



Department
of Energy &
Climate Change

Geological Disposal Siting Process in the UK

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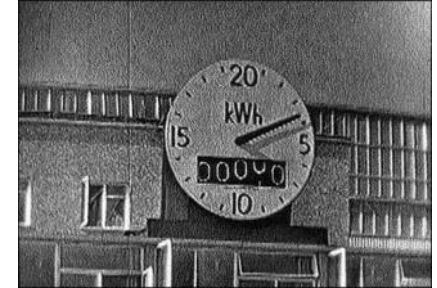
November 2015.



UK Nuclear History

UK has been a “nuclear nation” since the late 1940s.

- Early work in support of weapons programme (Windscale)
- World’s first commercial nuclear power station (Calder Hall 1956-2003)
- Reprocessing to obtain useful materials
- Research reactors (Harwell) – Fast Breeders (Dounreay)
- Fuel manufacturing sites in support
- UK technology choices – Magnox and AGR





Types of waste for geological disposal

HLW – High Level Waste

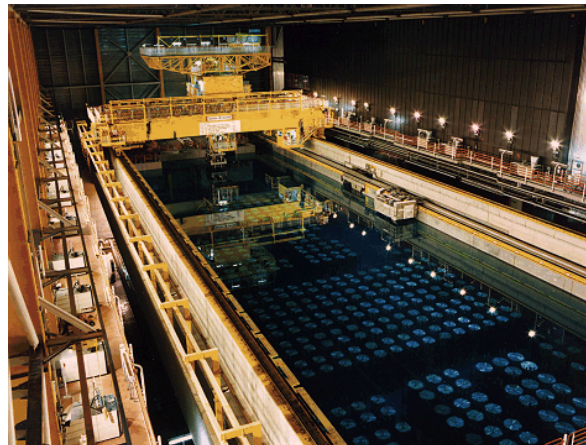
ILW – Intermediate Level Waste

Small amounts of LLW – Low Level Waste

Spent Fuel

Plutonium?

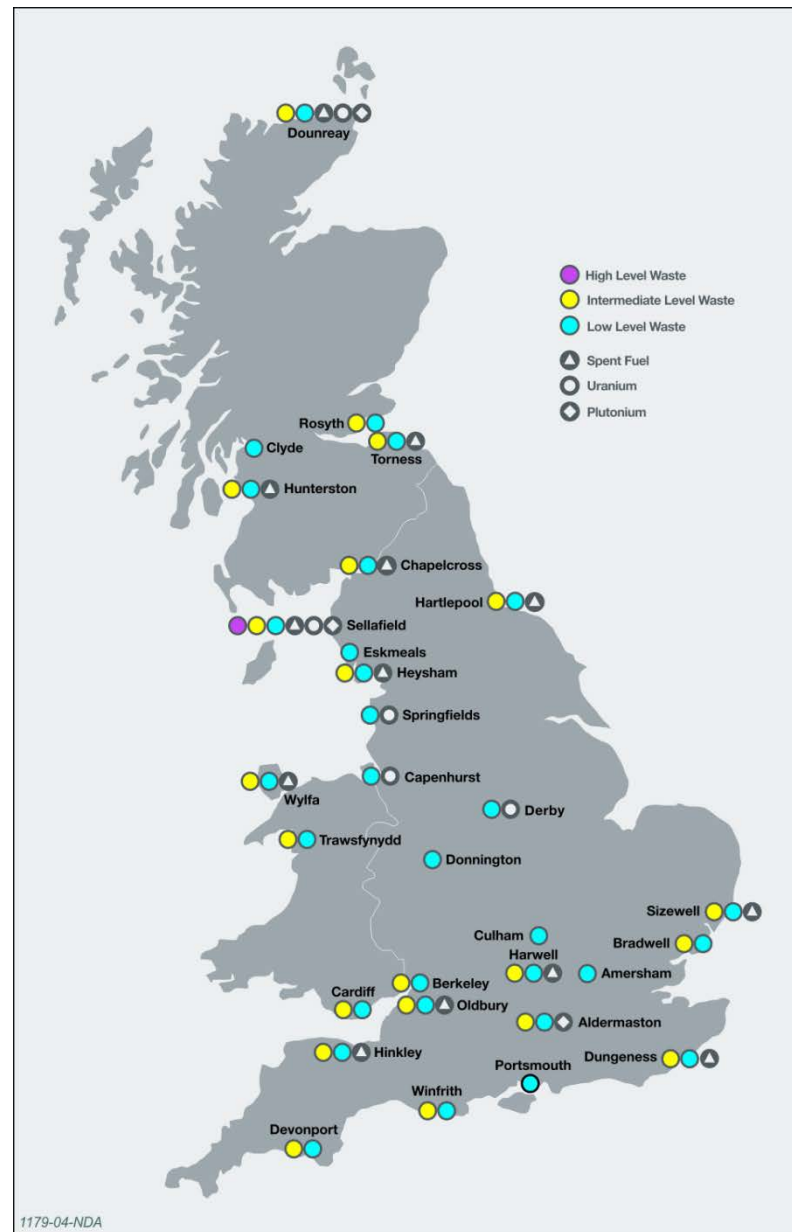
Uranium?





Where is the waste stored?

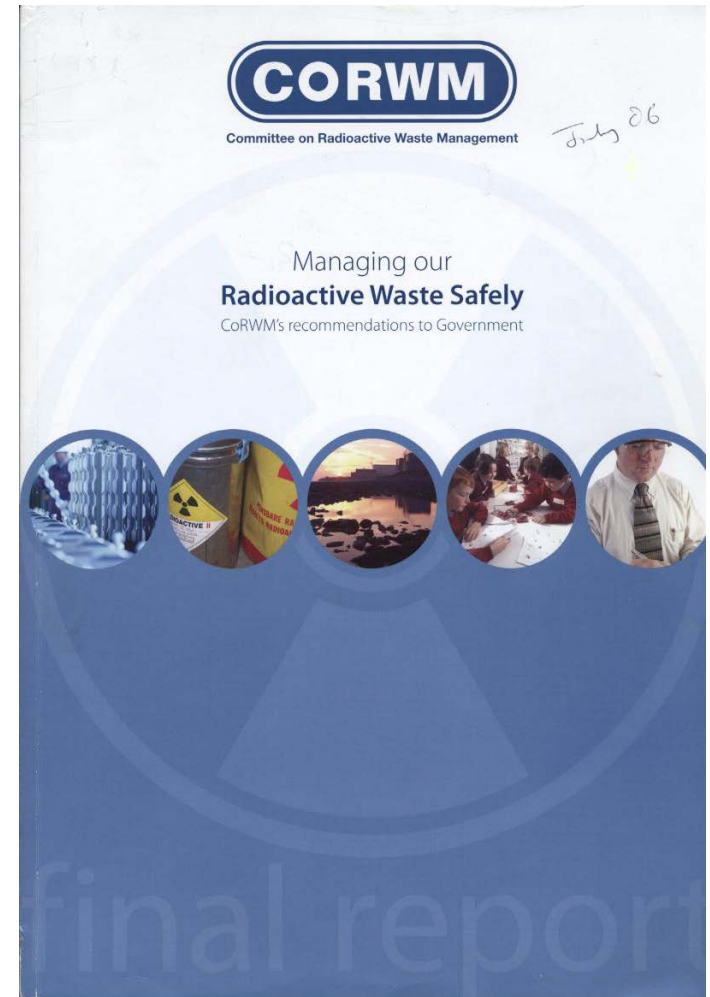
30+ sites around the UK





A brief history of waste

- Recognised since 1970s that we need a long term plan to manage our waste.
- Nirex work in 1980s-90s
- Then an independent body “CoRWM” considered every possible option including firing into space, under icecaps and simply continuing to store at the surface.
- Geological disposal seen as best approach.
- Led to 2008 White Paper.
- Interest from Cumbria but this siting process stopped in 2013.





Learning lessons - 2013

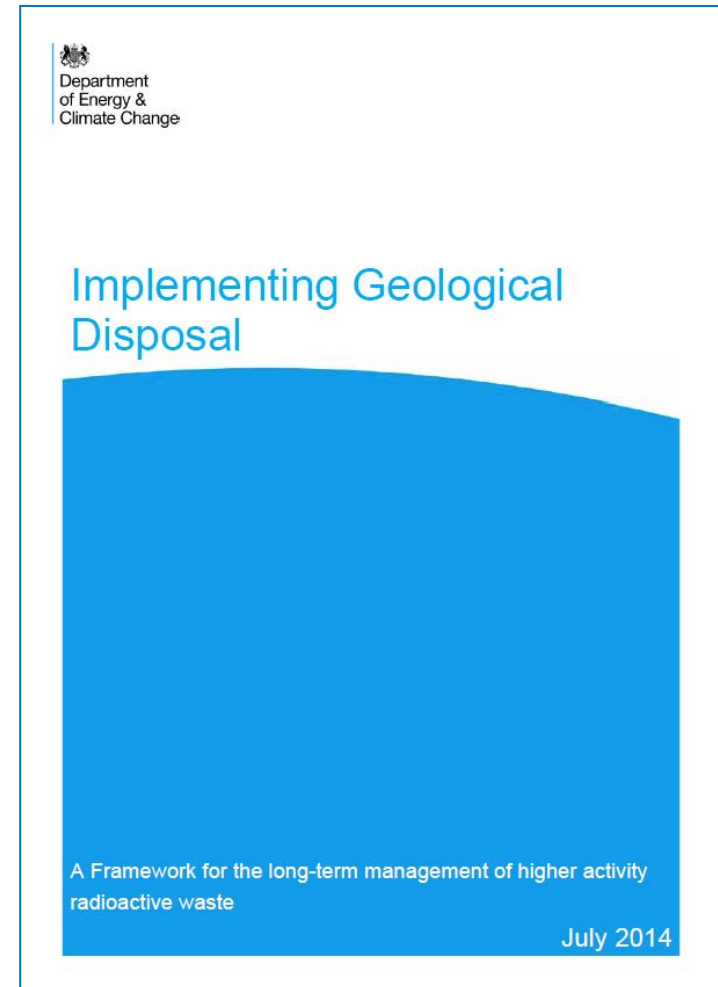
- Government remains committed to geological disposal
- Confident that overarching programme is sound and new nuclear build can continue
- Reflected on experience of the process to date
- Held a Call for Evidence in May/June 2013
- Consultation on revised siting process launched 12 September 2013

New White Paper - 2014

The White Paper takes into consideration what we've heard and describes a two year process that will:

- Provide more information about geology
- Clarify the planning process for a geological disposal facility
- Answer important questions of detail about community representation and investment

All of this is will happen before formal discussions between interested communities and the developer begin.



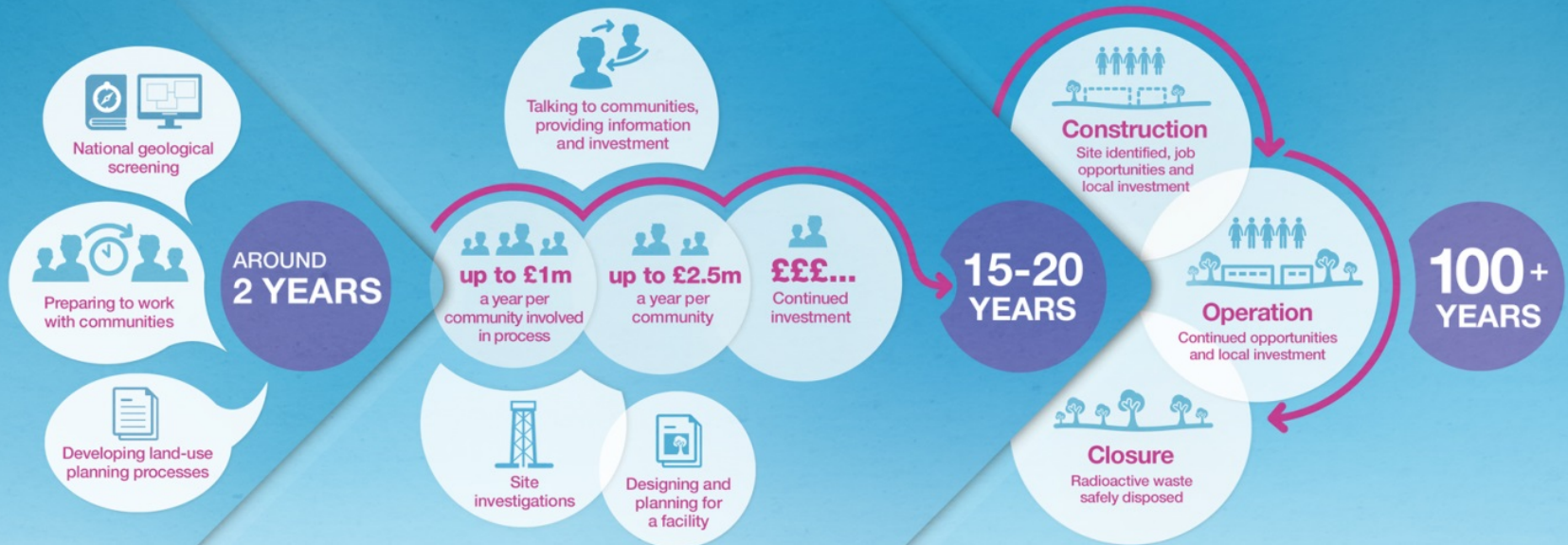
Geological disposal: roles and responsibilities



Key

- Communities**
Sit at the heart of this process – they can talk to Government and the developer throughout. A geological disposal facility (GDF) cannot proceed without community support.
- Government**
Owns the policy, sponsors the project and provides funding.
- Regulators**
Independent bodies will only authorise construction and operation of a facility if the developer can demonstrate that it will be safe, secure and the environment will be protected.
- Developer**
Responsible for designing, building, operating and closing a facility safely.
- Committee on Radioactive Waste Management (CoRWM)**
Provides independent advice to Government and scrutiny on radioactive waste management.

Geological disposal: making it happen



Making it safe: Office for Nuclear Regulation and environment agencies - independent bodies that will only authorise construction and operation of any facility if the developer can demonstrate that it will be safe, secure and the environment will be protected.



Engagement: Communities can talk to Government and the developer at any time, although formal discussions will only begin in 2016. There will be open dialogue throughout the entire process and a test of public support will be carried out before construction of a geological disposal facility can begin.



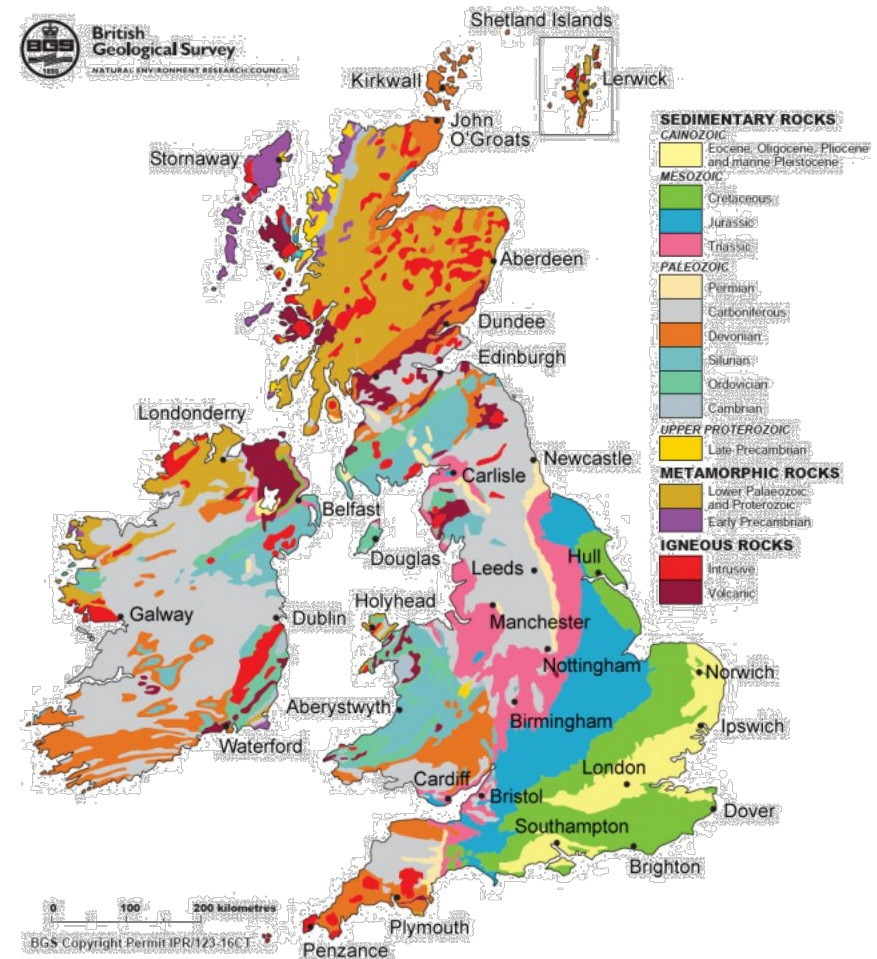
National Geological Screening

RWM will carry out a national geological screening exercise.

It will consider what level of information is already available about geology at depth across the country.

Engage with people on the reality of how much this can help in early identification of potential for siting a safe GDF.

Information will be used in the safety case for a GDF and will help the developer engage with interested communities on the prospects for development in their area.



Land Use Planning

The GDF has now been made a 'nationally significant infrastructure project' in law. Legislation was passed in March 2015 to bring development of a GDF and associated deep boreholes within the coverage of the Planning Act 2008.

DECC will also now bring forward a National Policy Statement and accompanying Appraisal of Sustainability for public consultation.

The Planning Inspectorate will examine the eventual development consent application before recommending to the Secretary of State whether or not to grant development consent.

As part of this process, the developer is obliged to consult various bodies – including the local community.



Working with communities

We have established a new “Community Representation Working Group” to engage further on the detail of community representation and decision making.

There will be early community investment but detailed mechanisms still to be determined.

There will be access to independent 3rd party advice on technical issues.

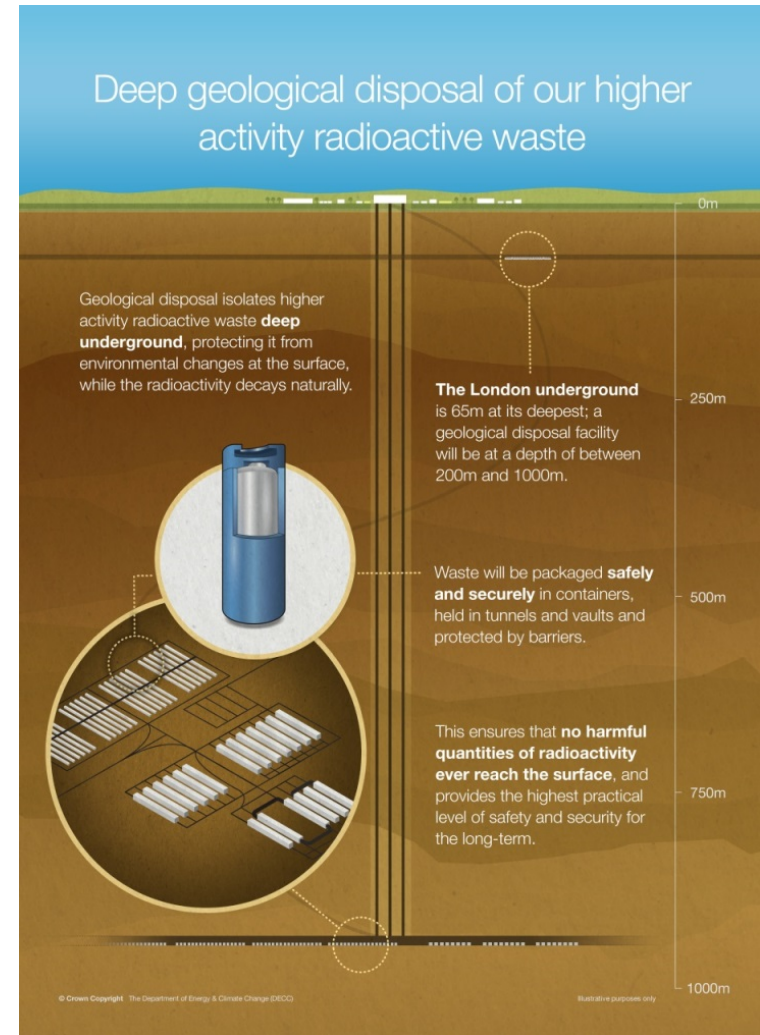
There will be a requirement for a positive test of public support before a GDF can be built.



Other White Paper Actions

In addition to the main areas of work discussed:

- RWM leading a work package to prepare the organisation for formal engagement with communities.
- DECC holding discussions with regulators to enable them to make their requirements clear to the developer, and any communities considering hosting a GDF, at an early stage.
- DECC establishing a mechanism for community access to independent advice.





Thank you for listening

Link to the 2014 White Paper:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/implementing-geological-disposal>

Link to RWM website:

<http://www.nda.gov.uk/rwm/>