



The Sedgwick Museum
of Earth Sciences

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

29 August 2007

DCMS/Wolfson Foundation Grant Awarded to the Sedgwick Museum

The **Sedgwick Museum of Earth Sciences** has been awarded £28,000 to assist in the redevelopment of its entrance and galleries to provide easier access for disabled visitors. The Sedgwick Museum was founded in 1728 and is the oldest of the University Museums; its present main building was opened by King Edward VII in 1904 and, although it was innovative in its time and an excellent building within which to exhibit its internationally important collections, it presents disabled visitors with a number of challenges.

The new grant will link in with a major project that is intended to improve disabled access for students, teachers and researchers throughout the Department of Earth Sciences.

The **DCMS/Wolfson Foundation** Gallery Improvement Fund Grant will assist in the provision of new lighting for the entrance stairways, modification to the entrance doors, the purchase of portable ramps and handrails, the re-siting of large geological specimens, seating, height adjustable workbenches, induction loops for the lecture theatres, an intercom, improved signage and leaflets.

Sedgwick Museum Director Dr David Norman said "It is enormously satisfying to be rewarded in this way by the DCMS/Wolfson Foundation because it demonstrates that all the efforts that my staff have been making over the past few years to open up this Museum to *everyone* is being recognised."

The Museum was recently awarded substantial grants from the **Heritage Lottery Fund** and the **Designation Challenge Fund** to mount an exhibition focusing on Charles Darwin's, largely unappreciated, work as a hugely important Geologist in the first half of the 19th century. The exhibition, which is scheduled to open in two phases, the first in the spring of 2008 and the second in 2009, is likely to attract considerably more visitors than at present, so improving physical access to the galleries is a high priority for the Museum.

Principal Assistant in Earth Sciences Nigel Johnson said: "I am so pleased that we can now introduce access improvements, they will go a long way to help serve an already busy and renowned Department and Museum. My thanks go to all concerned in this process, the hard work put in now will pay us back over many years to come."

- ENDS -

Note to Editors

1) Forty-three museums and galleries in England will benefit from grants totalling £4 million, Culture Minister Margaret Hodge announced today. Provided jointly by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the Wolfson Foundation, the grants will help improve the quality of museum displays and the visitor experience.

2) This is the sixth year of the current DCMS/Wolfson Foundation Museums & Galleries Improvement Fund, which has awarded a total of £20 million to institutions around the country since it was set up in 2002.

3) The Sedgwick Museum was founded in 1728 and is the oldest of the University Museums; its present main building was opened by King Edward VII in 1904 and, although it was innovative in its time and an excellent building within which to exhibit its internationally important collections, it presents disabled visitors with a number of challenges.

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The Sedgwick Museum welcomes over 50,000 visitors a year. The Museum is open Monday – Friday 10.00 - 1700; Saturday: 10.00 – 16.00.

Admission is FREE.

www.sedgwickmuseum.org

Press and media enquiries

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