

PRESS RELEASE

Environment Minister visits Eden's ground-breaking Hot Rocks project and tours Biomes

Environment Minister Rebecca Pow has made a special visit to the Eden Project to see first-hand the pioneering Eden Geothermal energy project and then tour the world-famous Biomes with Co-Founder Sir Tim Smit.

Drilling of the first well by Eden Geothermal Ltd began in the middle of May and is making great progress, now reaching a depth of 1,200 metres, about a quarter of the total depth.

At the geothermal site the Minister was hosted by Richard Day, Chairman of Eden Geothermal Ltd (EGL), and Augusta Grand, EGL's Executive Director.

She was then met by Sir Tim Smit and Eden Project Interim Chief Executive David Harland on a journey around Eden, learning about the project - now in its 20th year - and the progress of other Edens around the UK and overseas.

The Minister was shown a model of Eden Project North in Morecambe, Lancashire, which Eden hopes to open in 2024.

Environment Minister Rebecca Pow said: "The Eden Project is a shining example of the action being taken to create alternative heating sources and to pioneer sustainable ways of reaching Net Zero.

"I was delighted to see the geothermal project and hear about its potential as a renewable energy source and then to plant a tree in the world-famous Eden gardens as part of our Plant for Our Planet initiative. This is encouraging everyone to do their bit to increase nature and adapt to climate change.

"We must all take action – however small to tackle climate change and restore nature, the Eden Project is focusing on these issues and I look forward to seeing how their work continues."

Sir Tim Smit said: "I'm delighted the Minister came to see our thrilling geothermal plant and explored how Eden is developing its Emergence Academy thinking so that we look at the natural world as a whole where clean air, water, soil and energy are seen as the birthright of the future and natural integrated systems we all depend on and need to nurture.

"For me, the Minister's commitment to these values and insistence that we must effectively halt systems damage and create a National benchmark of environmental standards against which we are all judged for the first time, giving us a policing mechanism against which policies can be developed, strategies implemented and fiscal policies encouraging good behaviours put in place, is the start of a new era."

On behalf of EGL, Richard Day said: “We were pleased to welcome the Minister to our site in Cornwall, where we are working with the Eden Project to help them attain their Net Zero targets.

“We are committed to sustainable development, helping address climate change by generating clean renewable heat and power from the abundant levels of geothermal resource beneath our feet for the benefit of local businesses and the community.”

The Geothermal Project is being delivered by Eden Geothermal Limited (EGL), a three-way partnership between Eden Project Limited, EGS Energy Limited, a leading geothermal development and consultancy group, and BESTEC (UK) Limited, affiliated with BESTEC GmbH, the specialist geothermal developer and drilling advisor.

Drilling of the first well is expected to take five months in total. When complete it will then allow water to be injected down the borehole to be superheated by the hot rocks beneath.

The hot water will then be pumped back to the top up a pipe suspended in the same borehole, generating heat initially to warm Eden’s Rainforest and Mediterranean Biomes, offices, kitchens and greenhouses. The same water will then be re-circulated to be superheated and used again.

Following the successful completion of this first phase the next crucial phase is to drill a second well close to the first to a similar depth of around 4.5 kilometres.

Once complete, the two well Eden Geothermal project has the potential to supply renewable heat to the Eden Project and neighbouring industries equivalent to the heat used by more than 35,000 homes, or renewable electricity to that consumed by around 14,000 homes.

To drill the first well, EGL secured £17 million funding from a combination of European Regional Development Fund, Cornwall Council and commercial funding from GCP Infrastructure Investments Limited, an investment trust advised by Gravis Capital Management Ltd.

Ends

June 30, 2021



Caption 1: At the geothermal drilling rig, from left, Eden Geothermal Ltd's Executive Director Augusta Grand, Drilling Rig Supervisor Peter Mulholland, Environment Minister Rebecca Pow, the Minister's Private Secretary Lily Ginsberg-Keig and Chairman of Eden Geothermal Ltd Richard Day.

Caption 2: Environment Minister Rebecca Pow with a shale shaker at the Eden Geothermal Ltd site.

Caption 3: Environment Minister Rebecca Pow in conversation with Peter Mulholland, Drilling Supervisor at the Eden Geothermal site. Also pictured (left to right) are Augusta Grand, EGL Executive Director; the Minister's Private Secretary Lily Ginsberg Keig and Chairman of Eden Geothermal Ltd Richard Day.

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