



HARROW & HILLINGDON GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

A Local Group of the Geologists' Association

Founded 1973

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Non-members, please register by email: contact@hhgs.org.uk

Following our Annual General Meeting this year we have a special lecture on the progress of our Stanmore Gravel Project.

Wednesday 14th May 2025 at 8.45pm on Zoom

“The Stanmore Pebble Gravel in the context of similar high-level deposits”

By Prof David Bridgland, (Durham University)

In his Geological Conservation Review No 7: *The Quaternary of the Thames* (1994), Chapter 3, David Bridgland wrote:

April-May 2024 analysis X1



“The exposure of the Stanmore Pebble Gravel at Harrow Weald Common is one of very few, in the Thames basin, in which Pliocene/Early Pleistocene deposits can be examined. The origin of this type of material has been a subject of considerable controversy but, until recently, most authors have favoured a shallow-marine origin. Recent reappraisal has considerably undermined the case for a Pliocene or Early Pleistocene marine episode in the London Basin, such that the Pebble Gravel Group is now generally thought to comprise fluvial deposits, their marine characteristics having been inherited from earlier Cenozoic gravels. The suggestion, in this report, that the Stanmore Pebble Gravel represents a south-bank tributary of the early Thames is based on re-evaluation of published evidence. Further research on the deposit at Harrow Weald Common and other sites in the Stanmore and Northaw Gravels is required to test this theory and provide more information about the palaeogeography of the London Basin during the poorly understood Late Pliocene—Early Pleistocene period. The goal of such work would be a more complete understanding of the early history of the River Thames, prior to its acme, in the Early Pleistocene, as a huge river draining the West Midlands as well as the present catchment.”

In September 2022 we held a meeting to discuss the feasibility of investigating the Stanmore Gravel deposit at our local geological Site of Special Scientific Interest, Harrow Weald SSSI. Professor David Bridgland agreed to lead the

project, along with Dr Peter Allen. In this special lecture, David Bridgland will explain the broader context of the Stanmore Gravel and why the current investigation is needed.



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Professor David Bridgland's research interests are Quaternary environmental change and fluvial history, with reference to palaeontology and archaeology, on which he has published extensively.

David Bridgland is Vice President of the Geologists' Association and Chair of publications; he is also on the editorial board of Earth Heritage Magazine. He was awarded the Henry Stopes Memorial Medal of the Geologists' Association in 2003, for 'on the Prehistory of Man and his geological environment'.

In 2011, he helped organise 'Geoconservation for Science and Society: an Agenda for the 21st Century', reflecting his long-standing interest in Earth Science conservation.