



PRESS RELEASE

27th February 2019

Lyell Centre Hosts Parliamentarian

The British Geological Survey (BGS) and Heriot-Watt University (HWU) welcomed Liam McArthur MSP to the Lyell Centre today (Wed 27 Feb).

The Liberal Democrat politician for Orkney Islands, who is also a member of the Scottish Parliament's Cross-Party Group for Science and Technology, and Convenor of the Cross-Party Group on Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency, was greeted by Dr Tracy Shimmield, Director of the Lyell Centre.

The Lyell Centre is a strategic partnership between Heriot-Watt University and the British Geological Survey which enables them to work together combining their expertise in geoscience. Exploring themes ranging from geology and geophysics to marine ecosystems, the centre's combination of pure and applied expertise employs innovative methods and technologies to society's most important environmental science and energy challenges.

As part of his visit, Mr McArthur met with scientists to discuss a raft of issues including offshore renewables, marine geoscience, aquaculture and energy.

He was also given a tour of Heriot-Watt labs as well as the BGS Marine Operations base at the £21m purpose-built facility.

Afterwards, Liam McArthur MSP, said: "I am grateful to Dr Shimmield and her colleagues at the Lyell Centre for hosting my visit earlier today. It was fascinating to learn more about the collaboration between Heriot-Watt University and BGS and the cutting edge research being undertaken.

"Improving our understanding of marine geoscience will help enormously in tackling the environmental challenges we face as well as in the development of a wide range of different sectors, where Scotland is well-placed to play a world-leading role.

"It was encouraging also to hear about the ambitions Heriot-Watt has for its ICIT campus in Orkney, which is already carrying out excellent work supporting sectors such as fisheries and



renewable energy. Plans to expand this expertise in the years ahead has the potential to further enhance Orkney's reputation as a world class 'living laboratory'."

Dr Tracy Shimmield, Director of the Lyell Centre, said: "We've welcomed the opportunity to discuss with Liam the possibilities for utilising applied science generated by the Lyell Centre to help Scotland manage its environment as well as supporting economic growth. We have scientists who are experts in their fields, who are producing award-winning work, and our science aims to find solutions to local, and global, environmental challenges."

Professor Malcolm Crisp, Head of School of Energy, Geoscience, Infrastructure and Society at Heriot-Watt University, said: "Our research in areas such as energy and marine science continues to have a positive impact on communities around the world. I was delighted to meet with Mr McArthur to discuss these and other important issues.

"Here at Heriot-Watt, we have always had a reputation for innovative science, which seeks to push boundaries for public good and our collaboration with the British Geological Survey allows us both to develop that even further through the Lyell Centre."

Ends

Notes for Editors:

The Lyell Centre

The Lyell Centre is a strategic partnership between the British Geological Survey and Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh, which builds on our individual and combined interdisciplinary expertise in land and marine conservation, geology and geoscience. Based at Heriot-Watt University's Edinburgh campus, the Lyell Centre strives to be one of Europe's leading centres for research and expertise in the earth and marine sciences.

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.

Heriot-Watt University

Heriot-Watt is a specialist, pioneering University, with a global presence, world renowned, innovative research and highly employable graduates. www.hw.ac.uk

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