

Edinburgh Geological Society – Excursions 2026



Excursion title:	Building Stones of Edinburgh
Date & start time:	Saturday 29 th July 2026 at 19:00
Finish time:	21:00
Leader(s), organisation:	Luis Albornoz-Parra

Excursion summary:	A tour of part of Edinburgh's Old and New Towns, focusing on buildings and monuments made of both local stone, and stone brought into the city from further away. Starting at Old College moving downhill to the New Town the walk will zigzag through the streets of the Old Town and stop by buildings and monuments with an interesting building stone story. We will look in detail at what the different stones are, where they came from, their character, how this affects their condition, and past and current conservation issues.
Meeting point:	Meeting at the Old College Quad, South Bridge, Edinburgh EH8 9YL. [325972 , 673356]
Transport details:	There is a range of Lothian buses passing nearby.
Outline of the excursion route:	We will start at the Old College, and we will make our way downhill into the New Town by zigzagging through the streets of the Old Town, passing by important and interesting buildings and monuments on our way. Finishing at St Andrew's Square.
Terrain, walking distance, height gain:	c. 1.5 miles (2.5 km) walk on flat or downhill slopes throughout the city.
Excursion Grade	A - Easy Note these grades are not an extensive list of difficulty so please read the full excursion form or inform the excursion secretary if you have any questions or concerns.
Additional Hazards not included in the <i>EGS Excursion Handbook</i>:	The most important hazard to be aware in this trip is traffic, both while crossing roads and while standing on the streets. Please use crossings and be mindful of other pavement users.
Control measures required to mitigate against any Hazards referred to above:	Always keep an eye out for all vehicular traffic when crossing streets Moving vehicles: we shall be crossing busy city centre streets, usually but not always at pedestrian crossings; paving and road surfaces can be irregular.
Hard hats or Hi-viz clothing needed?	Hi-viz vests optional for participants
May dogs be brought on the excursion?	Yes, but must be well behaved in busy environments.
Toilet information:	No public toilets anywhere. But it is always possible to pop into a pub or café, should there be an emergency. Waverley Station is the closest.
Geological map sheet:	32-Edinburgh
References:	A general knowledge of the stratigraphical succession will be useful (see published maps listed above) or e.g., Geology of Scotland (5th Ed.). 2024. See also Ellen, R., Browne, M.A.E., Mitten, A.J., Clarke, S.M., Leslie, A.G. and Callaghan, E. (2019). Sedimentology,

	architecture and depositional setting of the fluvial Spireslack Sandstone of the Midland Valley, Scotland: insights from the Spireslack surface coal mine. Geological Society, London, Special Publications, 488, 181–204. I will also supply a printable guide in. pdf format for participants.
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Excursion grade key

A grade field trips participants should be able to walk 1 mile (1.6 km), on good coastal paths and beaches of sand and pebbles.

B grade field trips all participants should have good balance and be fit enough to walk up to 3 miles (4.8 km), sometimes on uneven ground (such as rocky shores).

C grade field trips all participants should have very good balance & be fit enough to walk up to 4 miles (6.5 km), sometimes on more uneven ground than for B grade (such as rocky shores with small boulders), on steeper slopes, & for light scrambles.