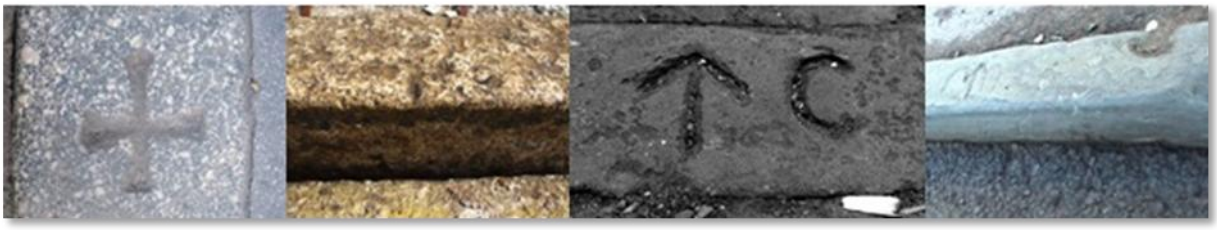

Kerbstone identification guide

The kerbstones we're interested in for our #kerbsurvey are almost all either **igneous** or **sedimentary**. Use this guide to identify what type of rock you have and, if you can, guess where it may have come from!

Igneous

Igneous rocks are made from the cooling and solidification of magma or lava. They often contain crystals – but never fossils!

They are commonly used to make kerbstones because they tend to be very hard and resistant to getting bashed about by traffic.

Igneous rocks can vary considerably in colour, from black through shades of grey to even a dominant pink hue. Many igneous kerbstones are made from **granite**, or mafic rocks such as **gabbro** and **basalt**.

Granite is a type of igneous rock consisting mainly of quartz, mica and feldspar. Sometimes the feldspar crystals are large and elongated, and either pink, white or cream in colour. They can give a characteristic speckled appearance.

Mafics tend to be medium to very dark grey, even black, in colour. The term **'mafic'** represents a wide variety of rock types rich in dark ferromagnesian minerals which can be identified only by close examination under a microscope. Some are finely crystalline, so it can be difficult to see any detailed fabric.

Sedimentary

Sedimentary rocks are formed when particles are eroded from the landscape and are then deposited by water, wind or (occasionally) ice and are cemented together over time. They form in layers, and sometimes contain fossils. Often, you can see the tiny grains and layering. The rock is usually one colour.

Sandstone is a common a type of sedimentary rock used to make kerbstones. It is made up of grains, usually of quartz or feldspar. If the grains are very small then the sedimentary rock may be called a **siltstone**. These fine grained sediments often flake fairly easily and if used as kerbstones quite often look rather worn and battered.

Local or imported?

Many kerbstones are made from material sourced at local quarries, so it can be useful to know what type of rocks occur where you live. For example, sandstone was quarried in the area around Bristol, and occurs frequently in kerbstones throughout the city.

Often, however, the rock was imported from elsewhere. London kerbstones are mainly granite, despite the fact that no granite quarries exist close to the Capital.

To find out what rocks are local to where you live, you can download the British Geological Survey's app, **iGeology,** at www.bgs.ac.uk/igeology

How to take part

If you spot a kerbstone marking where you live, take a picture and send it to us! You can tweet us @geoscientistmag using #kerbsurvey, or email your picture to sarah.day@geolsoc.org.uk.

For more information, visit www.geolsoc.org.uk/kerbsurvey

And remember – STAY ON THE PAVEMENT!