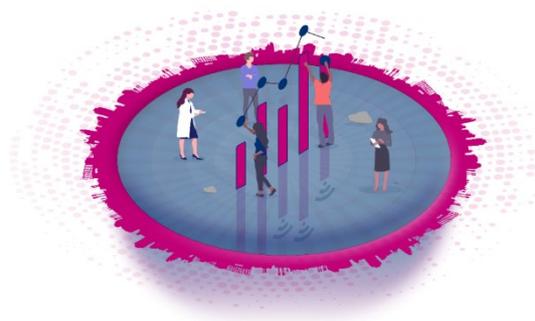


JOINT STATEMENT

Tuesday 30 July 2019

Joint statement on UK Geoenergy Observatories Open Data

The UK Geoenergy Observatories will be world-leading research facilities, opening up our understanding of the world beneath our feet as never before. Based in Cardiff, Cheshire and Glasgow, they will be scientific test beds in three locations that have very different geological characteristics. Together they will create a 'macroscope of the Earth'. Experiments carried out by earth scientists at the observatories could help address some of the world's biggest energy challenges and understand the potential risks of geoenergy - and how to avoid them.



Recognising their national and international significance, the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) asked the British Geological Survey (BGS) to create and run these observatories, using £31m from the Government's 2014 plan to grow UK science and innovation.

The openness and engagement with the public is on a different scale to what has gone before, setting a precedent for the future. NERC and the BGS consulted widely with people in the local area as plans for the observatories were developed. Sense about Science has been working with NERC and BGS to take that open approach even further, to ensure the public is genuinely involved in communication and understanding of this initiative, in the public interest.

Together, NERC, the BGS and Sense about Science have collaborated with members of the public, community groups, environmental campaigners, open data experts and other researchers to co-create a website which sets out the ambitions for the observatories and hosts all the research data, so they are readily available to anyone who wants to see them.

The BGS is launching [this website](#) as data become available from the Cardiff and Glasgow observatories, and as work starts to build the observatory in Cheshire.

NERC, the BGS and Sense about Science are committed to making science open and accessible. The level of debate surrounding geoenergy demonstrates the importance of sound, impartial information being available to the public.

By working with people with a range of perspectives, the hope is that all who visit the website – including people with a casual interest in the observatories, local residents, and specialist researchers – will find it informative and easy to use.

- Alison Robinson, director of corporate affairs at NERC
- Prof Mike Stephenson, executive chief scientist for decarbonisation at the BGS
- Tracey Brown OBE, director of Sense about Science