

Forum.



The recently unveiled Masterplan for the Chapelcross site.

Welcome

Here is a summary of what has been hitting the headlines, recently issued reports, consultations in progress, forthcoming meeting dates and other items of note. This is a monthly service which we provide to those of our members who financially support our work.

Dates for the diary

Nuleaf is holding a special meeting on the 27th February to present the findings of our independent consultancy research on **stakeholder engagement**. The meeting will be held on Teams from 10am until 12 noon.

Our next **Steering Group** will take place from 10am until 3pm on Wednesday the 12th March. On the agenda is a presentation on the Canadian geological disposal programme - other presenters are being confirmed at present.

If you are interested in joining either meeting, please contact Chloe Atkinson Chloe.Atkinson@nuleaf.org.uk .



UK minister Lord Hunt addresses the NDA reception at Westminster

Nuclear week in Parliament

Nuleaf's Executive Director participated in a variety of events held during the annual **Nuclear Week in Parliament** (27th to 29th January), the aim of which is to engage parliamentarians in discussion on all aspects of the nuclear landscape. UK Nuclear Minister Lord Hunt gave an upbeat address to an NDA reception on the Tuesday evening. Elsewhere, concern was expressed on the challenges presented to the NDA by the funding settlement provided for in the last budget.

Plutonium disposition

On the 24th January, the **Department of Energy and Net Zero (DESNZ)** announced that the UK's inventory of 140 tonnes of plutonium will be immobilised. This puts the material beyond reach, ensuring it is suitable for final disposal in a Geological Disposal Facility (GDF).

The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) group welcomed this decision, stating that it paves the way for significant investment in West Cumbria. It noted that this would generate thousands of jobs during construction, and hundreds of jobs in operation, along with investment in the regional supply chain and local infrastructure projects.

West Cumbria Site Stakeholder Group (SSG) Chair (and Nuleaf Chair) Cllr David Moore commented that the SSG *'will need to look at the implications, there will be lots of job opportunities as new plant will need to be built and run here at Sellafield, but we need to understand how it is going to be funded as it must not impact on the high hazard clean-up of the site, that is so important to our local community.'*

Work will continue to develop a suitable immobilisation solution, before seeking approval for a major programme on plutonium disposition.

UK Government update

On the 13th December, Energy Secretary Ed Miliband published **Clean Power 2030**, its roadmap to decarbonise electricity by 2030. The plan sets out a pathway for delivery of this objective, deliver a more effective planning regime and identify priority infrastructure projects that will take the UK towards this target.

While it is unlikely that new nuclear capacity beyond Hinkley Point C will be ready by 2030, the plan does envisage renewables and nuclear as forming the backbone of the electricity system by 2030 and looks to support new nuclear technology development beyond the end of this decade.

Separately, the UK Government is to establish an **AI Energy Council** to look at the opportunities for '*renewable and innovative energy solutions, including small modular reactors*' to support the significant energy demand required by artificial intelligence (AI). The Government has committed to establishing 'AI Growth Zones', the first of these being at Culham in Oxfordshire, home of the UK Atomic Energy Authority (UKAEA).

Annual Gathering 2025

Members have now been sent an invitation to the Nuleaf's **Annual Gathering 2025**, which will take place in **London on the 10th and 11th June**. The meeting will mark the 20th anniversary of both Nuleaf and the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) and we will be celebrating this over the two days.

The event begins at 1pm on the 10th, with lunch being followed by a Nuleaf Steering Group meeting and AGM. The second half of the afternoon will consist of a seminar on the nuclear landscape in the UK, where we hope to hear from Government and Great British Nuclear. In the evening, we will host a dinner, which will be addressed by David Peattie, CEO of the NDA. A range of people who have worked with and for Nuleaf over the years will be invited to join us.

On the morning of the 11th we travel to Dungeness where there will be a visit to the nuclear site and a meeting with the Romney Marsh Partnership.

The venue will be the Stratford Hotel, next to Stratford International Railway station. All of Nuleaf's contributing member local authorities are able to send two Members and/or officers to the Gathering, with all travel and catering costs, along with accommodation for the night of the 10th June, being met by Nuleaf. Corresponding member local authorities are also welcome to attend but will have to cover their own costs.

Please contact Chloe Atkinson (Chloe.Atkinson@nuleaf.org.uk) if you would like to register.



Geological Disposal news

A **Hosting Agreement** between Lincolnshire County Council, East Lindsey District Council, Nuclear Waste Services (NWS) and the UK Government is being considered, with this setting out the infrastructure requirements for a GDF if developed in the area. The Agreement was the subject of a report considered by the County Council's Executive on the 3rd December. An agreement could be similar to that reached between South Bruce Municipality and the Canadian Nuclear Waste Management Organisation (NWMO) and would have to be developed before any 'Test of Public Support' was undertaken in **Theddlethorpe**.

At the end of January, NWS announced the specific **Areas of Focus** for the GDF in Lincolnshire and Cumberland. These will enable NWS to focus more in-depth studies and investigations to help experts understand and consider the potential for an area to safely and securely host a GDF. They have been identified using a range of information, such as geological data, areas of environmental protection, and consideration of built-up areas. In East Lincolnshire an area has been identified between the villages of Gayton le Marsh and Great Carlton. Two surface Areas of Focus have been identified in Mid Copeland – Land East of Sellafield and Land East of Seascale. In South Copeland there is one surface Area of Focus – West of Haverigg.

Groundwork has begun for the construction of **Sweden's** final repository for Spent Nuclear Fuel at Forsmark in the Osthhammer municipality. *'It is a historic day for the Swedish nuclear waste programme. We are taking an important step and breaking ground for a final solution for the spent nuclear fuel'* commented Stefan Engdahl, CEO of the Swedish waste management organisation SKB. The construction of the used fuel repository will take ten years before deposition can begin, after which the repository will be gradually expanded over many years.

Pete Wilkinson

Prominent anti-nuclear campaigner Pete Wilkinson passed away suddenly on the 21st January. Pete was involved in the founding of both Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth in the UK, and more recently was active as Vice-Chair of the Sizewell Site Stakeholder Group (SSG) and as Chair of Together Against Sizewell C (TASC).

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