



HARROW & HILLINGDON GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

A Local Group of the Geologists' Association

Founded 1973

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Volcano Lecture Series 2025

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

Wednesday 8th October 2025 at 8pm on Zoom

“Risky Mountains in Paradise – Volcanism in the Caribbean”

By Prof Richard Robertson (University of the West Indies)



Life in the multi-hazard volcanic landscape of the Eastern Caribbean (previously described as the “Lesser Antilles”) can be challenging. These challenges arise from systemic vulnerabilities resulting from the legacy of colonialism which has left the region with settlement patterns, social structures and economies that are not designed to build resilience to the hazardous environments in which the islands are sited. They also arise from the nature of the geology and geography of the region which makes it susceptible to the impacts of all possible natural and man-made hazards existent on the earth. Located within a tropical region where hurricanes and windstorms are likely and prevalent, the plate tectonic setting of the region is one where divergent, convergent and transvergent plate boundaries are present; all with their attendant associated hazards. The region therefore has the double distinction of being both vulnerable and exposed to hazards of all types. Managing risk and building resilience in the multi-hazard environment is and had been extremely challenging. However, through a combination of regional collaboration of monitoring scientist, government agencies and working closely with communities at risk, crises have been effectively managed. In this talk Richie will outline lessons learned from his work in the region aimed at reducing volcanic risk. His work includes creating affordable monitoring tools, working directly with communities, improving scientific knowledge through research partnerships, and adopting new technologies.



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Prof. Richard (Richie) Robertson is a professor of geology at the University of the West Indies who has spent the past 30+ years in the Eastern Caribbean investigating geologic hazards and working with local people and their organizations to reduce vulnerability to these hazards. As Director of *The UWI Seismic Research Centre* he was involved in the creation of volcanic hazard maps and establishment of volcano monitoring networks (mainly geodetic); public education and outreach campaigns and management of the scientific response to the 1995 Soufriere Hills Volcano on Montserrat and the 2020-2021 eruption of La Soufriere Volcano on St. Vincent.