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Geography Southwest Newsbites November 2025

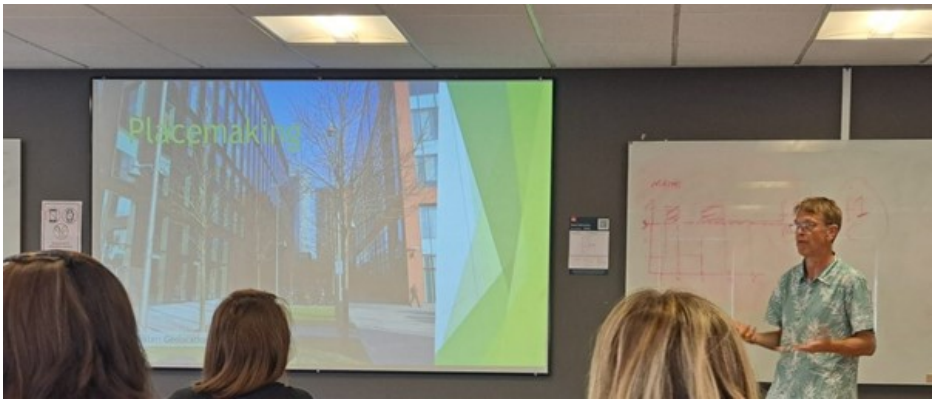


Welcome to the November 2025 Newsbites with a round up of news and topical resources. Do also look at our Forthcoming Events section for CPD courses and events in January, which can often get overlooked in the Christmas school paperwork.

Looking for inspiration for the end of term? Discover the World's Big Christmas Quiz was launched on Wednesday 25 November.
You need to sign up for the free quiz which will then be sent to you. The 8 rounds are aimed at Key Stages 3 to 5 and include *Islands of the World* devised by Geography South West, and *Volcanic Eruptions from Space, OS Maps, Urban Landscapes, Geography & Tech, Hazards and Geography in the News.*

Congratulations to the Derby-based travel company **Rayburn Tours** who are celebrating a landmark achievement after being named Best School Tour Operator (Large) at the 2025 **School Travel Awards**, one of the most respected accolades in the UK's educational visits sector. In 2025, Rayburn Tours has taken more than 34,000 passengers on educational experiences around the world.

Save the dates: The 2026 South West Geography Conference is on **Monday 22 June** at the University of West of England (UWE), Bristol and the provisional programme will be announced in our December Newsbites. On Monday 29 June, the SE Geography Conference will take place at RHUL with free entry. Further details and updates on the programme are **here**.



Geography in the News



New Okehampton Parkway station due to open in Summer 2026

Okehampton Parkway station is making significant progress and is due to open in 2026. Located close to the A30 dual carriageway on the eastern outskirts of Okehampton, the new station is designed to serve both local residents and visitors, providing an easily accessible gateway to Dartmoor and acting as a boost for the local economy. The **Dartmoor Line** was reopened from Exeter to Okehampton via Crediton in November 2021 with an hourly service and traffic volumes have exceeded expectations, making the line profitable.

Bristol Airport plans major expansion and enlarged terminal

Bristol Airport has officially unveiled plans for a significant expansion project, including the construction of a state-of-the-art terminal. The project is aimed at accommodating growing passenger numbers and boosting growth in the region. A new energy efficient terminal will provide expanded check in areas, passenger lounges and retailing and eating services. The expansion will enable the airport to have 12 million passengers

by 2030. The construction phase will generate hundreds of jobs in the region. The improved facilities are also anticipated to attract new airlines and routes, enhancing Bristol's status as a gateway for international travel and business. Bristol Airport currently has around 5,000 people working on-site and it is estimated that the Airport's economic footprint supports around 10,650 jobs and around £810 million of gross value added (GVA) in the Bristol region.

New battery factory near Bridgewater takes shape

Work is well underway on the new **EV Battery Factory** at Bridgewater, set to open in 2027. Video footage from Agratas shows the site taking shape. About 2,000 people are involved in the build, and once it is finished, the site will offer 4,000 jobs.

Storm Claudia impacts on South West England

Storm Claudia hit the country from Thursday 13 November to Sunday 16 November with severe floods and winds affecting parts of the South West. Over 100 mm of rain fell in a few hours, over 60% of the average for November leading to rapid runoff. The South West region received 15 Flood alerts and two flood warnings with disruption of events and delays on motorways. The railway from Crediton to Barnstaple was closed for nearly a week due to high rivers levels affecting three bridges. **Monmouth** in South Wales was badly affected by flood waters when the River Monnow burst its banks, after the catchment area received nearly 120 mm rainfall in less than 24 hours.



New geography resources

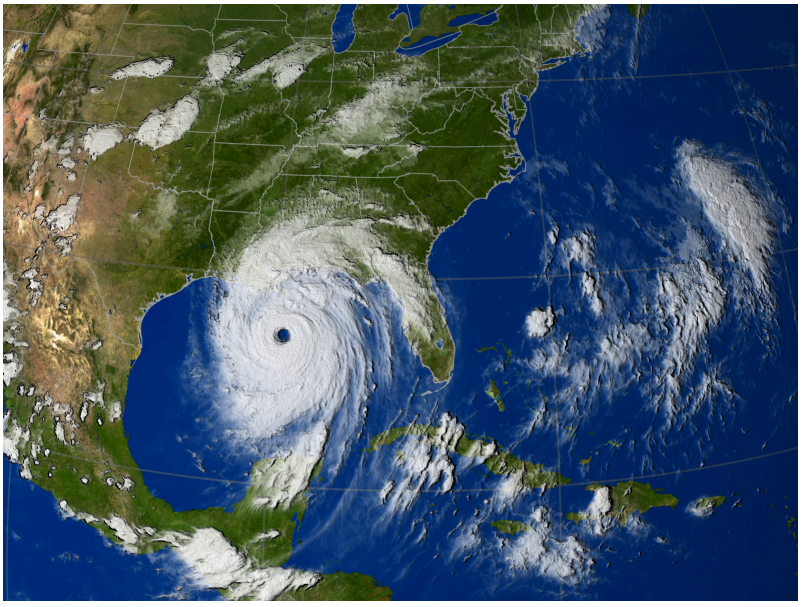


Image credit: NASA-Katrina

Teaching Hurricanes? A new **YouTube video** summarises the 5 levels of the Saffir Simpson Hurricane Scale and asks if there should now be a category 6.

Updating your lessons on UK weather and climate? The Royal Meteorological Society's **State of the UK Climate** provides an overview of 2024, including the evidence that the UK is warming at a rate of about 0.25°C per decade and that 2024 was the fourth warmest year on record with worrying concerns over extreme heat.

Looking at changing UK land uses? The **National Library of Scotland** have made available an online collection of land use maps from the Land Use survey of the 1960s. This valuable archive source provides a basis for local studies on land use change and also possible NEA research comparing historic maps to fieldwork surveys conducted by students.

Looking at changing places over time? The National Library of Scotland have a comprehensive collection of maps providing a very useful resource for **studies of changing places at GCSE or A level**.

Topical news on UK land use changes and ecology from the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (UKCEH) can be found on the **here.**

Green Careers. Did you look at green careers in November with your students? The RGS have a range of **supporting resources** on their website, including the 24 page **Choose Geography Supplement,** and their comprehensive collection of **career profiles**.

Looking for an overview of current geography issues and new resources? Sign up for **Emma Espley's Free Educational roundup of news** which appears weekly/fortnightly**.**



Forthcoming events for geography teachers

The Travel Company Flooglebinder have three very different trips for teachers in 2026, and you can sign up now.

Teachers' Weekend in Pembrokeshire, Wales from Friday 20 March to Sunday 22 March 2026, £ 50 per person.

Teacher Expedition to Romania, July/August 2026. A full CPD-led journey by train (optional) from the UK to Romania including guided tours, animal tracking and even a night of wild camping.

Floogals trip to Sri Lanka, August 2026. Designed for female teachers who are looking for a genuine break from teaching in an inspiring location**. Contact Flooglebinder for more details.**

Climate Science Updates for Science and non-Science teachers

Sylvia Knight from the RMetS will be delivering two online, twilight CPD sessions as part of the ASE's programme of climate education CPD events in January and February. Join her on 19th January in a session on **climate change for non-scientists**, or on 20th January in a similar session for scientists.
See **ASE Events** for a full list of CPD and Events, many of which are relevant to Geography teachers.

OCR GCSE CPD on weather and climate, Enhance your Teaching: Teaching Climate Change GCSE Geography A and B J383, J384 (Webinar) Online 11 Feb 1600

Royal Geographical Society (RGS) events:
Stretch and challenge in geography - Wednesday 21 January, 5.00pm-6.30pm, online

Embedding water and carbon cycles across A Level geography - Wednesday 28 January, 4.00pm-5.30pm, online. This course will look at ways to embed water and carbon cycles into a range of A level topics.

Getting started with ArcGIS - Thursday 15 January, in-person (London). This course will be based on ArcGIS and will include creating storymaps for classroom use.

Going further with ArcGIS - Friday 16 January, in-person (London). An opportunity for teachers who have previously attended 'Getting started with ArcGIS' or acquired equivalent experience in another way to develop further their use of ArcGIS in the classroom.

Geographical Association (GA) events:
Sequencing GIS into your secondary geography curriculum. Four online sessions from 1700 to 1800 on Mondays 5, 12 ,19, and 26 January.

Teaching GCSE Geography: Building complex knowledge. Six online sessions from 1600-1645 on Mondays 12,19, 26 January and 2, 9 and 23 February.
This course will provide a structure and look at examples including rivers and coasts, weather and climate, place, urban change and global development.

Look out for our Christmas Newsletter in December 2025.

If you have not already signed up to receive this newsletter directly by email, please click on the **Sign-Up box** and complete the short form below.

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