

GDF to create more than 4,000 jobs within the first 25 years

More than 4,000 jobs are set to be created during the siting and constructing of a deep underground facility for the safe and secure disposal of higher-activity radioactive waste.

The [GDF – \(Geological Disposal Facility\) Creating Jobs & Skills: A First Look](#) report, which was published today by Nuclear Waste Services (NWS), sets out how the multi-billion-pound programme is expected to create thousands of skilled, well-paid jobs for over a century.

This highly engineered facility will be one of the biggest infrastructure projects in the UK and will provide a major investment for the local host community and its economy. Work on a GDF will carry on for about 175 years, generating an expected average of 2,000 jobs in any given year. During this time, it could provide significant additional investment and create thousands of extra jobs through increased business opportunities and the development of new or improved infrastructure and facilities across the region.

Employment will be generated at the facility itself and in the supply chain, while attracting further investment in the local area. Most of the jobs created during construction and, operation could and should be locally based.

NWS will be the developer of a GDF and is committed to recruiting locally where possible, and once a site is selected, roles would be available in a range of disciplines including engineering, science and technical, trades, operations, and business functions. 75% of roles are estimated to be for candidates with qualifications equivalent to A-Level or below.

The long timeframe means that education and training initiatives are planned to ensure local people have the best opportunities to develop relevant skills and qualifications. This project will provide a unique opportunity not only to recruit but also to upskill and reskill local communities, transforming the prospects of a region for generations.

Karen Wheeler, Nuclear Waste Services Deputy CEO/ Major Capital Programmes Director, said:

A GDF will be one of the biggest infrastructure programmes in the UK and provide a major investment for the local host community and its economy, as well as being a vital national project.

The long-term nature of the project provides a unique opportunity to develop skills, expertise and sustainable jobs for a local community.

We are now making real progress and having conversations with a number of communities about the potential for them to host a GDF.

A GDF will make a major contribution to the environment by safely and finally disposing of waste which otherwise would have to be stored and maintained for thousands of years above ground.

The UK search for a suitable site is a nationwide process based on community consent and includes detailed investigations over a number of years to ensure a GDF can be constructed safely and securely. Community Partnerships, which have formed in Mid Copeland, South Copeland, and Allerdale in Cumbria, and Theddlethorpe in Lincolnshire, are engaging in a dialogue with local people to ensure they have access to information about what hosting a GDF might mean.

The Creating Jobs & Skills report provides a national picture, and at this early stage in the process, is not specific to any region. Building on this generic review, NWS is commissioning further detailed analyses to understand requirements for specific regions.

To learn more about GDF and for more information about progress, please read the [GDF Annual Report](#).

Career Insight: Amy, Legal Trainee, Government Legal Department

“After completing a degree in Spanish and English Literature, I knew that I wanted a career that combined my interests in international relations, law and policy; that was fast paced and exciting; and full of different possibilities and outcomes.

However, I also knew that I did not have family members who were lawyers or any connections in the legal sector, nor had I undertaken legal work experience from when I was 14 years old. After the final year of my degree, I was not only absolutely exhausted, but at a complete loss of how to actually go about embarking upon my dream career.

And so, I started from where I could: I applied for any and all opportunities that could further my career aspirations, whilst living with family and working part-time in hospitality. I undertook various brief stints of unpaid voluntary work and then writing articles for an online news blog for young people.

It was only in the summer of 2019, a whole year after I had graduated, that I realised that the [Government Legal Profession Legal Trainee Scheme](#) offered not only the chance to work on the type of law I was interested in, but also included sponsorship of the LPC (without which I simply would not have been able to fund).

But with thousands of applications for fewer than 60 positions, I honestly did not think that I would ever be lucky enough to be selected for a training contract with the [Government Legal Department \(GLD\)](#). Yet, the way in which the GLD recruits is unique: by reducing the capacity for individuals to highlight the school they attended, the degree result they achieved, and the previous work experience that some people may have, it really does feel fair and transparent. The emphasis instead is on your ability to make effective decisions, communicate and influence, work together (with others) and deliver at pace. It is on the skills you possess and the ways in which you behave, and not on what you degree result you achieved or secondary school you went to.

When I was first offered my training contract, it felt as if I had been handed a golden ticket, and to a large extent, I still feel that way today. My first year training with GLD has comprised of two six-month seats in public law and private law litigation, serving a range of clients from the [Ministry of Justice](#), [Department for Education](#), [Department for Transport](#), [Department for Health and Social Care](#) and [Department for Work and Pensions](#). I have attended numerous hearings, some of which have been extremely high profile with leading barristers instructed on both sides, and I have had the opportunity to take the lead on my own cases. I have greatly enjoyed the level of responsibility that GLD entrusts to its trainees from Day 1, the high-profile nature of the work, as well as the continual focus of learning and development. In all honesty, I simply cannot conceive of a better place to train as a lawyer.

I truly believe that I have found a career that combines my interests in international relations, law and policy, that is fast paced and exciting, and that is full of different possibilities and outcomes, and for that, I could not be more thankful.”

[New Justice Secretary agrees deal to get criminal barristers back to work](#)

- fee rises for legal professionals for the vast majority of Crown Court cases
- barristers and government commit to working together to reduce the backlog

Criminal barristers have agreed to vote on ending strike action to get justice moving for victims following discussions with Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice, Rt Hon Brandon Lewis MP.

The Criminal Bar Association will re-ballot members following meetings with the Lord Chancellor and his decision to offer a package of further reforms

and fee uplifts to criminal legal aid. This represents further investment of £54 million in the criminal bar and solicitors.

A planned 15 percent fee increase for criminal barristers will now apply to the vast majority of cases currently in the Crown Court. This will also apply to fee increases for solicitors and is part of a wider package of proposals announced by the government today (29 September 2022) to help tackle the court backlog.

As part of the proposals, the Criminal Bar Association and Bar Council have also committed to working together with the government to reduce the courts backlog and increasing diversity among barristers. Measures designed to reduce delays for victims, such as increasing early resolution of cases, reducing the number of ineffective trials and progressing cases between magistrates' courts and the Crown Court, will be explored.

Lord Chancellor and Justice Secretary Brandon Lewis said:

I greatly value the criminal bar and solicitors and the work they do every day in our Crown and Magistrates Courts. They are crucial to reducing the backlog.

My priority in these discussions has been to ensure that victims aren't forced to wait longer to see justice done.

These are generous proposals, and I would strongly urge all members of the Criminal Bar Association to consider carefully, end their strike and work with me to deliver better outcomes for victims of crime.

The Ministry of Justice will make £3 million of funding available for case preparation like written work and special preparation. A further £4 million will be allocated to defence barristers involved in pre-recorded cross-examinations, which are used to reduce the trauma of a trial for vulnerable victims and witnesses.

The Ministry of Justice is also proposing a £5 million uplift per year for fees in the youth court, from the 2024/25 financial year, expected to benefit both solicitors and some junior barristers.

An Advisory Board on Criminal Legal Aid reform will hold its first meeting in October, to discuss future proposals to improve the system for legal professionals and victims in a constructive way.

Further uplifts for solicitors will be announced in the weeks ahead.

Marking the first demolition at MOD Ashchurch

The demolition of the first building signals the beginning of a two-phase programme that will deliver modern, sustainable, and effective storage and maintenance solutions for the British Army's vehicle and equipment fleet.

Belinda Lunn, Senior Responsible Owner for VSSP said:

I am delighted to be present for this demolition which marks the start of the works at the Ashchurch site. It is well known that several buildings are in poor condition, and I look forward to working with our partners to deliver the Vehicle Storage and Support Programme that will return the site to full operating capability.

This important work will provide vehicles with Controlled Humidity Environment (CHE) storage, reducing maintenance costs and unnecessary deterioration caused by extreme drops or rises in temperature, ensuring that our fleet is operationally ready at all times.

Stephen Bunce, DIO's Principal Project Manager, said:

We are delighted to have awarded this multi-million-pound project to Skanska to meet the enduring requirements for the Army's fleet of vehicles. The Vehicle Storage and Support Programme is a project which will bring significant new infrastructure to the site in the form of storage, maintenance, inspection and office buildings.

The Project delivery team consisting of Skanska, Mace and DIO worked together to achieve the customer required contract award date of end May 22. Although very early into the project, it is evident that the entire project team are working with the customer and all parties to deliver the project and address any issues that may arise.

Skanska will deliver the construction and mechanical and electrical engineering for the complex programme that will see demolition of 58 buildings, construction of 12 new buildings and refurbishment of one existing facility, plus renewal of site wide infrastructure.

Katy Dowding, Skanska Executive Vice President Skanska UK said:

We're excited to begin demolition on this significant project, as

from this point forward, we are on the way to transforming the site into a facility that will protect and futureproof the British Army's vehicle fleet – and we're really proud to be a part of that.

Steve Holbrook, Managing Director for Skanska UK's construction arm, added:

Sustainability will be a guiding principle in how we deliver this project, and we will be looking at how we can use modern methods of construction, plus a green site set up approach and productivity monitoring to drive down carbon emissions.

As well as delivering CHE vehicle storage for military vehicles, VSSP will also provide dedicated inspection and maintenance spaces. All buildings will adhere to the latest sustainability standards and the DREEAM (Defence Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) Excellent is the sustainability target for the programme. Construction of new infrastructure is expected to start in February 2023.

Solar panels will be installed that will provide a large portion of the site with electricity, meeting the sustainable energy requirement and contributing to the drive to be carbon neutral as a site.

The project signifies a joint approach to providing better opportunities for Defence and the local community. Having previously engaged with Tewkesbury Borough Council there is a real optimism about what this represents. The local region's support to the Armed forces continues and this investment into Ashchurch ensures a long-lasting relationship that will continue to strengthen.

Multi-sectoral collaboration contributed to halving the sale of antibiotics in the UK livestock industry

Significant success in tackling antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in food-producing animals can be achieved if the livestock industry takes ownership of the issue and drives the work of its sectors, according to a new UK case study on AMR published today.

Produced jointly by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the UK's Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD), FAO's

Reference Centre for AMR, [“Tackling antimicrobial use and resistance in food-producing animals: Lessons learned in the United Kingdom”](#), is the third publication in the [AMR case study series](#).

This FAO series explores case studies from around the world and helps countries share what works to accelerate global progress in preserving valuable medicines and promoting sustainable agriculture practices. The new publication highlights the UK’s successful collaborative approach to antimicrobial stewardship, which has led to the country halving the sale of antibiotics for food-producing animals since 2014.

“UK agriculture has undergone a transformation over the last few years, embedding the principles of responsible antimicrobial use across all sectors of livestock production through collaboration between government, vets and farmers culminating in the UK halving its sales of antibiotics for food-producing animals since 2014,” said Christine Middlemiss, UK’s Chief Veterinary Officer.

“We are proud of the achievements detailed within this report, which represents a concerted effort from all those involved, and hope that the lessons here can inspire others to embark on their own stewardship journeys. The UK will continue to work alongside our global partners to promote the responsible use of antimicrobials,” she concluded.

“FAO thanks its partners in the United Kingdom for contributing their valuable experience,” said Keith Sumption, FAO Chief Veterinary Officer. “Together, we can work towards a future where AMR is controlled, leading to safe and sustainable agrifood systems for all.”

AMR is recognized as one of the greatest threats to humans, animals, plants and the environment. If left unchecked, antimicrobial resistance could lead to a USD 3.4 trillion drop in gross domestic product worldwide over the next decade. Responsible use of antimicrobials is key to addressing this growing challenge, as misuse and overuse of antimicrobials is a major cause of drug resistance.

Building trust across sectors

The United Kingdom is one of the most significant livestock producers in Europe, worth GBP 14.7 billion. Its livestock industry is responsible for the health and welfare of over one billion animals each year. Although antimicrobials are essential medicines for animal welfare and protection, growing pressure from the media, the public and government highlighted the need to use antimicrobials responsibly and reduce the need by improving animal health and adopting preventative veterinary practices.

Remarkably, the industry took ownership of the issue by forming the Targets Task Force (TTF) convened by the Responsible Use of Medicines in Agriculture (RUMA) Alliance. Each sector has been able to look closely at its system and identify opportunities for improved antimicrobial use.

The cross-sectoral exchange of experience within the TTF enabled all sectors

to benefit from the collective knowledge. Thanks to the increased awareness and understanding among producers and veterinarians, a fundamental and sustainable behaviour change has been brought about in the livestock industry.

Lessons Learned

The publication identified key factors for the UK's success, such as building a strong relationship between farmers and veterinarians, setting targets tailored to the challenges of each livestock sector, and ensuring access to data for target setting and monitoring.

Other elements highlighted were the importance of clear and transparent communication, collaboration and committed leadership. As a result of the voluntary, collaborative approach, the United Kingdom is now one of the countries with the lowest antimicrobial consumption in Europe and one of the countries with a significant livestock industry.

Based on a deeper understanding of the sectors, the original Targets Task Force was reconfigured as TTF2, which was tasked with developing a second set of targets for 2021-2024. The United Kingdom recognizes that there is no one-size-fits-all solution to tackling AMR, but hopes that the report will provide insight and a helpful resource for others exploring options to implement their own stewardship programmes.

Reducing the need for antimicrobials

Livestock products play a crucial role in feeding the ever-growing human population, so careful planning is needed to ensure sustainable food production and reduce the need for antimicrobials. At the heart of the UK's strategy lies the importance of the [One Health approach](#).

To support Members in their efforts to address AMR, FAO is currently developing an ambitious ten-year global initiative aimed at reducing the need for antimicrobials in agrifood systems (RENOFAM). It will be action-oriented, advocating for better biosecurity measures, vaccination programmes and public-private partnerships.

FAO recognizes and supports the United Kingdom's continued efforts in dealing with AMR and is pleased to have designated an [FAO Reference Centre for AMR in the United Kingdom](#). The Centre's mandate is to support FAO in international knowledge transfer and capacity building. The Organization welcomes the United Kingdom's commitment to helping others and learning from global partners.