

eBulletin.



Aerial view of the Dounreay site, Caithness

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 on **Wednesday the 7th May from 10am until 12.30pm**. Speakers will be confirmed nearer the time.

If you are interested in joining this meeting, please contact Chloe Atkinson
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Steering Group report

The first Steering Group meeting of 2025 took place on the 12th March.

During the morning session, the meeting heard from Paul Skelton and colleagues from Nuclear Waste Services (NWS) who spoke on developments at the Low Level Waste Repository (LLWR), the wider management of Low Level Waste and Near Surface Disposal (NSD).

After lunch, the Steering Group was joined by John McNamara, Director of Communities and Stakeholder Engagement at the NDA. John updated members on research on **Site Stakeholder Groups (SSGs)** commissioned by the NDA, which is due for publication in the near future. Members raised a range of issues in discussion, with a particular focus on how best to ensure engagement with those currently under-represented in SSGs, particularly younger people.

The meeting closed with a presentation and discussion on the Canadian Geological Disposal Siting Process – Canada has recently selected a community to host its repository following a positive test of public support by the local municipality and First Nation.

Mike Borelli, of the Canadian **Nuclear Waste Management Organisation (NWMO)** offered a range of interesting insights into how the Canadian process had reached the stage it has, and discussed successes and challenges with those Nuleaf members involved in the UK process.

Nuleaf news

We are delighted to announce that **Lord Hunt**, Minister of State at the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) will be joining our Annual Gathering 2025, which will take place in London on the 10th and 11th June. Lord Hunt will give an overview of the Government's current and future plans for the nuclear sector as part of a seminar on the afternoon of the 10th June. We will also be joined by **Clive Nixon**, NDA Chief Nuclear Strategist and are currently confirming other speakers.

We are pleased to welcome Louise Martin to the Nuleaf team where she will act as **Co-ordinator of SCCORS (Scottish Council Committee on Radioactive Substances)**. Louise joins on a 12 month secondment from Somerset Council, and will be working 3 days a week. Her key task is to re-establish and develop SCCORS, the representative body on nuclear matters north of the border, but she will also be providing policy support for Nuleaf.

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Community engagement event, Ignace, Canada.

Geological Disposal news

East Lindsey District Council is withdrawing from the Theddlethorpe GDF Community Partnership, with Council Leader Craig Leyland issuing a [statement](#) on the 12th February. Cllr. Leyland noted that his Council's decision was in response to the announcement by Nuclear Waste Services (NWS) on the 30th January that their 'Area of Focus' for the GDF headworks would move from the former Theddlethorpe gas terminal to land between Gayton le Marsh and Great Carlton. The view of his local authority is that this move from a brownfield site to agricultural land close to the Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Natural Beauty (AONB) '*severely tests the original rationale*' of the Council in engaging in the siting process.

Lincolnshire County Council continue to participate in the Community Partnership. The involvement of at least one principal local authority is necessary for the process to continue.

On the 30th January, Nuclear Waste Services (NWS) announced the proposed **[Areas of Focus](#)** within the three potential host communities, Mid and South Copeland and East Lincolnshire. These [locations](#) 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.

Nuleaf has prepared a case study on the Canadian GDF siting process, following the announcement that the communities of **Ignace** and the **Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nations**, in northern Ontario, have been selected as the location of the repository. The case study will be published on the Nuleaf website shortly.

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NDA updates

The NDA Group continues to consider the implications of the 25/26 funding settlement it received in the 2024 Budget. The award is similar to that allocated in the current year, but increases in construction, labour and energy costs have been significant, and the provision made is seen as challenging. Further concerns have been expressed about the likely level of financial support over the lifetime of this Parliament.

Sellafield, responsible for the majority of NDA spending, stated in late February that the £2.8Billion allocated in next financial year *'would not be enough'* for planned operations and some planned works would have to be slowed down or paused. A Sellafield spokesman said the company was working with employees, trade unions and stakeholders to *'manage any impact'*.

Beyond Sellafield there are concerns about the impact on the planned forward work programmes for **Nuclear Restoration Services (NRS)**, responsible for the Magnox sites and Dounreay; and for the GDF programme and the other operations of **Nuclear Waste Services (NWS)**.

The need to consider the implications of the budget on the NDA Group's forward work programme is expected to cause a delay in the production of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority's (NDA) **Strategy 5**, the five year Strategy for the NDA Group, covering 2026-31. It is now anticipated that a 12 week public consultation on the draft Strategy will begin in July 2025.

Consultations

On the 10th March, the NDA launched a consultation on its **Business Plan 2025-28**, with this running for 6 weeks. Nuleaf will submit a response. It is expected that the Plan will be formally published in May next year, after the council elections.

The UK Government has launched a consultation on a draft new **National Policy Statement for Nuclear Energy Generation (EN7)**. EN-7 will allow developers more freedom in choosing locations for new nuclear projects, a move away from the pre-identified locations set out in EN-6; and also supports the development of Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) and Advanced Modular Reactors (AMRs) along with conventional Gigawatt stations.

It follows on from an earlier consultation that sought general views on siting criteria. Nuleaf submitted a response to that consultation and will respond to the current one. The deadline for this is **midday on the 3rd April**.

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