

# E-BULLETIN

June 2020, Issue 58



Welcome to Issue 58 of the e-bulletin, which reports on:

- Impact of COVID-19 on NuLeAF meetings and work
- NDA COVID-19 response
- Geological Disposal Facility siting process update including publication of NuLeAF Briefing Paper on retrievability of waste
- Sustainability
- Low Level Waste
- Radioactive Waste Planning Group meeting, 29<sup>th</sup> July 2020
- Dates for your diary

You can find the papers which were submitted to the NuLeAF Steering Group meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> June in the document library on [our website](#).

## Impact of COVID-19 on NuLeAF meetings and work

Because NuLeAF staff were already homeworkers when the Covid-19 pandemic hit, our work routine has been far less affected than many of our colleagues around the country. However, we recognise that it has been quite an adjustment for many, and congratulate the IT departments of our member councils who have stepped up and supported remote working for tens of thousands of local government staff and elected members in the UK.

For the time being NuLeAF will be holding all meetings online. To date we have held successful meetings of the Steering Group and Radioactive Waste Planning Group. We are also looking at hold some single theme online sessions with NDA to help support them in their stakeholder engagement commitments. More of this in the coming weeks.

We will continue to provide news and updates using our website, email and social media; and would encourage all members to contact us by phone or email if there is anything we can help with or advise on.

## NDA COVID-19 response

At the start of lockdown, NDA worked with the regulators to pause the majority of work on their sites. Many of their 16,000 staff now work from home, where it is possible to do so. Social media is used to keep in touch with those staff who do not have laptops. Some work has restarted at Sellafield, and work will soon restart at Dounreay and Magnox sites. This will be low key and low scale. Initially work will be health and safety related, and also look at how sites can be made to conform to social distancing rules while being operational. NDA has engaged with staff and unions and recognises that some staff will be reticent about returning.

NDA has established a recovery group, headed by Richard Green, and a recovery plan has been drawn up. One of the issues it will consider is how NDA achieves its stakeholder commitments over the coming months. With Strategy 4 due for consultation in the autumn, a tool kit to permit engagement is being developed.

NDA has recognised that there may be a need to review the Local Economic and Social Impact Strategy in light of the Covid-19 pandemic as communities reassess what they need. NuLeAF is in contact with NDA with the view of setting up workshops to facilitate engagement with members so NDA can understand the impact of the pandemic has had on communities.

Those of you who keep an eye on social media will have seen that NDA and its subsidiaries have taken an active role in their local communities to help with the fight against Covid-19. PPE has been donated, and staff have been given leave to volunteer in their local communities. A fund of £300,000 has been set up for local authorities to access (£25,000 per site) to help them alleviate hardship in their area. Work on the sites has mostly ceased, with minimum staffing levels on site and social distancing implemented. You can read more about this in [NDA's newsletter](#) and their monthly update to stakeholder.



NDA Monthly  
Update May - June.

## The Geological Disposal Facility (GDF) siting process

Dr Guy Esnouf has been appointed Director of Communication and Stakeholder Engagement at RWM Ltd. Prior to his appointment he was Director of Communications and Corporate Responsibility at Npower. NuLeAF's Chair and Executive Director had a positive meeting with Guy via videolink in early June 2020 and NuLeAF looks forward to working with him to ensure the voice of local government and local communities is heard and understood in the search for a site for a Geological Disposal Facility.

Professor Cherry Tweed, RWM's Chief Scientific Advisor, has written a [fascinating blog](#) looking back at her career and how she got involved in radioactive waste management.

NuLeAF has published a [Briefing Paper](#) on the issues around retrievability of wastes disposed in a GDF.

**Any local authority wishing to have informal discussions or seeking further information on the Geological Disposal Facility siting process should contact the Executive Director, Philip Matthews on 07949 209126 or [philip.matthews@nuleaf.org.uk](mailto:philip.matthews@nuleaf.org.uk).**

## Sustainability

At the meeting of NuLeAF's Steering Group held on 10<sup>th</sup> June, a presentation and discussion on the development a sustainability strategy and action on climate change by NDA was held with Murdo Allen and Alyson Morris. As many local authorities are developing their own strategies, members were keen to hear about NDA's approach and identify any areas of common interest. You can view the slides from the presentation on the [NuLeAF website](#). Alyson would welcome the opportunity to discuss sustainability issues with local government staff dealing with sustainability and climate change issues – [alyson.morris@nda.gov.uk](mailto:alyson.morris@nda.gov.uk) .

NuLeAF secretariat is in discussions with NDA about taking this workstream forward, and Alyson Morris will be joining the Radioactive Waste Planning Group meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> July to discuss the draft sustainability report.

LGA has published a new report – [Local green jobs – accelerating a sustainable economic recovery](#) - which members may also find interesting.

## Low Level Waste

NuLeAF has revised [Briefing Paper 8](#) on the UK Low Level Waste Strategy. This is to reflect recent changes to the policy landscape, in particular the Radioactive Waste Strategy, published in late 2019; and also NuLeAF's recent Policy Statement and Briefing Paper on community benefits. Briefing Paper 8 complements Briefing Paper 11 on radioactive waste and local plans, which was also updated in early 2020.

LLWR Ltd has published the latest edition of its newsletter [One the Level](#) which includes items on how the company is restarting work and the contributions it has made to the local community during the Covid-19 pandemic.

## Radioactive Waste Planning Group meeting, 29<sup>th</sup> July 2020

The next meeting of the Radioactive Waste Planning Group will be held online on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2020, 10.00 – 12.00. Officers from NuLeAF member authorities wishing to participate should contact [catherine.draper@nuleaf.org.uk](mailto:catherine.draper@nuleaf.org.uk).

## Dates for the Diary

Here is the NuLeAF meeting timetable for the second half of 2020. Please note these dates in your diary for future reference. Meetings of the Steering Group are open to elected members and officers from NuLeAF member authorities. The Radioactive Waste Planning Group is officer only.

DATE	MEETING	VENUE
29 <sup>th</sup> July 2020 10.00 – 12.00	Radioactive Waste Planning Group	Online
9 <sup>th</sup> September 2020 10.30 – 12.00 and 1.00 – 2.30	Steering Group	Online
9 <sup>th</sup> December 2020 Tba	Steering Group	tba

Members wishing to attend any of the above meetings should contact the secretariat at [catherine.draper@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:catherine.draper@suffolk.gov.uk)

## Joining NuLeAF and participating in our work

Nuclear waste and legacy issues are major concerns for local authorities across the country. Critical issues include management of Low and Very Low-Level Waste to landfill, changes to planning guidance, considerations on the siting of a Geological Disposal Facility, the need to maximise community benefits from nuclear legacy operations and the impacts of the decommissioning of current and future nuclear power stations.

NuLeAF continues to be an effective voice for local authorities on all these issues. We welcome new member authorities and the active participation of Elected Members and officers in our Steering Group and in the officer Radioactive Waste Planning Group. If your authority would like to join NuLeAF, or find out more, then please contact Catherine Draper at the address below.

## NuLeAF on LinkedIn and Twitter

NuLeAF has a group on [LinkedIn.com](https://www.linkedin.com). We hope that members will use this as a forum to discuss issues and seek advice with other members. We also post regular items of news. Our Twitter account alerts members to consultations, news, and other items of interest as they happen. Our Twitter handle is [@nuleaforguk](https://twitter.com/nuleaforguk).

## Contact point

All member authorities are asked to ensure that NuLeAF is kept informed of any changes to officer or councillor contacts. It is important that these are kept up-to-date, so that the right people receive e-bulletins, invitations to NuLeAF meetings and other information.

The NuLeAF Secretariat can be contacted at *T*: 01473 264833 *W*: [www.nuleaf.org.uk](http://www.nuleaf.org.uk)  
*E*: [catherine.draper@nuleaf.org.uk](mailto:catherine.draper@nuleaf.org.uk)