



## **IGCP735 Regional Meeting in Llandrindod Wells (Wales, UK)** **July 4<sup>th</sup>–11<sup>th</sup> 2025**

### **Joint conference, field meeting and workshop**

Further to our preliminary announcement, we are delighted to formally invite you to a mixed-format symposium and field meeting based in the beautiful town of Llandrindod Wells (central Wales, UK), on the edge of the famous Bwlch–Llandrindod Inlier. **We will shortly be opening registration**, and we aim to keep the fee as low as possible (we hope this will be around £150–200), to enable as many people as possible to attend. We also hope that some funds will be available from the IGCP735 budget to help those from developing countries or who have no research grants; please ask if you need some support.

### **Timeline**

*Registration* to open shortly (January 2025).

Registration deadline is likely to be relatively short, so please be prepared to book promptly! (Note: because this is a small venue, it makes it quite important that we know numbers early on... or at least let us know that you intend to attend.)

*Abstract submission deadline*: March 31<sup>st</sup>.

Meeting from 4<sup>th</sup>–11<sup>th</sup> July 2025.



### **Conference Venue**

The Metropole Hotel, Llandrindod: a historic hotel that is hosting all our conference activities, and also has a substantial amount of half-board accommodation currently set aside for delegates at a reduced rate. The conference dinner is included in the cost for those staying at the Metropole, but will be extra for those staying elsewhere. There is also a range of other accommodation within and around the town, for a range of budgets.

### **Getting here**

Llandrindod is in the centre of Wales, far from the major cities. However, it is reachable by train or bus from the major UK airports, including Birmingham, Manchester and London. It might take you a while, but whichever way you come, it's a beautiful journey! We'll provide details of the available

routes in a future update.

### Conference format and focus

The format will be mixed, involving alternating days of presentations and local field visits, with a day of workshops. We would like to particularly emphasise presentations on the subject of total communities within the early Palaeozoic: exceptional preservation, ecological studies and neglected or poorly-known groups. Other subjects within the IGCP735 remit are very welcome also, of course!

Presentations can be in the form of traditional talks or posters. If you would like to present a different style or format of talk to the normal types (for example, a field report of interesting discoveries, even if you are unfamiliar with formal scientific presentations), please just ask: we would be delighted to receive such suggestions and advise! We will be selecting some talks for longer slots based on their fit to the programme and potential for wide interest.

The **field visits** will be to a range of local sites within the Ordovician (Darriwilian to early Sandbian) Builth–Llandrindod Inlier. The inlier preserves the history of a volcanic island complex, and is the focus of the nascent Heart of Wales Geopark (<https://heartofwalesgeopark.org.uk/>). The area is home to many sites with a degree of exceptional preservation, and some major Konservat-Lagerstätten such as Llanfawr and the newly-discovered Castle Bank (which will be included in the itinerary). The landscape, culture and history of the area are also remarkable, and these will not be neglected! Some of these sites are within walking distance of the conference venue, and transport will be provided for slightly more distant ones, or for those with more limited mobility; the costs of this are included in the conference fee.



The **workshops** will include at least (1) the range of exceptional preservation and palaeoecology within the Builth–Llandrindod Inlier (including unpublished sites); (2) identification and interpretation of fossil sponges.

Other sessions are under consideration, including one on bivalved arthropods.

The current plan (depending on numbers of presentations, etc.) is as follows:

July 4<sup>th</sup>: arrival and icebreaker

5<sup>th</sup>: talks

6<sup>th</sup>: fieldwork

7<sup>th</sup>: talks

8<sup>th</sup>: fieldwork

9<sup>th</sup>: talks and conference dinner

10<sup>th</sup>: workshops

11<sup>th</sup>: departure

Posters will be available for the whole meeting, but we aim to have extended lunch breaks with dedicated sessions; again, dependent on the number of presentations.

## **Conference ethos**

We, the organisers, greatly enjoy the atmosphere of these small meetings, where the aim is to come together, share exciting news, and have time for discussions—both formal and informal. This is where collaborations start and enthusiasm is kindled for new directions. It's not so much a chance to show off the prestige of your research group, but rather to get involved, and we value the insights and contributions of all. To this end, we are encouraging amateur palaeontologists, early-career researchers and everyone from any nation to join us and become part of this scientific community.

We have also chosen to integrate the various aspects of the meeting into one whole, including the field visits and workshops, as we believe all are equally important. These are included within the registration fee, which we will keep as low as possible. The workshops will also provide opportunities for open discussion. We may not have all the resources of a university, but we can provide a warm welcome, and a positive atmosphere!

In contrast to most conference locations in big cities, Llandrindod is a small, friendly town, and this conference is a major event for us and other residents. We encourage delegates to relax, enjoy the culture, and spend time outside the conference venue; there are many cafes for lunch, shops to buy a picnic, and pubs for ongoing scientific discussions into the night. Locals will probably be interested in where you've come from, and what you're doing, but they probably won't know anything much about fossils—consider it a chance to be ambassadors for palaeontology! The Metropole Hotel is offering its facilities at low cost, in order to encourage the meeting.

## **Other considerations**

*Weather.* It's Wales. Expect temperatures between 5°C and 35°C, probably rain and (hopefully) some sunshine. We should be safe from snow. It might be windy, or it might not. Some of the locations can get surprisingly hot in sunny weather, so bring sun-block and a hat. Basically, be prepared for anything!

*Language.* English. Welsh is not widely spoken in Llandrindod, but for those who want to immerse themselves a little more, we recommend that you learn at least how to properly pronounce Welsh words and place names! With practice, you can work up to Llanfawrwpwllgwyngyllgogerychwerndrobwlllantisiliogogoch.

*Microscopes and specimens.* We will have some microscopes available for examination and discussion of specimens, but more (and other interesting bits of equipment) are welcome!

*Collecting specimens.* Hammering and collecting will be possible at some sites, but restricted at others. If you'd like to take something away with you, especially to deposit in your own local museum, then please ask!

*We're looking forward to seeing you!*

## **Organising committee**

Lucy Muir, Joe Botting, Michelle Thomas, Berwyn Powell

## **Scientific committee**

Lucy Muir, Joe Botting, Steve Pates, Mansoureh Ghobadi-Pour, Caroline Buttler, Lucy McCobb

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