

eBulletin.



Aspö rock laboratory near Oskarshamn, Sweden

Welcome

Here is a summary of topics discussed at the recent Nuleaf Steering Group meeting, forthcoming meeting dates and other items we hope will be of interest.

Dates for your diary

The next meeting of the **Radioactive Waste Planning Group (RWPG)** will be held, via Teams, between **10am and 12.30pm on Wednesday the 6th November**. In addition to the usual papers, we will receive an update from Nuclear Restoration Services (NRS) on their work; from the Environment Agency on their upcoming consultation on the Guidance on Requirements for Authorisation (GRA); and from the Office for Nuclear Regulation on Proportionate Regulatory Control (PRC).

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The next **Steering Group** will be held online on **Wednesday the 11th December between 10am and 3pm**. This will include presentations on Nuleaf's consultancy report on nuclear engagement and from Bill Hamilton of Nuclear Restoration Services (NRS) on current and planned work. Members will also be updated on the various international meetings and site visits that Nuleaf has participated in over recent months.

If you wish to attend either meeting, please contact Chloe Atkinson:
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Steering Group report

Our Steering Group on the 11th September had a busy agenda. The meeting began with a presentation and discussion that updated members on our current research on stakeholder engagement, being undertaken by independent consultants. Members were in general agreement with many of the emerging conclusions but offered a range of further comments and suggestions regarding the research and desired outcomes.

The Steering Group also heard from:

- **Matthew Buckley, Strategy Manager for Treatment and Storage, NDA** on the Group's evolving Storage Strategy. Members discussed a range of issues with Matt including around the management of waste from AGR sites, plans for future engagement, and the impact of waste storage on other activities, particularly in the context of Sellafield.
- **Neil Crewdson, Site Director, Sellafield** provided a detailed update on progress at the Sellafield Site covering both site operations and challenges and the wider social value impact. The presentation prompted a range of questions on issues including waste management, the leak from the MSSS facility and proposals for new nuclear development at Moorside.

Members also discussed the 2025 Nuleaf Annual Gathering. There was general support for the secretariat's proposal that the event should involve a seminar in London followed by a site visit within south-east England. Next year will be the 20th anniversary of Nuleaf, and it was also agreed that the event should mark this milestone with a dinner involving members and guests.

Meeting papers and presentations can be viewed [here](#).

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Nuleaf's Executive Director participating in a panel discussion at the Stakeholder Summit

NDA updates

A number of our members joined the **NDA Stakeholder Summit**, held in Manchester on the 17th and 18th September. Nuleaf's Executive Director participated in a panel discussion on building partnerships. Members were also able to meet with NDA CEO David Peattie where a range of issues was discussed.

On the 26th September, the NDA published its **socio-economic funding report 2023/24**, detailing the £60 million of investment made over the last 5 years. NDA Director of Socio-Economics, Jamie Reed, said: *'We believe that decommissioning activities should benefit local communities and that we must provide a positive legacy once our work is completed.....We are immensely proud of our work with local communities to date and the vast variety of projects we've supported, and are very ambitious to make further progress.'* The report can be viewed [here](#).

The NDA is seeking a strategic partner to turn the **Chapelcross** site into a green energy hub; and has also unveiled a Masterplan for the 210Ha site. The plans are supported by up to £15.3 million from the Scottish and UK Governments. NDA Chief Executive David Peattie commented: *'Our ultimate aim is to free up our land for reuse, delivering benefit to local communities, the environment and the wider economy – the green energy hub will enable us to deliver this at Chapelcross.'*

Sellafield Ltd. has issued an apology after pleading guilty to charges related to cybersecurity failings that were brought by the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR). The ONR has stated that it will not provide details of the offences ahead of sentencing. The Guardian newspaper, which reported on cybersecurity issues at the site in late 2023, has detailed a range of alleged [failings](#).

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Geological Disposal news

Nuleaf participated in a GMF Europe site visit to the **Aspö Rock Laboratory** and **canister laboratory** at Oskarshamn, Sweden, on the 24th to 27th September. The rock laboratory is located 450 metres underground and is the location for research at full scale on how the planned Swedish repository for Spent Fuel (SF) will operate. The canister lab is developing the technology that will be used to encapsulate the waste.

Joining Nuleaf's Executive Director on the visit was Vanessa Strange, Head of Infrastructure Investment at Lincolnshire County Council. Lincolnshire hosts one of the three current GDF Community Partnerships, at Theddlethorpe.

A 20-minute video on the **geology of Copeland** and its suitability for a Geological Disposal Facility (GDF) is now [available](#). The video explains the investigative work undertaken over the last 2 years, including seismic surveys, and what the implications of these are. It focusses in on the Mercia Mudstone Group (MMG), a mix of mudstones and halites (salts). These are potentially of interest for a GDF as both mudstones and salts have very low permeability.

On the 30th August, NWS published [guidance](#) on their **Property Value Protection (PVP) Scheme**. The intention is to provide support to those who are able to demonstrate a compelling need to sell their property, yet have been unable to do so, other than at a substantially reduced price, due to the search for a suitable site to host a GDF in their community. It is based on similar schemes employed as part of infrastructure projects including Crossrail and High Speed 2 (HS2).

New nuclear

Great British Nuclear (GBN) has [announced](#) that there are 4 companies remaining in the context to select technology for UK Small Modular Reactors (SMRs). These are GE Hitachi, Holtec, Rolls Royce SMR and Westinghouse. All four will now begin negotiations with GBN.

The UK Government has confirmed that **Great British Energy (GBE)** will be headquartered in Aberdeen. The founding [statement](#) commits GBE to engagement with local authorities across the UK and states that the Government is exploring how GBE can align with Great British Nuclear (GBN).

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