

U3A GEOLOGY REPORT

Bob Tuddenham

Meetings on Monday January 26th and February 2026

The first meeting of 2026 was well attended but was sadly the first without Trevor Morse taking a leading role. Trevor unfortunately has been unwell and has had to step down with immediate effect. We wish both Trevor and Lynn our best wishes for a speedy recovery and thank Trevor for his expert talks and great enthusiasm in leading the u3a Geology group over many years.

The first talk at the meeting was by John Watkinson and looked at mountain building processes and particularly the Himalayas; John showed some very spectacular slides of mountain scenery including Everest itself. He talked briefly about the tectonics of mountains and our greater understanding of mountain building processes through measurements of gravity to produce maps which depict variations in the Earth's gravitational field due to uneven mass distribution.

In the second half Bob Tuddenham gave the first part of his talk on the Geology of South Shropshire. This beautiful area of grass covered hills and moorland is a National Landscape but interestingly is not a National Park or a Geopark. The variety of the geology is quite remarkable with some eight different geological periods in the 35 miles going from west to east. Bob touched on the 'crumpled' area of the Long Mynd and Stretton Hills which are Precambrian (550 million years old) and are much older than the mountains in North Wales and the Lake District.

In the February meeting, we had two most interesting talks. The first by Chris Lovett was about 'Lava Tubes'. These remarkable features are found in volcanic areas of the world where there are basaltic lava flows. Low viscous fluid flow is essential for lava tube formation. Chris explained the detail of how these tubes are formed and talked about their unusual features with even mineral stalactites and stalagmites with amazing colours.

In the second half of this meeting, David Saville continued his excellent series on the 'Introduction to Geology' with the first part of a talk on 'Life in the Carboniferous'. This period of Geology is of particular interest being the major geology of the North Pennines and Yorkshire Dales. More details will be given after David completes part two of the talk in the April meeting.

The next meeting is at The Witham on Monday morning **March 23rd** at 10 am. All are welcome. Please contact the convenor for details.