

GEOLOGICAL DISPOSAL OF RADIOACTIVE WASTE IN THE UK

Radioactive Waste Management (RWM) is tasked with disposing of Britain's radioactive waste and preparations for undertaking the UK's largest ever environmental project are advancing rapidly. The safest way to deal with higher activity waste is to emplace it in a geological disposal facility, combining engineered and natural geological barriers working together to isolate the waste from humans and surface processes, and preventing migration of harmful radionuclides to the near-surface. The geosciences are contributing to solving the most pressing global issues facing humankind: clean and sustainable economic growth, and resilience to climate change and natural hazards. Rocks are both recorders of the geological past and enablers for improving lives now and in the future, and there is innate curiosity and intense public interest in the geosciences. Projects like deep geological disposal of radioactive waste are strategically important and exciting, with the potential to capture the national imagination and restore public confidence in responsible stewardship of the subsurface.