

# ON THE LEVEL

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NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE LLW REPOSITORY

## From disposal to diversion: how we've transformed the low level waste landscape



Stacked one on top of each other, the 10,000 containers would be over 13km high. That is around 1.5 times the height of Mount Everest.



Placed end to end, the containers would stretch 61km - the distance from Drigg to Penrith.

LLW Repository Ltd has diverted its 10,000<sup>th</sup> container since taking responsibility for the UK's low level waste Site in 2007.

The more waste diverted away from disposal at the Repository, the greater the saving to the UK taxpayer.

Over the last decade more than £350m has been saved, by extending the life of the national repository. More than £80m has been saved in 2018/19 alone.

"Reaching 10,000 diverted containers is a huge landmark," said Dave Rossiter, LLWR's Head of Waste Management Services.

"If not for diverting waste, Vault 9 would now have been full and we would be half way to filling Vault 10.

"This would have seen us facing a real capacity shortage in the near future. Thankfully through hard work across the industry, led by the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority and LLWR through the National Waste Programme, we have managed to avoid that significant risk.

"In fact, if we sustain the current diversion performance, we expect to have enough capacity to extend the life of the Repository to 2130, avoiding the need for a second LLW repository."

LLWR is facilitating more transports of waste diverted by road and rail than ever this year, using a range of treatment, recycling and alternative disposal routes, to preserve valuable capacity at the Repository.

These routes are provided by commercial organisations working with LLWR and include facilities for the treatment and recycling of metallic waste, incineration of suitable waste, the diversion of Very Low Level Waste to suitably licensed landfill sites and supercompaction of waste to minimise volumes sent to the Repository.

Dave added: "We've seen a 30% increase in transports this year and achieved our 1,000<sup>th</sup> consignment before Christmas for the first time. We are busier than ever.

"Having alternative low level waste treatment and diversion routes available is the key enabler to achieve the NDA's decommissioning mission. Without these routes, decommissioning would quickly grind to a halt."

# Retaining our Golden touch



Smiles better: combined LLWR and GRAHAM team collect their award

LLWR and Framework partner GRAHAM Construction have struck Gold at the Considerate Constructors Scheme (CCS) Awards for the second consecutive year.

The Engineering, Design & Construction Framework (EDCF) team was hailed for its “outstanding commitment to improving the image of construction,” and a joint team from the two organisations was on hand in Edinburgh to collect the National Site Award.

The CCS noted that 90% of subcontractors were local, highlighted the strong commitment to Equality, Diversity & Inclusivity (ED&I), and to keeping the workforce informed on a wide array of project information via digital screens, including safety, environmental matters and job opportunities.

“In every aspect, this was an exceptional site,” CCS concluded.

Cath Giel, Head of Public Affairs at LLWR, *pictured third left*, said: “We run a Respect at Work campaign and many of the values it highlights are exemplified by the EDCF Site team.

“It’s gratifying to see their efforts recognised on the national stage.”

## We fund courses for community lifeline group

A community group providing a host of crucial services throughout Copeland has received a £1,000 donation from LLWR.

Always Another Way, Cumbria Ltd, is a not-for-profit Community Interest Company (CIC) based on the Sneekyeat Industrial Estate in Whitehaven.

The donation will fund first aid and safeguarding courses for volunteers, none of whom is paid for their work.

Sign language courses and mental health support, emotional resilience and coping sessions, and emergency/paediatric first aid courses are among the services provided.

Volunteers also collect donations of household items and furniture to help those in dire need.

An LGBTQ+ project for young people and their families offers information and advice, builds confidence and offers a chance to meet others.

Activities, trips and guest speakers are arranged, and the group assists at local PRIDE events.

Jo Haigh, Managing Director of Always



Never snookered: Always Another Way providing a community lifeline at their Whitehaven base

Another Way, said: “We are over the moon about the donation.

“We have over 200 families on our books and we’re looking to expand our services, but to do that we need funding so we can pay a couple of members of staff to ensure we are open for more hours in the day.

“We are filling the gaps in the service that other organisations can’t provide.”

The group hosts drop-in sessions on Mondays at Whitehaven Library for anyone who wishes to discuss mental health issues or gain support.

To volunteer, or to learn more about Always Another Way, email [info@alwaysanotherway.co.uk](mailto:info@alwaysanotherway.co.uk) or see its website at [www.alwaysanotherway.co.uk](http://www.alwaysanotherway.co.uk)

# Best figures yet for Perfect Days

LLWR has hit a new record for the number of 'Perfect Days' achieved in the financial year – last year's tally was topped on 4<sup>th</sup> March, with still a month to go!

We believe there is more to safety than ensuring our people do not come to any harm at work, which is why we borrowed the Perfect Day concept from our Framework contract partner NSG and adapted it to suit the requirements of LLWR.

Our Perfect Day initiative employs a metric that enables us to measure our safety performance against a set of criteria.

These are:

- **Safety**
- **Quality**
- **Environmental Stewardship**
- **Security**
- **Stakeholder Relations**
- **Schedule Adherence**
- **Standards and Expectations**

We achieve a Perfect Day only if everything goes to plan, no harm is suffered (including to the environment), actions are closed out on time and stakeholders are not given any reason to be unhappy with LLWR.

Elaine Burrage, Health & Safety Manager, said: "We've been running our Perfect Day process for nearly 3 years now, and each year has seen an improvement on the achievement of the previous year.

"In our first year we achieved 193 Perfect Days, the following year we improved to 253 Perfect Days and this year we have bettered it once again, with 266, and a week to go.

"The fact that we're seeing year on year improvement in our Perfect Day achievements is testament to the hard work that everyone puts in throughout the year, and it's great to be able to recognise and reward that effort."



## Apprentices add a new skill to their set

Keen apprentices from LLWR brushed up on their painting skills to support an emergency short stay homeless shelter in Egremont.

The seven undertook the painting task at Calderwood House as part of National Apprenticeship Week, saving the shelter the cost of paying for the work.

In addition to painting the communal area and kitchen, the apprentices applied their skills to a suite sponsored by LLWR. The suite, one of 10 at Calderwood, is currently occupied by an Armed Forces veteran who was homeless but is now about to start employment.

Steve Pettit, Hostel Manager, said: "Generous support from LLWR is helping us keep our doors open, and right now they are supporting us with a job that would cost us quite a lot of money if it was being done by professional painters.

"The apprentices have paid attention to detail and the job looks great. It's amazing how fast and efficient they've been, and they are also a very polite and well-mannered group."

Six of the apprentices joined LLWR in September last year and work in a range of areas, including project management, and project controls



"It's nice to be able to help Calderwood House and at the same time get our apprentices out of the office, doing something different. They are so enthusiastic and driven," said Abbie Wright, Apprenticeship Coordinator.

"They all work in separate parts of the business, so a task like this is also good for team building."



## Paul's Points . . . . .

The end is in sight for our Plutonium Contaminated Materials (PCM) Decommissioning Programme, which has been a key focus for LLWR over recent years.

This programme will have delivered work in six years that was originally scheduled to take ten, and shave around £20m off the baseline cost of £100m. These figures are testament to fantastic integrated teamwork from LLWR and our framework partner NSG, whose focus on safety and efficiency around controlled area working has been exemplary.

The Programme will conclude a long-running chapter in the history of the Site, dating back to the 1950s when material from Sellafield was stored in magazines at the Repository. Decommissioning will pave the way for the eventual demolition of the remaining five magazines, freeing up space for future development.

Rubble from the demolition will be recycled as in-fill material for our capping programme (RDP), our next major focus and the largest programme yet undertaken at the Repository. Of all our priorities on Site, nothing is more important than safety, and I'm pleased to report that we have seen a sustained improvement throughout the year, as measured by our Total Recordable Incident Rate (TRIR). We are seeing the benefits of an extensive safety improvement plan, developed in conjunction with our Parent Body Organisation (PBO), who operate LLW Repository Ltd.

Another reliable metric to gauge safety is the Perfect Day, detailed overleaf. In simple terms, we have achieved as many Perfect Days – those without incident across the breadth of our business – in just over 11 months this year as we did in 12 months last year.

The strong progress of our Waste Management Services (WMS) is also detailed in this newsletter. Service Delivery is on track to finish the year 30% ahead of last year's record throughput. A record high for waste transports for treatment or alternative disposal means a record low number of containers disposed of at the Repository. Two years ago this figure was 174 and last year it was 93. This year it will be 75. The days when 750 containers were coming through our gates each year are well gone.

**Our savings this year have topped £80m, through the treatment and diversion of low level waste that otherwise would be disposed of at the Repository. This is a big step towards our contract commitment of £150m.**

Meanwhile, we approached Apprentice Week with relish earlier this month, knowing that we would be playing our full part. The six apprentices, all female, incidentally, who started with us in September last year were among the seven who took on a painting job at Calderwood House, in Egremont. We had contacted the emergency homeless hostel to ask if they required any work done, and we were happy to oblige.

A colleague due to take photographs of the work thought he would give the apprentices an hour's start before popping along. On arrival he found the seven, and their line manager, totally immersed in the task they had been set. They appeared just as focused as they would be looking over a financial spreadsheet or an engineering drawing. Most pleasing of all was the comment from the hostel manager about what a well-mannered, hard-working group they were.

But we do not restrict the focus on our apprentices to one week in March. We nurture them, and we see community work as part of their apprenticeship experience. We ensure our apprentices get a well-rounded education in many different aspects of the business – and now we know they are also pretty handy with a paintbrush!

**Paul Pointon**  
**Managing Director**



## Seascale win is out of this world!

Seascale Primary, one of three schools sponsored by LLWR in the First Lego League, scooped the prize for robot design and performance in the regional finals at Energus.

Gosforth Primary and Millom Secondary, who we also support, performed with enthusiasm and a high degree of skill but were this time pipped to the prizes.

LLWR volunteers including former Seascale pupil Jim Carnall supported pupils in the challenge, which this year was based around space travel.

Pupils had to develop and complete a presentation on their Core Values, covering team spirit, inspiration, inclusion and respect, and also address a real problem related to space travel. Seascale chose to explore the issues associated with reduction of bone density due to a prolonged lack of gravity.

Jim said: "Some robots were very elaborate but Seascale focused on a fit-for-purpose design that was able to achieve points reliably on each of the three sessions. What a result; we were all absolutely delighted to come away with a cup after all the hard work."



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