

ON THE LEVEL

Edition 22 December 2019

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE LLW REPOSITORY

Celebrating a happy 60th!

Around 130 members of our local community joined us to mark the 60th anniversary of safe operations at the Repository Site.

Most took the opportunity to enjoy escorted tours of the Site, where they visited a decommissioned magazine, or bunker, that for many decades had held Plutonium Contaminated Materials (PCM), and Pelham House, where



Great day: above, Mike Banks and family, middle, a guided tour of Pelham House and bottom, the decommissioned Magazine 4 is the focus of a Site tour.

refreshments and children's attractions were available.

Carole Wilson's Pelham Drive garden backs onto our Pelham House grounds, and she loved her first visits to both the House and the LLWR Site.

"The whole day was wonderful, I felt a bit sad when it ended. I think we were the last to leave," she said. "I would recommend going on the Site tour to anybody."

Carole was grateful for the insight into the Site given by senior LLWR staff.

"Buses were laid on and there was always someone to talk to," she added. "Everything was laid on for us."

LLWR's Mike Banks made the day a family affair and was joined by his wife, daughter, two grand-daughters, plus his sister and brother-in-law, who were visiting from London – and family dog Toby!

Mike said: "My sister and brother-in-law were coming up to visit but they timed it around this day, and they loved it."

"It was a nice, social day and we stayed right to the end. The food was nice and it was good to chat to people."



Transforming LLWR:

one step at a time

LLWR's plan is underway to ensure it is a high-performing organisation, prepared to face the challenges ahead when the third contract term with its Parent Body Organisation ends in 2023.

The Transformation Programme was launched to be the vehicle to drive improvements with 28 topic areas across the business identified for Rapid Improvement Events (RIEs) over an initial 18 months.

Areas encompassed are: Managing the Organisation, Developing Waste Solutions, Dealing with Legacy Waste, Developing New Business, plus a host of support and enabling functions across LLWR.

Each structured RIE involves 6 to 10 people from across the company - around half of whom work in the topic area under discussion - in a process lasting around 9 weeks.

Problems are identified and data/evidence collected, leading to 'Event Week', where participants develop and Implement solutions. These solutions are embedded over the following weeks.

Andy Bicknell, Business Improvements Manager, who guides teams through the RIE process, said: "The team provide the

solutions from within. They are empowered to make and act on decisions, which is important.

"We are looking to implement significant changes and it's quite a challenge for the organisation. Event Week is not a time to come up with a set of actions, it's a week to come up with, develop and test solutions. We adopt the new process the Monday immediately after Event Week.

"The goal is to have a more productive organisation that puts the welfare of the workforce high on the agenda and develops people. Toyota have been using this process for 60 years and they say, 'We build people before we build cars'.

A dozen RIEs have already been held across the business, and while it's early days, the benefits are being felt. So, what happens when all 28 planned RIEs have been completed?

"We start again, looking at more RIEs," said Andy. "For us, this is now a way of life."

Don't be a waster!

LLWR is beefing up its green credentials by looking to appoint its first Environmental Champion from within its ranks.

The previous edition of our newsletter in September focused on green issues, including environmental monitoring, ecology on Site and recycling our non-radiological waste.

And the momentum is being maintained with a relaunch of our Waste Recycling Plan, to reinforce the message to our workforce.

LLWR has a target to recycle at least 75% of its non-rad waste, with a hope to extend the figure to 80%, and appointing an Environmental Champion is a step in that direction.

Sue Trohear, Environmental Advisor, said: "We are looking for a people-person who is passionate about recycling and isn't afraid to challenge those who are not recycling properly.

"They will also be a go-to person for advice on recycling, and if they feel they require training, it will be available. Our recycling figures have been on a downward spiral and we need to improve them to meet our business objectives."

There is no requirement to restrict the role to a single person if more than one fits the bill.



Our apprentices bring some Christmas cheer

Our apprentices pulled out all the stops to ensure it was a merry Christmas for LLWR's charity of the year Danica's Dream Fund (DDF). The apprentices raised £400 for the Egremont-based charity in a Christmas Fayre, selling a host of tasty festive treats on the Repository Site and at Pelham House.

Chloe Glaister, an Operations/Departmental Manager apprentice, said: "We are overwhelmed with the response we have received as well as the £400 we raised."

Transformation in Practice

Digging our new process

An RIE into LLWR's process to enable excavations on the Site has cut the time needed to 'break ground' from 12 weeks to just 5 days.

In the initial 'current state' stage of the Improvement Event, a 9-strong team drawn from engineering and construction personnel, in addition to members from other areas of the business with no experience of excavations, looked at the process.

They found it to be overly-bureaucratic and repetitive, time-consuming and unnecessary, proving highly frustrating for members of the construction team and costly to the business.

The RIE team then looked at the 'future state' and instituted a string of improvements to speed up the process. A Ground Information Folder was introduced to hold all current in-ground data, with grid references.

This means all relevant information is held in one place, by a single person, cutting out much of the paperwork under the old system, which required signatures from 12 different people to institute excavations.

The Folder is a 'live' document, constantly updated with relevant information on ground conditions, and when fully-populated, the time required to initiate work will again be reduced.

Paul Williamson, Construction Manager, said: "The output from this Rapid Improvement Event was extremely beneficial and the process to break ground is now much more user friendly, safer and cost efficient. The RIE process encouraged us to open our minds and challenge the team on what we could all do differently and challenge the norm, thus removing any excessive, unnecessary procedures, and freeing up time."



Our excavations RIE has dramatically reduced the time it takes to start digging



Teamwork: members of the team that undertook the WMS RIE

Slashing red tape

Customers are feeling the benefits of the first RIE in the organisation's Waste Management Services (WMS) department.

The original process for customers who wished to utilise LLWR's suite of waste management services was developed several years ago, when the drive to divert waste from disposal at the Repository was in its infancy, and the RIE provided an opportunity to update it.

"Customer feedback was that our processes were overly-bureaucratic, with a lot of complex forms to complete to consign waste," said Dave Rossiter, Head of WMS. "There were quite a lot of re-works of paperwork and the process was quite long – several months.

"So, we got together a multi-discipline team from around the business to simplify the process. The level of staff engagement was high, with almost everyone in the department involved in some way in developing the new process. We realised several steps were involved in the process that were not adding much value to us or the customer, and there was an opportunity to streamline and simplify.

"A new Waste Enquiry process has been implemented, and more tailored solutions have been designed for customers. The number of forms in the consignment process have been reduced, so the time our customer team take in reviewing forms has been reduced significantly. This frees up our people to spend more time advising customers on how to best consign waste."

Following the RIE a new work planning tool has now been introduced and the final elements of the WMS Work Management Improvement Event will be implemented in the last quarter of the financial year. Two further Improvement Events for the department are in the pipeline, looking at improving the services on offer and developing solutions for complex wastes. Dave is a member of LLWR's Lead Team and aware of the benefits of the Transformation Programme.

He said: "It's always tough to challenge existing practices, but every business needs to look at how it operates and continuously improve. It enables us to find new work "

Paul's Points



What a great summer we've had! In September we opened our doors (and gates) to members of the community in celebration of 60 years safe operations at the Repository Site.

We were delighted to welcome so many people, the weather was glorious, and we've had some terrific feedback from those who attended.

60 years is a long time. So much has changed since those early days but never more so than in the past decade.

Since 2008 we've transformed the low level radioactive waste landscape in the UK.

We now need to do the same with our organisation to ensure it is ready to meet new and existing challenges both up to the end of our PBO's contract term and beyond.

If I were to sum up the nature of LLWR's mission in one word it would be 'evolving'.

Sometimes evolution needs a helping hand, so we have initiated a Transformation Programme that uses Rapid Improvement Events (RIEs) to drive swift and enduring change.

An RIE looks at existing processes and procedures but can also identify gaps in service provision then goes about addressing issues, streamlining or enhancing processes and determining where the most value is gained.

Our Transformation Programme is not just about quality, cost and delivery.

It also considers our workforce and looks to ensure the right skills and capabilities are deployed at the right time, and seeks to ensure our people feel fulfilled and productive in delivering our Mission.

In this way we can meet customer expectations, continue to grow and expand our range of products and services and provide greater value for money for the UK taxpayer.

Through the diversion of low level waste away from disposal at the Repository, we have delivered over £152M of cost avoidance savings exceeding the target of £150M set for this 5-year term.

As 2019 draws to a close and I reflect on a successful year for the business and a challenging year ahead, I would like to thank you for your continued support and wish each and every one of you a Merry Christmas and a very happy New Year.

Paul Pointon
Managing Director

Other News



Smashing effort on Site

Squibb have been contracted through our framework contractor NSG to demolish by March 2020 the 4 Magazine Retrieval Facilities (MRFs) on Site that have been decommissioned over the past 6 years. The demolition contractor is pictured above, working on Magazine 10's MRF.

Carl Smith, PCM Decommissioning Programme Manager, said: "The demolition scope is the final phase of a successful 6-year

decommissioning schedule.

"I am very proud what the team has achieved over the 6 years without any lost time accidents, which would not have been possible without the collaboration and integration between LLWR and NSG teams." The MRFs were built as extensions to the magazines and are located at each magazine entrance to provide containment for retrieval activities.

RDP Enabling Works contract award

The Enabling Works contract for the Repository Development Programme (RDP) has been awarded to Graham Construction following a competitive tender process. This contract will deliver the key infrastructure elements, such as construction compounds, haul roads, material stockpile areas and drainage lagoons, that will allow the final cap over the trenches and vaults at the Repository Site to be constructed. It will see LLWR continuing its relationship with Graham Construction following completion of a range of infrastructure and security projects delivered under the Engineering Design and Construction Framework.

Invitation to our Stakeholder meeting

Please be aware that the latest quarterly meeting of the LLWR Working Group will be held in Drigg Village Hall, on Wednesday, 15th January, 2020, 2pm to 4pm.

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