



# PRESS RELEASE

7<sup>th</sup> March 2018

## **New board created for the British Geological Survey**

**The Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) and British Geological Survey (BGS) have today announced the membership of the first BGS Board.**

The BGS Board has been created to assist BGS in meeting future challenges and ensure it continues as a world-leading survey, delivering services and providing infrastructure support nationally and globally. The Chair and Board will work closely with the BGS Director and the NERC Chief Executive to shape BGS' successful future. NERC and Sir Keith O'Nions, the BGS Chair, have appointed a high quality Board of non-executive directors to support the Board Chair and BGS Executive Team in shaping the organisation's strategy and business plans. This will enable BGS to deliver its mission, manage commercial risk and diversify its funding.

Announcing the Board membership, Sir Keith O'Nions, BGS Chair, said:

"I am delighted to announce the make-up of the first BGS Board. I am very pleased that we have attracted a high-calibre and diverse range of people who will, by bringing their specific skills and experience, enhance the strong reputation of the British Geological Survey.

"I look forward to working with my new Board and all of those at BGS to build on the fine history and experience of BGS, the wider geoscience community and NERC to ensure a collaborative and coherent approach to maximise BGS's future capability and capacity."

The new Board members are:

- Sir Keith O'Nions (Chair)
- Sir Michael Dixon (Director, Natural History Museum)
- Dr Donna Kirkwood (Chief Scientist, Natural Resources Canada)
- Olivier Peyret (Chairman & CEO, Schlumberger France)
- Joanne Wilson (VP Corporate & UK Company Controller, Shell International)
- David Simpson (Council member of Cardiff University)
- Professor Richard Williams OBE (Vice-Chancellor & Principal, Heriot-Watt University)
- Paul Fox (Chief Operating Officer, NERC)
- Professor John Ludden CBE (Executive Director, BGS)
- Dr Mike Patterson (Chief Operating Officer, BGS)

Professor Duncan Wingham, NERC Chief Executive and Executive Chair Designate, said:

"I welcome this array of talent to the BGS Board, and am confident it will provide the leadership and challenge needed to ensure BGS continues to punch above its weight to the benefit of us all, both in the UK and internationally. I look forward to working with Sir Keith and BGS board members to sustain BGS's role as a world-class survey."

NERC and BGS have agreed that BGS will operate at arm's length from NERC, with a structure that mirrors that of a wholly owned incorporated subsidiary within the single legal entity. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018, that legal entity will be UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).



Professor John Ludden, Executive Director, BGS said:

"I am delighted to welcome the new board members to BGS. The addition of this first Board will bring challenge and insight to help push BGS to further develop its role as a world-class survey, bring new ideas to assist us to continue to diversify, and ensure we remain at the forefront of new ways of working for the benefit of Government, business and the wider public."

**\*Ends\***

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### **Notes for Editors**

NERC appointed a chair of the new BGS Board, Sir Keith O'Nions. This was announced in September 2017. In December 2017, NERC Council agreed the terms of the new governance arrangements as jointly recommended by the NERC Chief Executive and Sir Keith O'Nions. NERC will remain the shareholder and the NERC Chief Executive / Executive Chair Designate will work with the Chair of the BGS Board and BGS Director to shape BGS's successful future. Recruitment for the new BGS Board took place during January and February 2018. The first BGS Board meeting will be on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> April.

The following are available for interview:

- Professor John Ludden, Executive Director, British Geological Survey
- Sir Keith O'Nions, Chair, BGS Board

### **The British Geological Survey**

The British Geological Survey (BGS), a component body of the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC), is the nation's principal supplier of objective, impartial and up-to-date geological expertise and information for decision making for governmental, commercial and individual users. The BGS maintains and develops the nation's understanding of its geology to improve policy making, enhance national wealth and reduce risk. It also collaborates with the national and international scientific community in carrying out research in strategic areas, including energy and natural resources, our vulnerability to environmental change and hazards, and our general knowledge of the Earth system. More about the BGS can be found at [www.bgs.ac.uk](http://www.bgs.ac.uk).

### **The Natural Environment Research Council**

The Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) is the UK's main agency for funding and managing world-class research, training and knowledge exchange in the environmental sciences. It coordinates some of the world's most exciting research projects, tackling major issues such as climate change, food security, environmental influences on human health, the genetic make-up of life on earth, and much more. NERC receives around £300 million a year from the government's science budget, which it uses to fund research and training in universities and its own research centres. [www.nerc.ac.uk](http://www.nerc.ac.uk).

From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018, NERC will become part of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) [www.ukri.org](http://www.ukri.org).