

## **The Earth Science Education Forum for England and Wales**

The seeds of the Earth Science Education Forum for England and Wales were sown at the launch of the Earth Science Education Unit (ESEU) in the Earth Galleries of the Natural History Museum on 5 February 2002. Conversations between the earth science organisations represented at the event highlighted a need to provide opportunities for interested parties to meet, exchange views, and raise the profile of earth science in education.

A little over a week later, on 13 February, a small group comprising representatives from the BGS, ESTA, and ESEU, and chaired by Allan Rogers, a member of the BGS Board and former MP for the Rhondda, met in the BGS's London office 'to discuss earth science in education' and agreed to set up a forum, along the lines of the recently established Scottish Earth Science Education Forum. The BGS agreed to act as a focal point and the inaugural meeting of the Earth Science Education Forum (England and Wales) — ESEF(EW) for short — was held on 27 February 2002.

The terms of reference for the new forum were:

- To promote earth science in education.
- To bring together all relevant organisations, institutes and individuals in pursuit of the above.

Today there are over 40 organisations associated with ESEF(EW). Membership is inclusive and encompasses academic institutions, professional bodies, industry, government agencies, museums, amateur geology groups, geoconservation and life-long learning. Members are able to raise issues of concern, discuss potential collaborative projects, share good practice and promote events, publications and other initiatives through the Forum's meetings and email distribution list.

Recently, members have been working hard together to ensure that earth science is properly represented in the revised National Curriculum. ESEF(EW) members, led by the Geological Society, Royal Geographical Society and the Forum's current chair, Professor Chris King, submitted a strong and coherent plan to the Department for Education recommending how earth science should be integrated across the Science and Geography curricula through each of the Key Stages. Continued correspondence during the consultation phase, supported by contributions from our other members, has ensured that the earth sciences have not been overlooked and we are confident that the outcome is a much stronger and more relevant earth science component to the curriculum, compared with the early drafts.

ESEF(EW) meetings are held four times a year at Burlington House, Piccadilly, thanks to the generosity of the Geological Society. Each meeting includes a discussion around a topic presented by an invited speaker. Meeting dates are posted on the website ([www.esef.org.uk](http://www.esef.org.uk)). If you would like to receive information about future meetings, please email David Bailey ([ESEFEW@gmail.com](mailto:ESEFEW@gmail.com)) to be added to the mailing list.