

RWM partners with the British Geological Survey

The British Geological Survey (BGS), a leading global geological survey and the UK's national geoscience agency, and RWM work together to provide expertise, research and information to support the UK's geological disposal programme.

The two UK government organisations today jointly published a five-year agreement setting out the framework for collaborative work at strategic, technical and operational levels. This will fulfil a key role in helping us understand and assess the rocks below the surface and their suitability for a UK Geological Disposal Facility (GDF) as we move through the process of finding a suitable site and a willing host community.

A GDF is a highly-engineered network of vaults and tunnels built into the rock many hundreds of metres underground designed to safely and permanently dispose of higher activity radioactive waste.

The MoU sets out ways of working between RWM and BGS, and describes key principles and areas for collaboration, including strategic planning, site characterisation, stakeholder engagement, research, training, communications, and information exchange.

PDF, 197KB, 7 pages

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This partnership between these two independent organisations will enable world-leading UK applied research in environmental geosciences to contribute towards delivering a GDF.

Karen Wheeler, Chief Executive of RWM said,

Delivering a Geological Disposal Facility to permanently deal with UK's higher-activity radioactive waste is the right thing to do. BGS will play a key role in ensuring we receive expert impartial advice as we work on this vital national programme. Their expertise in UK geoscience is unparalleled and crucially they will help us fully understand the rocks below the surface and their suitability for a GDF.

Dr. Karen Hanghøj, Director of BGS said,

The agreement with RWM will help to maintain BGS's impartiality whilst enabling us to provide the high-quality and objective geoscientific knowledge and expertise required for the delivery of a UK Geological Disposal Facility. BGS research will help to progress the UK's understanding about the rocks below its surface, and their suitability for hosting a GDF, as the importance of finding environmentally sound solutions for the issue of radioactive waste disposal grows. It's also important that communities and their representatives understand how geoscience plays a role in the process of evaluating sites for suitability, and this will form part of our work.