics issue of the *Geological Curator* were reviewed as part of the EDI role, in addition to the normal peer-review process. This was in response to feedback received in relation to the previous ethics edition. Improvements and revisions to the journal ethics policy are underway, which follow guidelines from the [Committee on Publishing Ethics](#) (COPE). These changes will better reflect the needs of an ever-changing scientific landscape and ensure clear transparency between the GCG, authors, and readers. Publication guidelines for the *Geological Curator* will also be revised for greater transparency.

Looking ahead, the GCG is continuously looking for ways to better support our members. If there are any equity, diversity, or inclusion issues which you are experiencing, or you think there is something we could improve upon, please get in touch. We are always open to suggestions about our activities and will actively work with members to implement change wherever possible.

Meghan Jenkinson

8. Online activity

8.1 Website

During the past year we have seen the website continue to mature, and our use of other “tech” services (videoconferencing, cloud storage etc.) has become more consistent and considered, after the knee jerk reactions initiated by the pandemic of 2020. In May, we successfully trialled the use of the Zoom Webinar add-on for the Marine Reptiles Mini Conference which we found produced a much more polished output for this kind of meeting. As a result, we are saving considerable amounts of committee time when it comes to the running of GCG events and at committee meetings.

Visitor numbers to the website are up slightly, and we have continued to add content, for example posters from [#SPPC2022](#) held in September, and recordings of the online talks from our 2021 AGM seminar. The journal fulltext search facility has also benefitted from a series of minor enhancements and now incorporates the facility for us to issue and deliver our journal articles via the familiar DOI system, which provides persistent identifiers for our content. You will be able to read more about this initiative in the Journal section of this report (5.1).

Hardware-wise, we have purchased a budget-priced 10-inch tablet computer. There were many reasons for this, but it is primarily for use at events where people may wish to sign up or check their membership status. We can also use it to access any documents stored on our cloud storage, and it could also be used to lower the barrier to participation on committee if any person does not have access to personal or work devices.

During 2023 we will be upgrading the content management system that drives the website (the current version is not supported by security upgrades beyond August next year) as well as moving our cloud document store and e-mail onto an integrated platform. Work like this is seldom visible to the end user but still consumes large amounts of time, and ultimately has to take precedence over forward-facing tasks such as adding content to the website. Therefore, we have decided to advertise a new Web Assistant role as you may already have seen. If you think this might be of interest, then you can check out the role description [here](#).

Rank	Page title	Hits
1	GCG homepage	39432
2	The GCG blog	2019
3	The Geological Curators Group mission statement	1772

4	SPPC 2008 Dublin	1301
5	SPPC 2007 Glasgow	1167
6	Thumbs-up leaflet	1116
7	Geological Curator 11(6)	888
8	Article search results	851
9	Committee Profile: Nigel Larkin	801
10	Voluntary Roles on the Geological Curator editorial team	788
11	News from the 48th GCG AGM: CIO progress, membership changes and DiSSCo developments	760
12	Make a donation	741
13	Privacy Policy	731
14	Current vacancies on the GCG Committee	634
15	Sign up for membership online	576
16	Committee Profile: Simon Harris	570
17	Geological Curators Group Events Policy	472
18	Geological Curator 5(9)	454
19	Committee Profile: Robert Lowther	447
20	Committee Profile: Dr Emma Nicholls	431
21	Committee Profile: Lu Allington-Jones	423
22	Committee Profile: Mike Howe	415
23	GCG statement on Black Lives Matter - June 2020	409
24	Brand new Natural History Museum opening in Sheffield	390
25	Committee Profile: Lil Stevens	385

Top 25 pages by page impression for 2022 to 12th October. You can compare this with the results of the same query for 2021 in the last annual report available to [download from here](#).

Simon Harris

8.2. Blog

Between 1st November 2021 (date of last annual report) and 21st October 2022, we have published a total of 26 articles on the [blog](#), and received 14,949 hits – over double compared to the previous year (we received 7,358 hits between November 2020 and October 2021).

Blog articles have been viewed by people in 125 countries, across the world and on all continents except Antarctica, which is 34 countries up on last year, proving we are most certainly reaching an international audience.

Two regular slots continue to feature on the blog: A monthly contribution from a committee member (on a rotating schedule), and the monthly *News from the Sector* (a round-up of forthcoming exhibitions, events, conferences, and workshops) written by Blog Editor Emma Nicholls.

The remaining articles were written by other authors, most of which are GCG members. The top ten most read articles between 1st November 2021 and 21st October 2022 were:

[Construction of A Modern Boxed Mineral Collection](#) by John Cooke

[The Dinosaurs Rediscovered: The Scientific Revolution in Paleontology - Michael J. Benton](#) by Jenna Davenport

[History of the Fossil Record Through Commercial Boxed Collections](#) by John Cooke

[Tyrannosaurus rex The Perfect Puzzle](#) by Nigel Larkin

[Toadstones and Re-Animated Toads](#) by John Cooke

[Tendaguru: A Decolonisation Perspective](#) by Matthew Porter

[In the Beginning - The Geological Curators Group Story](#) by Cindy Howells

[The Mineral Collection of the Royal Institution of Cornwall](#) by Roy Starkey

[On the Trail of Errant Specimens](#) by Mike Howe

[Geological Fakes- Minerals, Gems and Meteorites](#) by Nadine Gabriel

If you would like to contribute an article of your own or you have anything you would like to advertise in the monthly *News from the Sector* blog, please get in touch with us at blog@geocurator.org.

Emma is due to take over as Chair of GCG at the AGM in 2022 and as such, will be stepping down from the role of Blog Editor. She would like to thank all of the amazing authors she has had the pleasure of working with since she took over the role in July 2018, and looks forward to seeing where the next Blog Editor will take us!

Dr Emma Nicholls

8.3. Social media

Our social media presence remains healthy on Facebook and Twitter. We thank everyone who has engaged with us over the years. Most news, stories and events are shared across both platforms, and we try to engage in common hashtags such as #MineralMonday and #FossilFriday.

Contributors are reminded of our social media policy, which can be viewed [here](#). Please note, this is a live document, and we will continue to monitor and update it.

Please do get in touch if you have content you would like us to distribute via our social media channels at info@geocurator.org or send us a direct message (DM).

8.3.1. Facebook

We are represented on Facebook in two ways: a group and a page (both called Geological Curators' Group), which have been live since May 2013. All content is posted to both the group and page.

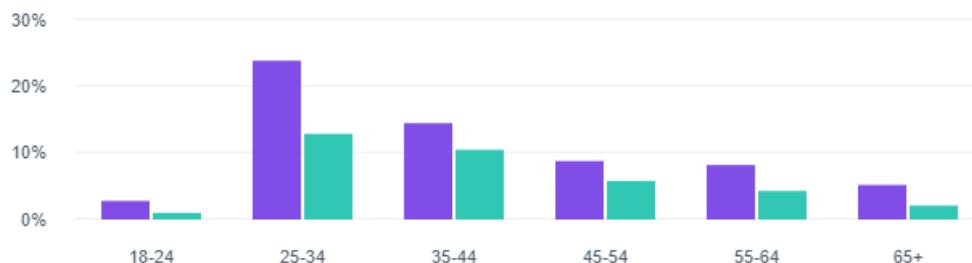
1287 people have liked our Facebook Group with a breakdown of the number of 'Likes' since 2017, below.

Year	Number of likes
2022	1287
2021	1178
2020	1035
2019	1035
2018	985
2017	912

Audience

Age and gender

■ Men 63.30%
■ Women 36.70%



Location

Towns/cities

Countries

United Kingdom	319
United States	158
Egypt	104
India	92
Mexico	67
Italy	42
Canada	36
Spain	30
Brazil	28
Pakistan	25

Above is a breakdown of our audience on the GCG Facebook Group. The stats do not give a true breakdown, as the numbers are only cover profiles where that information is provided. But it does provide a good insight.

We have 749 members on our group page from over 65 countries, predominately from the UK. Approximately three quarters are active members who will interact with the content posted.

Year	Number of Members
2022	749
2021	629
2020	502
2019	350
2018	292
2017	225

Table showing the number of members of the Facebook Page since 2017.

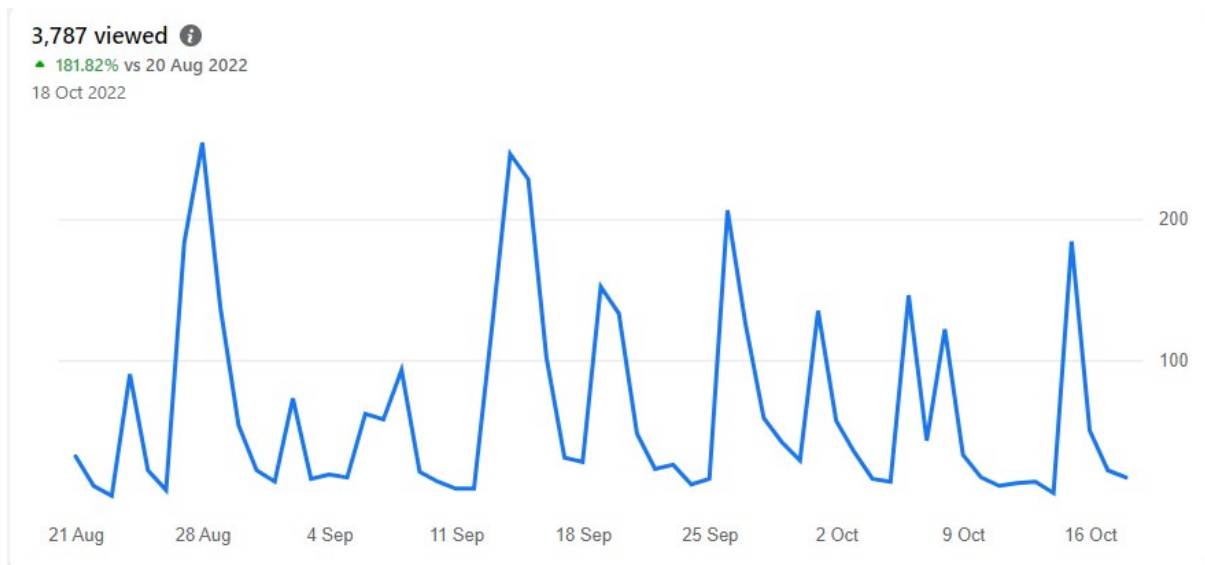


Chart showing the number of people who have viewed our Facebook Group between 21st August and 20th October. Most views tie in when new content is posted.

8.3.2. Twitter

We have had a Twitter account ([@OriginalGCG](https://twitter.com/OriginalGCG)), since January 2013, which was initially set up by Emma Bernard. There are currently 1518 followers which has been steadily increasing over the years (see table below). Typically posts with good images tend to have more interactions.

Year	Number of followers
2022	1518
2021	1445
2020	1355
2019	1227
2018	1068
2017	961

Emma Bernard

8.4. JISMail

The vast majority of general correspondence goes via our JISMail list: (GEO-CURATORS@JISMail.ac.uk).

Everyone is welcome to sign up and post to JISMail, whether a GCG member or not, although we do of course encourage you to [join us!](#) See our website for sign-up instructions.

List subscribers are roughly in line with our GCG membership, although it doesn't correspond completely. There are currently 279 list subscribers, which has remained constant over recent years (see table below). This varies during the year with some people joining as others leave, but overall remains constant. Sometimes this is because they have left the sector, changed email or had signed up for information about a specific topic and had it answered.

Year	Number of subscribers
2022	279
2021	278
2020	272
2019	275
2018	276
2017	272

Table showing the number of JISC mail subscribers since 2017.

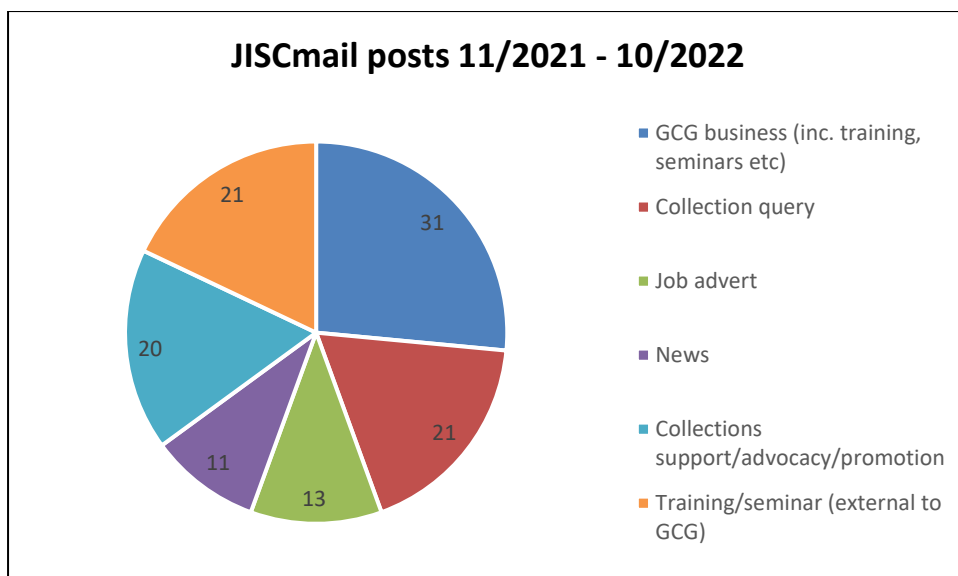
It's worth pointing out that this is purely a list of email addresses and some people have signed up with more than one email. If an email address bounces for 5 or so days in a row, JISC will remove it from the list. If you know there have been problems with your email address, it's worth checking if you're still subscribed! If you have any queries or problems, please send an email to secretary@geocurator.org.

Over the last few years, we have been grouping the posts into six different headings; GCG business (inc. training, seminars etc.); Collection queries; Job Adverts; News; Collections Support/advocacy/promotion and Training/seminar (external to the GCG offer).

Between November 2021 and 23rd October 2022, there were 157 posts in total on JISC mail, of those 117 were unique.

The majority of posts via JISC concern GCG business such as ads for GCG news, events and blog posts. Collection queries and identifications have most interactions with subscribers providing feedback.

The graph below gives a breakdown of the number of posts per category.



Graph showing the breakdown of posts on GCG JISCMail between November 2021 and October 2022.

Total original posts 2022: 157
 Total original posts 2021: 89
 Total original posts 2020: 136
 Total original posts 2019: 103
 Total original posts 2018: 98
 Total original posts 2017: 107

Please note, that the time range for each year can vary as it ties in with the scheduling of the AGM.

The majority of non-GCG specific posts came from list members who are not on committee, which shows there is a good sense of community and the need for the group and email list. On average there are 13 posts per month.

Total figures are not directly comparable as they don't cover the exact same dates each year. With a relatively small number of posts, small fluctuations are amplified, but it is clear that alongside our fantastic blog posts being sent out a few times a month, those working with collections are happy to trust the GCG hive mind with collections-based queries of all sorts.

It is noted that there are fluctuations each year depending on seasonal events e.g., more messages from committee around August and September due to SPPC, and in the lead up to events like the AGM in late November/early December.

As always, we thank everyone who has contributed to the conversations over the past year, especially those who have offered their expertise and advice which is greatly appreciated by the community.

Emma Bernard

9. Outreach and profile

During 2022 many in-person meetings started to make a comeback. However, in this post Covid world there is still space for virtual meetings, especially as it enables us to reach a more diverse audience. Some events like the online Marine Reptile Conference (see Section 4.2), which GCG agreed to sponsor in 2019 were able to go ahead.

GCG were pleased to provide sponsorship for the [Progressive Palaeontology](#) (Prog Pal) conference, which is aimed at, and run by, students, and which was held in June this year. It also gives an opportunity for the GCG to advocate for geological collections and also promote our "[I'm beginning my research. What do I do with my geological collection](#)" online booklet. Thanks go to Meghan for representing us at this meeting. More information about this meeting, can be found on our [blog](#).

As mentioned under Section 4, GCG was able to host and facilitate bookings for the 11th International Symposium on Cephalopods Present and Past, which also featured a day where delegates were able to work in the Cephalopod collections at the Natural History Museum, London.

Sponsorship was also provided for the [55th Earth Sciences Teachers Association](#) (ESTA), which was held in Leicester. A blog about this event, should be published shortly.

We have GCG fliers which can be sent out if you would like to help promote GCG. As a charity we would love to hear from anyone who might be interested in sponsoring a GCG event.

Do let us know if you would like to get more involved in GCG, whether that is writing a blog, assisting with the journal, joining the [committee](#), becoming a Trustee, or running an event. We are a friendly group, and it would be great to hear from you! Please contact us at info@geocurator.org.

Emma Bernard

10. GCG – SPNHC (Society for the Preservation of Natural History Collections) Rep

I have been very grateful to take on and continue in the role of GCG – SPNHC Rep, reporting back on the business and activities between the two organisations.

This year, I have provided full reports of GCG activity and events for the Spring and Autumn editions of the SPNHC Connection newsletter, as well as a summary for the SPNHC ABM (Annual Business Meeting) held at the Edinburgh [SPNHC conference](#) in June 2022 which I was lucky to be able to attend.

Held in partnership with BHL (Biodiversity Heritage Library) and NatSCA (Natural Sciences Collections Association) at National Museums of Scotland and Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, the conference theme was 'Through the door and through the web: releasing the power of natural history collections onsite and online', and included numerous talks, collection tours, demo camps and workshops.

There was ample opportunity to network with colleagues from across the globe to advocate the work GCG do. Thanks go to NatSCA for the opportunity to share table space in the grand McEwan

Hall to help promote our work. Simon Harris, Nigel Larkin and I took turns staffing the table to tempt conference goers with leaflets, journal prints and our very fashionable tote bags!

The June 2023 SPNHC conference will be hosted by the California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco, California, under the theme 'Taking the Long View', encouraging the Natural Science sector to 'envision the future for our field, our collections, and ourselves. What lessons can we take from the past to better shape our future? What are our goals as a society and as individual organisations?'

The conference will be hybrid with a virtual program for members who cannot attend in-person, see [here](#) for further details.

I look forward to continued advocacy on behalf of GCG. If there is any news or information you would like to share with SPNHC, please contact me at spnhc-rep@geocurator.org

Andrew Haycock

GCG information

The Geological Curators Group can be found at:

www.geocurator.org

<https://www.facebook.com/GeologicalCuratorsGroup/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/376700195784835/>

<https://twitter.com/OriginalGCG>

<https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-details/?regid=296050&subid=0>

Contact details:

Email: info@geocurator.org

Address: Geological Curators Group
(c/o Becky Goddard)
The Geological Society
Burlington House
London
W1J 0BG

Committee for 2022 (from AGM 2021)

(T = trustee)

Chair (T): Sarah King (*York Museums Trust*)

Vice-Chair* (T): Emma Nicholls (*Horniman Museum and Gardens*)

Secretary (T): Emma Bernard (*Natural History Museum, London*)

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator* (T): Meghan Jenkinson (*University of Leeds*)

Collections Coordinator (T): Mike Howe (*British Geological Survey*)

Treasurer (T): Robert Lowther (*Imperial College, London*)

Membership Officer: Cindy Howells (*National Museum Wales*)

Programme Coordinator (T): Zoë Hughes (*Natural History Museum, London*)

Journal Editor (T): Lu Allington-Jones has been acting Journal Editor

Web Coordinator (T): Simon Harris (*British Geological Survey*)

Trustee: Lu Allington-Jones (*Natural History Museum, London*)

Trustee: Rachel Walcott (*National Museum of Scotland*)

Newsletter Editor: Lu Allington-Jones (*Natural History Museum, London*)

Blog Editor: Emma Nicholls (*Horniman Museum and Gardens*)

Officer: (Treasurer support) Alex Peaker (*Dinosaur Isle*)

Officer: (Conservation Officer): Nigel Larkin (*Natural History Conservation*)

Officer: (Archive support): Lil Stevens (*Natural History Museum, London*)

Officer: (SPNHC Rep): Andrew Haycock (*National Museum Wales*).

* Denotes a new role in the CIO.

Proposed committee for 2023

Trustees

- **Chair:** Emma Nicholls (*Horniman Museum and Gardens*)
- **Secretary:** Lu Allington-Jones (*Natural History Museum, London*)
- **Treasurer:** Robert Lowther (*Imperial College, London*)
- **Web Coordinator:** Simon Harris (*British Geological Survey*)
- **Programme Coordinator:** Mark Evans (*British Antarctic Survey*)
- **Journal Editor:** Duncan Murdock (*Oxford University Museum of Natural History*)
- **Collections Coordinator:** Mike Howe (*British Geological Survey*)
- **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator:** Meghan Jenkinson (*University of Leeds*)
- **Communication Coordinator:** Juned Zariwala (*University of Bristol*)
- **Ordinary Member (Outgoing Treasurer):** Rachel Walcott (*National Museum of Scotland*)

Non-Trustees

- **Membership Officer:** Cindy Howells (*National Museum Wales*)
- **Blog Editor:** Rob Theodore (*Sedgwick Museum of Earth Sciences, Cambridge*)
- **Newsletter Editor:** Cinzia Ragni (*University of Turin, Italy*)
- **Conservation Officer:** Nigel Larkin (*Natural History Conservation*)
- **Society for the Prevention of Natural History Collections (SPNHC) Rep:** Andrew Haycock (*National Museum, Wales*)
- **Committee Assistant:** Alex Peaker (*Dinosaur Isle*)
- **Collections Coordinator Assistant:** Sherri Donaldson (*University of Edinburgh*)
- **Associate Editor (fossil vertebrates):** Neil Adams (*Natural History Museum, London*)
- **Associate Editor (microfossils and geoheritage):** Jess McCoy (*Northumbria University*)
- **Associate Editor (conservation, preparation and replication):** Lu Allington-Jones (*Natural History Museum, London*)
- **First Stage Production Editor:** Hannah Bird (*Freelance Editor & Content Creator*)
- **First Stage Production Editor:** Nicolas Baird (*American Museum of Natural History and Columbia University*)
- **Second Stage Production Editor:** Emily Carlisle (*University of Bristol*)

Thank you to outgoing committee members

- **Chair:** Sarah King (*York Museums Trust*)
- **Secretary:** Emma Bernard (*Natural History Museum, London*)
- **Programme Coordinator:** Zoë Hughes (*Natural History Museum, London*)
- **Archive Assistant:** Lil Stevens (*Natural History Museum, London*)

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Thank you.