

From the Physical Secretary and Vice-President Professor Alexander Halliday

Geological Disposal Team  
Office for Nuclear Development  
Department of Energy and Climate Change  
Room M06  
55 Whitehall  
London SW1A 2EY

10 March 2015  
Our ref: AH/BP

Dear Sir or Madam

**RE: Committee on Radioactive Waste Management (CoRWM) Triennial Review 2015**

The Royal Society welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the Triennial Review of the Committee on Radioactive Waste Management (CoRWM). Independent expert advice is vital to good policy development and building trust in the policy-making process. To help achieve this one of the Society's aims is to ensure that policy-makers and individual citizens alike can engage with the science that underpins the functioning of modern life. The provision of independent expert advice through bodies, such as CoRWM, to policymakers is vital in achieving this.

The Public Attitudes to Science 2014 survey shows that nuclear power, alongside genetically modified crops and animal research, tends to be more contentious, with individuals often unsure whether scientists have looked at alternative solutions. Safety and impacts on health are commonly mentioned concerns. This highlights the key role of independent expert advice that is delivered in a transparent way to inform government decisions in underpinning public confidence.

CoRWM allows the UK government to access independent, timely expert advice on the long-term management of higher activity radioactive wastes. Recently this has included providing expert advice to inform the Geological Disposal Facility Programme in England and Wales. In November 2013, the Royal Society hosted a meeting to discuss a proposed new process for siting a geological disposal facility. The discussion at that meeting concluded that it is important that communities have access to credible and independent advice about Geological Disposal Facility proposals and that CoRWM is well placed to play this role, if sufficiently resourced, alongside other suitable bodies including the Geological Society and the national academies.



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Executive Director Dr Julie Maxton  
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Please do not hesitate to contact me if you think that there is any way in which the Society can contribute further to your review.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alex Halliday".

**Alex Halliday**  
Physical Secretary and Vice-President of the Royal Society  
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