

# Karen Wheeler CBE announced as new Chief Executive of RWM

RWM, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA), provides radioactive waste management solutions and, on behalf of the UK government, is the organisation responsible for the delivery of a Geological Disposal Facility (GDF) – a deep underground, highly-engineered facility, to house the UK's higher activity radioactive waste.

Professor Malcolm Morley, OBE, Chair of RWM said:

I am delighted to announce Karen's appointment as RWM's Chief Executive and look forward to working with her. She joins us at an exciting time as we work in partnership with communities who may be willing to host a GDF. Karen brings a proven track record of leadership and delivery from across both the public and private sectors and has an invaluable insight into RWM, having already made an impact as an Independent Non-Executive Director. Her knowledge and experience will be vital as she leads RWM through the next phase of its development as a community-focused delivery organisation operating in a complex stakeholder environment and as a key contributor to the delivery of NDA's mission.

David Peattie, Chief Executive Officer, Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) said:

Delivering a GDF is a critical part of our mission to clean up the UK's nuclear sites and safely manage radioactive waste for thousands of years into the future. I am pleased to welcome Karen to the NDA group, as Chief Executive of RWM. The public and private sector experience she brings in major change and infrastructure programmes will be vital as we deliver this multi-billion pound project of national importance on behalf of the British taxpayer.

Karen Wheeler said:

I am delighted to be joining RWM as Chief Executive, to lead the delivery of its nationally important work, providing solutions for managing radioactive waste. RWM is at a particularly exciting stage in its work to find a suitable location for a deep underground Geological Disposal Facility. I look forward to working with the RWM team, the NDA group, and with the many stakeholders and communities involved and interested in this important project.

Karen Wheeler's previous full time role was Director General Border Delivery Group, responsible for leading the cross government work to prepare the UK border for Brexit. She has also been a Non-Executive Director on the RWM Board since September 2018.

Karen's appointment follows current RWM Managing Director, [Bruce McKirdy's decision to retire](#). She will take up position from 1 February 2020.

## **Karen Wheeler's biography**

Karen Wheeler CBE joined the Board of RWM as an Independent Non-Executive Director in September 2018.

From July 2017 to July 2019, Karen established and led, as Director General, the cross government Border Delivery Group, specifically to manage and deliver the work across government, private sector and industry, which would prepare for and ensure a functioning border, in preparation for EU exit.

Previous roles in government have included NHS England's National Director for Transformation and Corporate Operations from 2014-17, responsible for NHSE corporate services, and for transforming NHSE into a higher performing commissioning organisation.

Between 2010 and 2014, Karen worked in the Department for Health, managing the work to implement radical NHS and Public Health reforms, and as Director General she led DH's Informatics, Change and Operations Directorate.

Karen joined the Civil Service in 2003, to lead a number of major change and infrastructure projects in the Ministry of Justice, and then worked for a year in the Cabinet Office, launching cross government work to promote Digital services.

After graduating with a Physics degree from Durham, Karen worked for a number of years in management consultancy in the private sector, advising and helping organisations such as Guinness, British Steel, North West Water to manage and deliver major projects and programmes.