

## **News story: Your chance to influence policy on geological disposal**

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), the Northern Ireland Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, and the Welsh Government, have opened consultations on the proposed approach to working with communities in identifying potential sites for a GDF, and the associated planning process.

Stakeholders and members of the public will have the opportunity to provide feedback which will help shape the key policies on geological disposal. Ann McCall, RWM's GDF Siting and Engagement Director, said:

Geological disposal will provide a safe, secure and long-term solution for managing the UK's radioactive waste, and RWM welcomes the public consultations which place communities at the heart of the process. As the delivery body for geological disposal, we are eager to work with communities to progress this important programme on behalf of society.

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## **Map: Facilitation fund: successful applications in 2017 national round**

The document gives details for each group including:

- their priorities
- the map of their area
- their email address

The map shows the location of the 37 successful applications.

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## **Press release: Cyanide spill in**

# [Derbyshire still being assessed](#)

Environment Agency officers are continuing to investigate and monitor the impact on the local environment following an accidental chemical spillage at an industrial unit on Adams Close, Heanor, Derbyshire. The accident caused a spill of around 400 litres of liquid cyanide, some of which leaked into a nearby pond.

The incident happened on Tuesday 6 February and Environment Agency officers were immediately on the scene along with colleagues from Derbyshire Fire & Rescue Service, Severn Trent Water and Derbyshire County Council to manage the spill and minimise the risk to the environment.

Environment Agency officers are now in their third day at the scene and are continuing to take water samples and are assessing any potential environmental impacts this spill has had on the local watercourses and ponds.

Penny Thorpe, Area Duty Manager at the Environment Agency said:

Our officers have been on site since the incident occurred on Tuesday and have worked alongside Derbyshire Fire and Rescue and Derbyshire County Council to contain the spillage in order to minimise any effects on the environment and wildlife in the surrounding area.

A temporary dam has been created in order to stop the spillage leaving the pond and to prevent any further contamination and our officers will continue to monitor the environment for any other impacts from this spillage.

We have taken water samples from Adam's pond and the brook further upstream to help us establish the best way to clear the environment of any contaminants that may remain, we will also be investigating the cause of this spill and following up with action as necessary.

Our staff work 24/7 to protect people and wildlife from pollution incidents, if you see pollution in your local river, call our incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60.

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## [Press release: Oxford flood scheme](#)

## moves a step closer

*Updated:* Now with links to YouTube videos about the Oxford scheme.

The £120m Oxford flood alleviation scheme, which will reduce flood risk to homes, businesses, and transport in Oxford and the surrounding area, has moved a step closer.

The Oxford flood alleviation scheme partnership has just announced that it has secured the funding for the scheme, which will include at least 15 hectares of new habitat creation, 7 new bridges and 2.6 kilometres of new flood defences.

More than £65m in funding has already been committed by Government. A record amount of partnership funding totalling over £55m has now been given by a wide range of partners. Investment has been secured from Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, Thames Regional Flood and Coastal Committee, Oxfordshire County Council, Oxford City Council, Thames Water Utilities and the University of Oxford.

Joanna Larmour, Project Director at the Environment Agency, said:

This is a huge scheme – one of the biggest the Environment Agency is working on – and when complete it will not only reduce flood risk to homes across Oxford but it will also protect vital infrastructure, enabling the city to keep moving during flooding. It will also benefit communities and wildlife in a number of ways, including improving existing public footpaths and creating new habitat for wildlife and improving biodiversity.

Today's fantastic news shows that working in partnership can help us get the best scheme for Oxford. We are very pleased that our partners have recognised the multiple benefits it will bring and helped us secure the funding required to progress the scheme to the next stage.

The scheme will benefit everyone who lives, works in or visits Oxford. As well as reduced property flooding, the railway and Botley and Abingdon roads will be protected keeping the city open for business during future flooding. There will also be fewer flood related electricity, telephone and internet disruptions. The scheme will allow Oxford's successful economy to continue to thrive and also provide environmental benefits and a longterm green legacy.

County Councillor Yvonne Constance said:

The flood relief channel has been a hope for many people for a long time. Now we are at the stage where it has the funding it needs to

be made into a reality there will be thousands of homes and businesses protected from the devastating effects of flooding.

Clearly there is still much work to do, but this funding announcement means we can continue to work in partnership to move forward to the next stage.

Councillor Susan Brown, Leader of Oxford City Council, said:

The Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme will bring huge benefits to householders in West and South Oxford, and to all parts of the business community. I am delighted that we have been successful in our application for this final tranche of funding.

HM Treasury approved the outline business case for the scheme in November 2017. This detailed that full funding for the scheme had to be committed before it could move to the next stage. This has now been confirmed, thanks to increases in contributions from the scheme partners.

The total amount covers the design and construction costs to deliver the scheme. The project team will now work on the Full Business Case, which will be submitted to HM Treasury later this year. Partners will continue to work together on ongoing negotiations with external companies for future investment in the scheme.

The Environment Agency will submit the planning application for the Oxford flood alleviation scheme in March. It will take approximately 3 years to build the scheme, which is designed to work with the natural floodplain west of Oxford.

[The route of the Oxford flood scheme](#)

[Flood risk in Oxford before and after the Oxford flood alleviation scheme](#)