

September 2013 – July 2015



REYKJANES ASPIRING GEOPARK PROGRESS REPORT



FOREWORD

The area we have chosen to refer as Reykjanes Geopark have attracted tourists and researchers to the region for a long time. Reykjanes Geopark covers the peninsula of Reykjanes, one of the world's most interesting geological sites, where the Mid-Atlantic Ridge rises above sea level.

Reykjanes Geopark applied for EGN/GGN membership in November 2012. The coordination committee discussed the application in September 2013. The application was deferred until further developments were implemented. During the time from the EGN meeting in September 2013, the Reykjanes Aspiring Geopark has taken numerous steps towards EGN/GGN membership in order to fix the two main problems identified in 2013, i.e. management and visibility.

We are aware of the commitments that we would be undertaking by joining the Global Geopark Network, and we believe that we can contribute positively to further development of this international network. We wish to join the EGN/GGN in order to be able to collaborate with other Geoparks, and to expand our own Geopark in accordance with the principles of the European Geopark Network.



Róbert Ragnarsson

Chairman of the Board



Eggert Sólberg Jónsson

Project Manager

1. MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

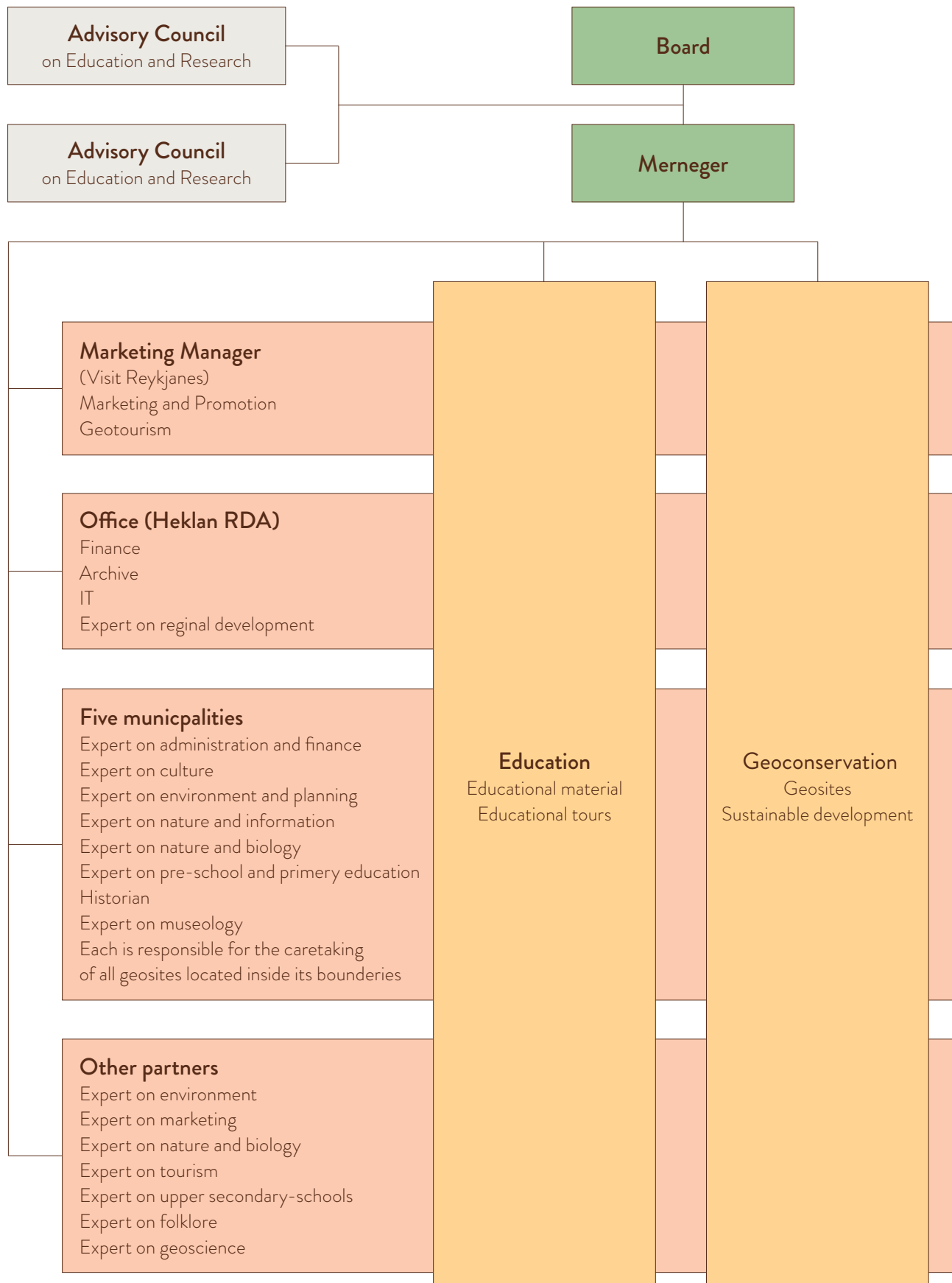
The Reykjanes Geopark is an independent corporate body. The proposed Geopark is managed by a partnership of the five municipalities as well as six other organisations: Heklan -Regional Development Agency, Reykjanes Tourist Board, Keilir - Atlantic Center of Excellence, Sudurnes Science and Learning Center, geothermal power company HS Orka Ltd. and Blue Lagoon Ltd. The Geopark is managed by an administration board, a statutory organ of the association, which includes seven members elected to one-year terms. The administration board agreed on a new management plan in 2014 including a new organisational structure.

The board employs a general manager for organisational and coordinating work. The manager carries out policies adopted by the administration board, prepares annual budgets, applies and administers grant funding, develops short-term as well as long-term plans, and prepares board meetings. The manager is also responsible for raising awareness of geoconservation and promoting the geological heritage of the region. It is also his/her responsibility to develop and carry out the Geopark educational policy in cooperation with other partners.

The Marketing Manager is responsible for marketing and promoting the Reykjanes Peninsula. Additionally his/her role is to develop and strengthen the image of the Reykjanes Peninsula as a tourist destination, as well as to cooperate with tourist information centres and coordinate information provided to tourists.

The Reykjanes Geopark is the key factor in marketing the Reykjanes Peninsula. Therefore it is also the Marketing Manager's responsibility to work on geotourism strategies in cooperation with the general manager. The proposed Geopark has also established two advisory councils; one on marketing and another one on education and research. Both councils serve as advisory bodies to the staff and the board of the Geopark including recommendations on geoconservation, education and geotourism strategies.

The advisory council on marketing consists of specialists from the Reykjanes Tourist Board, the Blue Lagoon and the five municipalities located within the Reykjanes Geopark. Members of the advisory council on education and research are nominated by the Suðurnes Science and Learning Center, the educational institution Keilir - Atlantic Center of Excellence, the geothermal power company HS Orka Ltd, the Suðurnes Comprehensive College and the Institute of Earth Sciences at the University of Iceland.



STRUCTURE FOR RECEIVING VISITORS

The Reykjanes Geopark opened a Visitor Centre in Duushús in Reykjanesbær in March 2015. Duushús is the Art and Cultural Centre of Reykjanesbær. Reykjanesbær is the largest municipality on the Reykjanes Peninsula and the Visitor Centre is located in the heart of the city. The purpose of the Centre is to inform and educate guests about the Geopark area; its uniqueness, geology, nature, history, service and recreation. The new exhibition depicts graphically and visualises the formation of the Reykjanes Peninsula.

The goal is to share knowledge and information about the Reykjanes Geopark and the Reykjanes Peninsula where guests can learn about geology and nature in an informative and accessible way. The visitor centre is useful to travellers and locals alike, and highly suitable for educational purposes for educational institutions and school groups. Additionally the visitor centre serves as the main information centre for Reykjanes Peninsula, as well as being defined as a regional information centre supported by the Icelandic Tourist Board.

The Reykjanes Geopark will establish a network of five visitor centres, located in each municipality on the peninsula, i.e. in Grindavík, Sandgerði, Vogar and Garður, along with the one in Reykjanesbær. Currently, these visitors centres also serve as information centres for tourists visiting the municipalities. The Geopark has funded the second visitor centre for Reykjanes Geopark located in Grindavík, the second largest municipality on the peninsula. The centre is scheduled to open in 2017 in Kvikan – House of Culture and Natural Resources in Grindavík.



Reykjanes Geopark Visitor Center in Duushus Cultural Center



Reykjanes Geopark Visitor Center in Duushus Cultural Center

FORMAL PARTNER AGREEMENTS

The proposed Geopark is an effective cooperation between local governments, the municipalities' educational institutions and independent partners. In 2014 the Suðurnes Science and Learning Center, a research centre that puts emphasis on natural sciences and related subjects, joined the Geopark as a partner. It is a valuable member of the partner team and has provided important work on various projects, e.g. local planning and the Visitor Centre.

The administration board of Reykjanes Geopark agreed on a new management plan in 2014 including a new organisational structure clearly stating the role of each partner. All of the five municipalities on Reykjanes Peninsula have formally agreed on the management plan as have the administrative boards of the other six partners.

The management plan ensures that the proposed Geopark will have access to partner resources and staff, as well as partner expertise and experience. Partners will focus on bringing their specialised know-how and knowledge to the Geopark.

Partners	Expertise / Experience
Grindavíkurbær (municipality)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Access to an expert on pre-school and primary education · Access to an expert on environment and planning · Access to an expert on media and information · Access to an expert on administration and finance · The municipality is responsible for the caretaking of all geosites located within its boundaries · A representative of the municipality is part of the advisory council on marketing
Reykjanesbær (municipality)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Access to an expert on pre-school and primary education · Access to an expert on environment and planning · Access to an historian and expert on museology · Access to an expert on culture · The municipality is responsible for the caretaking of all geosites located within its boundaries · A representative of the municipality is part of the advisory council on marketing
Sandgerðisbær (municipality)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Access to an expert on pre-school and primary education · Access to an expert on culture · Access to an expert on environment and planning · The municipality is responsible for the caretaking of all geosites located within its boundaries · A representative of the municipality is part of the advisory council on marketing
The Municipality of Garður	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Access to an expert on pre-school and primary education · Access to an expert on environment and planning · Access to an expert on culture · The municipality is responsible for the caretaking of all geosites located within its boundaries · A representative of the municipality is part of the advisory council on marketing
The Municipality of Vogar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Access to an expert on pre-school and primary education · Access to an expert on environment and planning · Access to an expert on nature and biology · Access to an expert on administration and finance · The municipality is responsible for the caretaking of all geosites located within its boundaries · A representative of the municipality is part of the advisory council on marketing
Suðurnes Science and Learning Center (research center)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Access to an expert on nature and biology · Access to an expert on environment · Access to an expert on folklore · A representative of the research centre is part of the advisory council on education and research

Partners	Expertise / Experience
Keilir – Atlantic Center of Excellence (educational institution)	Access to experts on geoscience Access to an expert on upper secondary-school and university education A representative of Keilir is part of the advisory council on education and research
Reykjanes Tourist Board	Access to an expert on tourism A representative of the tourist board is part of the advisory council on marketing
Blue Lagoon Ltd (health resort)	· Access to an expert on marketing A representative of the Blue Lagoon is part of the advisory council on marketing
HS Orka Ltd (power company)	Access to experts on geoscience A representative of HS Orka Ltd is part of the advisory council on education and research
Heklan – Regional Development Agency	Access to experts on regional development Access to experts on marketing Access to experts on tourism Access to experts on finance Housing

THE BLUE LAGOON

The Blue Lagoon is a key partner in the proposed Geopark. Their expertise and experience on marketing and promoting the uniqueness of the area will be highly beneficial for other partners. The Blue Lagoon is the most visited attraction in Iceland with 766,000 visitors in 2014. The Reykjanes Geopark will be made more visible in a new information centre, located next to the Blue Lagoon. The Blue Lagoon will also actively use and mention the Geopark in its information material and publications.

VISIBILITY OF THE GEOPARK

A huge effort has been put into improving the visibility and perception of the Reykjanes Geopark and the Geopark brand, logo and ideology of the park is more visible now than in 2013. Public awareness and interest from both individuals as well as companies and institutions in the area has also increased with more visibility and exposure.

Visit Reykjanes (the Reykjanes Marketing Office) is responsible for marketing and promoting of the Reykjanes Peninsula as a tourist destination, the same area Reykjanes Geopark is located. For this reason Visit Reykjanes is responsible for marketing the Reykjanes Geopark as a destination.

The Reykjanes Geopark is the main theme in all material published by Visit Reykjanes, e.g. the Reykjanes Official Tourist Guide, where all of the geosites are presented, and a destination branding catalogue. Both of these are updated and published on an annual basis.



Part of published material by Visit Reykjane

Five new welcoming signs are now visible to the guest entering the proposed Geopark, e.g. next to the Keflavík International Airport.

The proposed Geopark has produced flags with the Geopark logo which have been made available for existing tourism facilities and information centres. The flags are both for indoor (table flags) and outdoor use.



Reykjanes Geopark flag in front of Sudurnes Science and Learning Center

The Reykjanes Geopark facebook page has been active for over a year and includes regular posts and news updates. The page has a high engagement rate and has currently around 3000 likes. In the summer of 2014 the Geopark organised and developed an online edutainment game where the Geopark fans at facebook could answer a few easy questions to win prices from companies and industries within the Geopark. The game was very well received both by the public and companies in the area. The main purpose of the game was to educate and promote the Geopark so our fans could learn through exploration.



Screenshot of the edutainment game.

Question number 4: In what directions are the two tectonic plates moving? **A)** Apart from each other **B)** Together **C)** Towards Reykjavík

The proposed Geopark organised a “Geopark Week” between 25th and 30th of May 2015. This was the third time that such a week is organised. The aim was to raise public awareness of the geological heritage and historical background of the peninsula, with the Geopark offering a variety of activities, e.g. history and nature walks, guided hikes and a beach BBQ for participants.



Reykjanes Geopark offered educational hikes in the Geopark weeks 2014 and 2015

Local companies and institutions have been encouraged to use the Reykjanes Geopark and the Geopark logo in their marketing material and many of them have already done so. The proposed Geopark has organised workshops and seminars in the area in cooperation with Visit Reykjanes, e.g. on how to use the Geopark in marketing material.

In the spring of 2014 the Geopark published a book for children (3-8 years old). The book was given to local kindergartens and elementary schools. Teachers in the region also got access to a workbook to use alongside the book. The book is available in local stores and information centres and is a story about the author's pets that take on a tour around the Reykjanes Peninsula to learn about its history, geology and more in a simple and entertaining way.

The proposed Geopark has worked with both national and local media, in particular with the two local newspapers published in the Reykjanes region. Both of them are distributed free of charge to all homes in the region and one of them additionally operates a popular news website, the only one in the region. The main focus has been on promoting the Geopark as a destination and to raise awareness of geoconservation and promote the geological heritage of the region.

The Geopark has organized some popular lectures for public, e.g. about the geology and natural hazards of Reykjanes Peninsula in cooperation with Keilir – Atlantic Center of Excellence.

EXTENSION OF THE GEOPARK

An effort has been made to extend the Geopark to the Krýsuvík area, which belongs to the municipality of Hafnarfjörður. Even though the municipality of Hafnarfjörður has expressed interest in being part of the Reykjanes Geopark, their participation will most likely not be realised within the year 2015 whereas no formal decision has been made. Further efforts will be made to extend the area in the future with the possibility of the National Park of Þingvellir to be included in the Geopark in the long run, especially given the increased cooperation between EGN/GGN and UNESCO.

Currently the five municipalities that are based in the Reykjanes Peninsula and form the Geopark, work closely together. The municipalities have a long history of successful cooperation within several different topics, e.g. regarding common matters towards the central government, planning, waste management, health and veterinary surveillance as well as fire prevention and control.



Welcoming sign next to Keflavik International Airport

2. GEOCONSERVATION

GEOLOGIST ON THE STAFF TEAM

Currently the Reykjanes Geopark does not employ a full-time geologist on its staff team. However, the Geopark has full access to a number of geologists with different academic backgrounds through its cooperation with independent partners and educational institutions, research centres or companies, three of whom are members of the advisory council on education and research. It is however the long term goal of the Geopark to employ a geologist with expertise and experience in geoconservation.

Dr. Sverrir Guðmundsson, head of Keilir Institute of Technology (department within the Geopark partner Keilir – Atlantic Center of Excellence) and former faculty member of the Institute of Earth Sciences at the University of Iceland, has been appointed as a geological coordinator for the Reykjanes Geopark Project.

SELECTION OF GEOSITES

In 2012 group of geoscientists, historians, folklorists and biologists nominated more than 100 interesting and valuable places inside the border of the geopark. 55 sites were chosen from this list to represent the geodiversity of the Geopark based on intrinsic, cultural, aesthetic, economic, functional and scientific/educational values.

This work was repeated in 2014-2015. In June 2015 the administration board agreed on a new list of geosites within the Geopark, all of whom are valuable for reasons that can be ranked into three categories: 1. Sites of International importance (INT), 2. Sites of National importance (NAT) and 3. Sites of Regional importance (REG).

The purpose of geological sites, or geosites, is to represent the geological heritage of the proposed Geopark. Natural sites will represent the richness of the fauna and the flora, as well as landscape that displays unique or outstanding beauty. The third category consists of sites with archaeological, historical or cultural value. Some sites belong to two or three of these categories while others belong only to a single one.

See list of geosites in the Reykjanes Geopark in Appendix I

THE PRESENCE OF THE RIFT ZONE

The presence of the rift zone and the Mid-Atlantic Ridge is the major geological asset of the area and a unique and internationally distinctive feature. It is the main focal point in Visit Reykjanes's marketing material as well as in the Reykjanes Geopark's plans when prioritising resources and effort towards building infrastructure and facilities. The main focus area is the Southwestern tip of the Reykjanes Peninsula, where the Mid-Atlantic Ridge comes ashore, with other distinctive geological features as a direct consequence of being on a major plate boundary.



Three different educational hiking trails were marked in 2014 located in the area on the tip of the Reykjanes Peninsula where the Mid-Atlantic Ridge rises above sea level.

PROTECTION OF GEOSITES

The general policy of Reykjanes Geopark is to have all sites open to the public, although it is the role of the advisory council on education and research to consider the protection of geosites, e.g. geosites with higher scientific value. Because of protection value, some sites have already a limited access according to Icelandic legislation, e.g. the island Eldey.



Before (left, August 2013) and after (right, July 2014):
A new walking path next to the eroded hill Valahnúkur

GEOCONSERVATION STRATEGY

It is the Geopark's objective to create and develop a local plan/development plan for all major geosites within the park. A geoconservation strategy will be part of the local planning and the Reykjanes Geopark will accept two local development plans in the year 2015, for the Southwestern tip of the Reykjanes Peninsula and for the naturally carved pool Brimketill.

A management and protection strategy already exist for Reykjanes Country Park. In total 16 geosites are inside the borders of the Country Park. The park is managed by a special board appointed by the surrounding local municipalities, including Grindavík, Reykjanesbær and Vogar. Park Rangers operate in the area during the summer months, providing information as well as monitoring and tending the area.

It is the role of the advisory council on education and research to consider additional protection of geosites in the area.

The general manager of the Reykjanes Geopark is a member of the Cultural Heritage Council of Reykjanes, a council run by The Cultural Heritage Agency of Iceland. The main role of the council is to supervise the protection of the region's archaeological and building heritage.

Umhverfisstofnun (the Environment Agency of Iceland) is responsible for the daily operations of most of the protected areas in Iceland. This is done in cooperation with local authorities and committees. The Agency has limited resources which is reflected in the infrastructure and limited supervision.

One of the main purposes of The Nature Conservation Act no. 44 from 1999 is to ensure, to the extent possible, that Icelandic nature can develop according to its own laws, and ensure conservation of its exceptional or historical aspects. The Act shall as well facilitate the nation's access to, and knowledge of, Icelandic nature and cultural heritage and encourage the conservation and utilization of resources based on sustainable development. The following types of landscape shall enjoy special protection and their disturbance shall be avoided if at all possible, according to the Act.

- A — Volcanic craters, rootless vents (pseudocraters) and lava fields;
- B — Freshwater lakes and pools, 1000 m² or more in area;
- C — Bogs and fens, 3 hectares or more in area;
- D — Waterfalls, hot springs and other thermal sources, as well as surfacial geothermal deposits (sinter and travertine), 100 m² or more in area; e. salt marshes and mudflats.

3. GEOTOURISM AND PRESENTATION STRATEGIES

ON-SITE GEOLOGICAL PRESENTATION

In late 2013, all Geopark partners agreed on establishing a Geosite Protection Fund with the aim to develop, protect, and maintain geosites/tourist sites within the Geopark. The fund is an important aspect for the continuing development of the Geopark and cooperates closely with the Iceland Tourist Site Protection Fund.

The main focus area for the Geopark for the past two years has been the area around the tip of Reykjanes Peninsula, where the Mid-Atlantic Ridge comes ashore and associated fissures, faults and volcanic structures are visible. The Geopark is currently developing a local plan for the area including new walking paths, a parking lot and a service and information centre. The local development plan for the tip of the Reykjanes Peninsula, where the Mid-Atlantic Ridge rises above sea level, calls for some infrastructure and facilities to receive visitors, both in an outdoor classroom located in the Valbjargargjá Normal Fault and at a service centre next to the parking area.

In the summer of 2014, the Geopark marked three new educational hiking trails (4 km, 6 km and 14 km) located in the area on the tip of the Reykjanes Peninsula. These hiking trails have made seven geosites more accessible to the public. The Geopark will publish a hiking and activity map with an educational theme in the spring of 2016.

Together with the municipality of Grindavík and the Cultural Heritage Agency of Iceland, the Geopark has installed information signs in Húshólmi and Selatangar. Húshólmi contains the remains of buildings and walls from the settlement of Iceland, which have been partially covered by a lava flow from 1151. Selatangar are the ruins of an old fishing station.

In 2015 21 new geosites will be presented with on-site information signs.

The Geopark coordinated the appearance and design of the information signs within the five municipalities of the peninsula. The Reykjanes Geopark will print 21 information signs in 2015 located at 21 sites, in addition to the 17 signs already installed at the six geosites.

ACTIVITIES IN REYKJANES GEOSITES 2013 - 2015

Year	Geosite	Actions
2013-2014	Bridge between Continents	Information panel, new paths
2014	Háleyjarbunga	Part of new educational hiking trail
2014	Skálafell	Information panel, Part of new educational hiking trail
2015	Brimketill	Local planning
2015	Eldey	Information panel, Part of local planning for Reykjanes
2015	Eldvörp	Information panel
2015	Festarfjall/Hraunsvík	Information panel
2015	Hópsnes	Information panel
2015	Húshólmi	Information panel
2015	Kleifarvatn	Information panel
2015	Lambafellsgjá	Local planning, Information panel
2015	Méltunnuklif	Information panel
2015	Ögmundarhraun	Information panel
2015	Reykjanes	Local planning for Reykjanes, paths and information panels
2015	Rosmhvalanes	Information panel
2015	Selatangar	Information panel
2015	Skagagarðurinn	Information panel
2015	Snorrastaðatjarnir	Information panel
2015	Staðarborg	Information panel
2015	Stampar	Information panel, Part of new educational hiking trail
2015	Sveifluháls	Information panel
2015	Valahnúkamöl	Information panel, Part of new educational hiking trail
2015	Vigdísarvellir	Information panel, marked hiking trail
2015	Keilir	Information panel, marked hiking trail
2015	Reykjanesviti	Information panel
2015	Útilegumannabyggð við Eldvörp	Information panel
2015	Snorrastaðatjarnir/Háibjalli	Information panel

BRIDGE BETWEEN CONTINENTS

In the recommendations from the EGN/GGN Bureaus in September 2013 it was stated that the promotion of “the bridge between two continents” is not scientifically correct and does not correspond to the quality of on-site presentations delivered in a Global Geopark. It was recommended that this information would be put up to standards. Subsequently, the on-site presentation was changed and it is now clearly stated that the Bridge between Continents is a symbolic bridge and that guests can symbolically “cross the continental divide”.

The Bridge between Continents is a popular and useful educational tool for visitors, so information was added in early 2014 about the earth's tectonic plates, the Eurasian Plate, the North American Plate and the Mid-Atlantic Ridge.



New on site information panel about the tectonic plates next to Bridge between Continents

GEOTOURISM STRATEGY

Visit Reykjanes and the Reykjanes Aspiring Geopark agreed on a geotourism strategy in early 2014. The geology, nature and history reflected in the Reykjanes Aspiring Geopark are the key strengths identified in the strategy. Visit Reykjanes will work closely with the Reykjanes Geopark in involving the local businesses and civic groups to promote and provide a distinctive and authentic visitor experience.

The Reykjanes Geopark will develop, protect, and maintain geosites/tourist sites in the Geopark. Visit Reykjanes will market the Geopark and the facilities as a site where visitors can learn about and discover the region.

The Reykjanes Geopark will work on strengthening local production based on the region's heritage. Visit Reykjanes will promote this production as a local heritage.

TOURISM FACILITIES INTEGRATED IN THE GEOPARK

A special effort has been put into integrating existing tourism facilities in the Geopark project. As part of this development, all of the five information centres will be branded and promoted as Reykjanes Geopark Visitor Centres in the next years.

As stated above, the Blue Lagoon is a key partner in the proposed Geopark. The Reykjanes Geopark will be more visible in a new information centre being developed and located next to the Blue Lagoon. The Blue Lagoon will also use the Geopark in its publications and information material.

In June 2015 a new hotel opened in the town of Grindavík named Geo Hotel Grindavík. The hotel, the name, architecture and rooms are inspired by the Geopark.



Reykjanes Geopark flag in front of the new Geo Hotel Grindavík in May 2015

LOCAL PRODUCTS

The Reykjanes Aspiring Geopark is currently participating in a project called “GEOfood” led by Magma Geopark in Norway. Other partners are Odsherred Geopark in Denmark and Rokua Geopark in Finland. The GEOfood project aims to strengthen cooperation between Geoparks and local SME’S in the food and tourism sectors. The consortium aims to create local menus that will popularise the tourist offer of the Geoparks. The idea is to share good practices and create the disciplinary manual for obtaining the GEOfood label. By working with local food producers the Geopark logo will be more visible on local quality products.

As part of the Geotourism strategy the Geopark has organised workshops for local craftspeople, artists and designers. The objective is to support the development, furtherance and preservation of local crafts, applied art and design and to promote enhanced quality awareness in the field. These workshops have been developed in cooperation with Iceland Crafts and Design, a well-known private non-profit institution established in 1994.

It is the aim of the Geopark that local products will be labelled with the Reykjanes Geopark logo.



GEOfood information meeting in August 2014

4. GEOEDUCATIONAL STRATEGY

EDUCATIONAL STRATEGY

As stated above, Reykjanes Geopark has already established an advisory council on education and research. It is the council's responsibility to develop and agree on an educational strategy for the Geopark. The proposed Geopark was awarded a grant from the local development fund in 2014 to develop a joined educational strategy in cooperation with educational institutes located within the Geopark. Key partners are the Suðurnes science and learning Center and the educational institution Keilir – Atlantic Center of Excellence. The strategy will be ready in the autumn of 2015 and will focus on how to utilise the area in offering natural science education and joined marketing approaches. Currently a few local private operators offer educational activities for study groups in the Geopark. In the strategy it is outlined how the Geopark will cooperate with private educational companies in this development.

Reykjanes Geopark will use the educational strategy to promote all assets of the geopark for student groups, public visitors and tourists.

The advisory council on education and research is also responsible for advising the manager and the board of the Geopark on all matters concerning education and training activities.

The Reykjanes Geopark has a strong relationship with all educational institutions located within the park, with all of them being an active partner or taking part in the Geopark, either directly through the municipalities or indirectly through cooperation.

EDUCATIVE PROGRAMMES FOR STUDENTS

Reykjanes Geopark will create educational material for all school levels. The Geopark has already made material for kindergartens and the first years of elementary schools. This first book, published by the Geopark in cooperation with a local author, is a story about the author's pets that take on a tour around the Reykjanes Peninsula to learn about its history, geology and more in a simple and entertaining way. The book will soon be made available in English and an electronic version on iPad.



Genie, Dapper and Rex - Romp and Rollick in Reykjanes Peninsula: Book for 3-8 years old

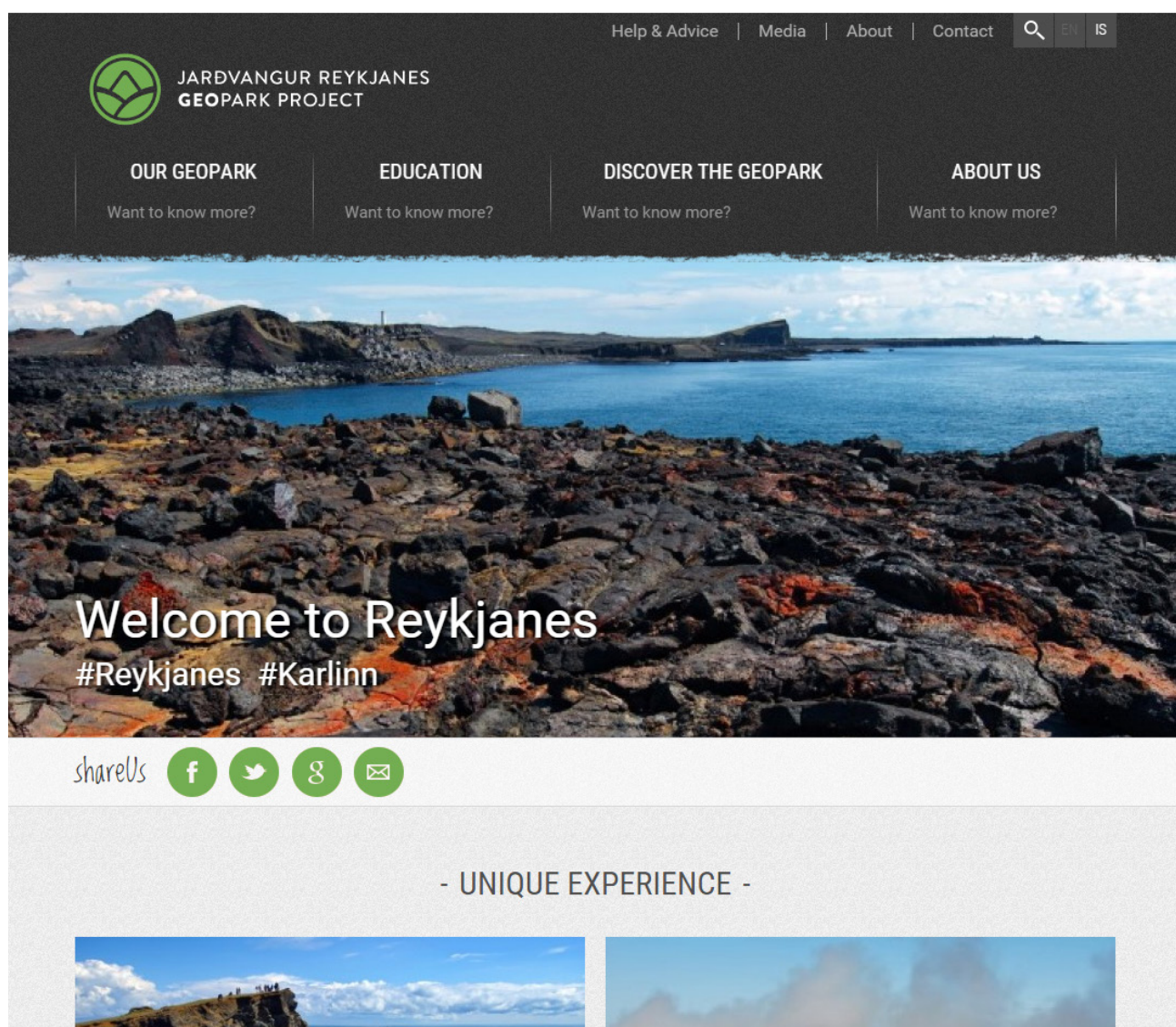


Part of the students attended Reykjanes Geoguide School in April 2014

In the spring of 2014 Reykjanes Geopark offered a course called “Reykjanes Geoguide School”. The school was organised as an intensive 36 hour training programme providing deep knowledge about the geology, nature and culture of the Geopark.

The proposed Geopark is part of a project named “Drifting Apart” involving geoparks from Norway, Canada, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Ireland, Iceland and Russia. The project is funded by the Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme and will run from 2015 to 2018. The aim of the project is

The proposed Geopark is part of a project named “Drifting Apart” involving geoparks from Norway, Canada, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Ireland, Iceland and Russia. The project is funded by the Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme and will run from 2015 to 2018. The aim of the project is to strengthen the understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of the fascinating and interconnected geological heritage of the Northern Periphery and Arctic region, and its many links to natural, built and cultural heritage. The Reykjanes Geopark will use part of the funding to create, in cooperation with local teachers, educational material covering all assets of the geopark area for all school levels. The proposed Geopark will publish this educational material on its website. A new website with more detailed and accessible information will be released in the autumn of 2015.



Screenshot of Reykjanes Geopark new website in June 2015

The proposed Geopark has in the last two years worked closely with GeoCamp Iceland, a local educational project dedicated to increasing knowledge and understanding in natural sciences with practical and active learning. The objective of the cooperation is to create educational material and promote the Geopark for international study groups and raise interest in natural sciences on all educational levels. GeoCamp Iceland organizes and receives study groups of secondary school and college students, as well as teacher groups focusing primarily on geology, natural sciences and renewable energy.