

Charmouth Gold.

How old will I be when you're 100 Granny? We stumble through loose cobbles knocking with our footfall, past small patches of wet sand glinting sharply before the next wave crashes. Alice is diverted by seaglass: white, pale green and poison blue but this is not our target. Cliffs of mudstone, liquid after storms, ooze above the tideline. This is where we want to be. A smug man with a large object wrapped in sacking shows we are on the right track. The beach is littered here with hunks of discarded grey rock, the detritus of hunters. Alice turns them over, and there waiting, is our treasure: a tiny golden ammonite seen by humans for the first time. Ever. To us it is more perfect than any huge museum specimen. How old is it Granny? About 200million years. How many years older than you is that?