

# Birmingham's Erratic Boulders Heritage of the Ice Age

## Project Update April 2022

This month saw the launch of our first walking trail, the Roland Kedge trail, which starts at the Great Stone Inn in Northfield, travels through Victoria Common to Selly Oak Park and ending at the Aston Webb boulder at the University of Birmingham, via the Worcester and Birmingham canal.



Boulder in the pond at the Great Stone Inn



Aston Webb boulder at University of Birmingham

The trail was named after Roland Kedge, who has spent the past 20 years, finding, and recording the erratic boulders in south Birmingham, along with Julie Schroder, and was the inspiration behind the National Lottery bid to raise public awareness of this natural heritage.

Professor Ian Fairchild presented Roland with a token of appreciation for all his hard work.



Roland Kedge, Julie Schroder and Prof. Ian Fairchild

Around 70 people attended the launch of our trail and the unveiling of a mill stone found in the River Rea, at the Pastoral Centre of St Laurence Church. We were entertained by Mark Reynolds and Revd. Theresa Morton, who read monologues about the River Rea and the Great Stone Inn from the "Northfield Revealed" project.



Mark Reynolds reading the River Rea monologue at the unveiling of the mill stone

Excerpt from the Great Stone monologue.

**Now, this Inn is named after that bloomin' huge stone that's sat in the pound.**

**I'm not sure who that belongs to but it's not the only one.**

**There's others, like the Gilbert stone over at Yardley.**

They reckon Gilbert, the giant from legend times, grabbed that stone and plonked in down to settle some land dispute.

**There's the War Stone over Hockley way an' all.**

They put that where Aston, Birmingham and Handsworth meet.

**And then there's this one - The Great Stone.**

It sat on the corner of Church Hill until 1954 before being moved into the pound.

I bet no one has had to pay a fine to get it back though.

Now my mate Derek, who lives over the way, he told me that thousands of years ago the land, all of it, was covered in ice.

Thick, like the road.

Perhaps thicker.

So thick it could pick up huge stones like this one here and carry them for miles.

Apparently this one started off in Wales.

Wales!

**Derek says it's made from igneous rock formed when volcanic lava solidifies.**

No idea what he is on about, especially when a giant carried one into Yardley.

I think Derek's a few sheep short of a flock, if you know what I mean?

**Well, that's enough chat about stones.**

**The inn's still serving and for me, my friends, duty calls....**

Northfield Revealed project

Volunteers led 2 tours of the trail, with around 20 people joining them and it was great to see so many children getting involved. The weather was kind to us, and Ian felt particularly lucky when he arrived at the Aston Webb boulder, just as the sun came out revealing lovely glacial striations on the stone.



Aston Webb boulder with glacial striations and an example of crystal lithic tuff from the Hole Lane boulder close to Garland Way.



Leaflets of the Roland Kedge trail can be found at Northfield Library, Great Stone Inn, St Laurence Church and the Lapworth Museum of Geology, or can be downloaded from our website <https://erraticsproject.org/trail-1/>

An accessible guide can be downloaded at <https://www.accessibilityguides.org/content/roland-kedge-trail-northfield-university-birmingham>

Prior to the launch, volunteer tour guides walked the route extending their knowledge of the **trail's** erratic boulders.



Volunteer trail guides at the Great Stone and Inn and along the route

There will be other training days for future launches. If you would like to join us, please contact Zoe, [z.jackson@worc.ac.uk](mailto:z.jackson@worc.ac.uk) for further details.

We are so grateful to Julie and John Schroder who continue to work so hard on planning the other trails. If you would like to volunteer to test the trails, then please contact Zoe.

We have scheduled the other trail launches as follows. More details will be available on our website <https://erraticsproject.org/> 2 weeks before each event.

Trail	Date	Starting Point
Kings Norton	14 <sup>th</sup> May 2022	Kings Norton Green, Farmer's Market
Frankley Festival community consultation	25 <sup>th</sup> June 2022	Arden Road, Frankley
Cotteridge Park and Bournville	2 <sup>nd</sup> July 2022	History Marquee, Cotteridge Park
Woodgate Valley Country Park	13 <sup>th</sup> August 2022	Visitor Centre WVCP
Cycle trail—Longbridge to Bromsgrove	20 <sup>th</sup> August 2022	Romsley Hill Green
Cycle trail—South West Birmingham	10 <sup>th</sup> September 2022	Cannon Hill Park
Frankley trail launch	10 <sup>th</sup> September 2022	Arden Road, Frankley



## Birmingham's Erratic Boulders Heritage of the Ice Age

Join us on an exploration of Birmingham's Ice Age Heritage around Kings Norton

You can take a guided tour around the ancient glacial boulders with our volunteer geologists, or wander on your own around the historic village of Kings Norton, to Bromford Dell via the 7 boulders at Masefield Square. The 4 mile accessible route will take you past more than a dozen examples of erratic stones, that were deposited by melting glaciers in Birmingham, 450 thousand years ago.

Kings Norton to Bromford Dell trail

Starting from Kings Norton Green,

on

Saturday 14th May 2022

from 9am to 1.30pm

You will be able to find us at Kings Norton Farmers Market, where you can pick up a trail leaflet and chat to our team of volunteer geologists.

If you would like a guided tour they will start from our stall on the Green near the Bull's Head pub @

10am and 11am

Further information on the trail and transport links can be found at

<https://erraticsproject.org/> from 2.5.22 or contact Val Turner  
erraticsproject@worc.ac.uk

Val Turner  
Project Manager  
25.4.22