



On the Level

News and views from the LLW Repository site

Warm welcome assured at new Winter Hub

The new Winter Warmth Hub in Drigg Village Hall is being supported by volunteers from Nuclear Waste Services (NWS).

The initiative is staffed each Friday, 10am-2pm, by members of Drigg and Carleton Parish Council, which is also funding the Hub, set up to help the community amid the rocketing cost of living.

The Hub launched in mid-November in the small meeting room off the main hall, and a call for volunteers from NWS to help staff it has seen

an impressive response, with employees stepping forward to help.

Members of the local community are invited to pop in for a tea or coffee, snacks and a chat, and homemade soup, supplied by The Victoria Hotel, in Drigg.

Andy Pratt, Vice-Chair of the council, said: "People are welcome to come along and keep warm – for free. It's all about social inclusion, but it can become whatever people want it to be. We can even get some speakers in if there is a demand. We had a dozen people attending the first few events, which I was really pleased about.

We are also arranging for a television to be set up. Hopefully it can continue to build a following."



Andy Pratt helping out at the Winter Warmth Hub with fellow council member Keith Hitchen, right, and NWS volunteer Sam Ward.

Keith to step down

Keith Hitchen, a parish councillor for 17 years and county councillor for 10, is to step down from both roles at the end of March 2023.

As former chair of the West Cumbria Sites Stakeholder LLWR Working Group, Keith played an important role in establishing closer relationships between the Repository site and the local community.

"I held regular meetings as chair, and we had a very effective working relationship with the company, which improved year on year," Keith

said. "You've got to build trust on both sides and try not to give each other surprises."

Martin Walkingshaw said "Keith has never flinched from asking thoughtful and incisive questions, always with the best interests of his community at heart. On behalf of everyone at NWS our thanks go to Keith for his dedication and commitment."

Boosting our sustainability credentials

We are aiming to scrap the use of all single use plastics on the Repository site and at Pelham House by the end of the financial year in March 2023.

The current sustainability initiative across the nuclear industry was launched by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. One initiative that NWS staff are enthusiastically backing is cutting back on the wasteful use of everyday materials around our offices and kitchens, with a focus on plastic.

"We are on a mission to eliminate single use plastics," said Sue Trohear, Environmental Advisor, based on site.

Paula McKeown, from our facilities management contractor Mitie, came up with the idea of replacing a range of kitchen, bathroom and other cleaning products in single-use plastic packaging, with an all-in-one multi-use cleaning agent that when diluted in water meets most requirements at a fraction of the cost, in a re-usable container.

When empty, the manufacturer collects the empty packaging, cleans and re-fills and returns it to the customer.

This is just one of a host of green measures being taken to boost our sustainability.

All milk supplied to the workforce at Pelham House and site is now delivered in glass bottles, which is playing a part in eliminating single use

plastic. After use bottles are rinsed clean and left to be collected and reused.

Paper cones have replaced plastic at water coolers, and plastic knives and forks swapped for metal cutlery on site.

March 2023

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Wammo's blown away by £4K award

Cllr Carl Walmsley was overwhelmed by our £4,000 donation to his Christmas for All project that aims to help those in need in Whitehaven South council ward this Christmas.

The Copeland and Whitehaven Town councillor described the area he represents as one of the most deprived in North West England, and NWS was delighted to help.

Carl, widely known as Wammo, said the donation "blew me away" adding: "I can't thank these guys enough for this. I'm now fully confident we are going to be able to help all those who need it in my ward this year."

The project aims to ensure all youngsters in the ward wake up to presents on Christmas morning, and supermarket vouchers are also provided to those who may be struggling this year.

£6,000

Our donation took the amount raised for the Christmas for All project to over £6,000 this year.

Wonderland's bumper turnout

We helped 10,000 visitors to Egremont Winter Wonderland Christmas event get into the festive spirit after providing support for this year's Christmas extravaganza.

Elaine Woodburn, Chair of Egremont Town Council, hailed the event a huge success and thanked NWS for its support.

"We could not hold this event without help and Nuclear Waste Services have provided support since our launch back in 2012," she said.

"It is amazing that NWS recognises how important such events are in raising pride in our towns and the morale of our communities, and we are sure the 10,000 people who attended all think the same, thank you again."



Grout plant work opens the door to container disposals

The first campaign for almost three years to grout containers for disposal in the vaults on the Repository site will get underway in the new year.

More than 200 containers will be grouted over at least 16 weeks, ahead of disposal, using a cement based grout that when set will immobilise the low level waste in the containers.

The production campaign follows the installation and commissioning of huge 'envirodoors' to protect the internal workings of the Grouting facility – a key strategic asset for Nuclear Waste Services – from harsh West Cumbrian weather conditions, assuring its long-term future.

Each of the two doors is 13m x 6m and weigh 2 tonnes, including panels that had to be meticulously loaded into position and locked together.

The installation was the biggest challenge to date for the major new Repository Asset Care and Remediation Programme (RACER).

Gary Cunningham, 'Plant Owner', said: "There has been some great work by our enabling functions, RACER team and site teams.

"Above all, they have delivered some high hazard work safely, with some real positive examples of a strong safety culture. From an asset care perspective, the facility is in a much better position.

"This work has put us on a strong footing to deliver a successful grouting campaign in the upcoming weeks and continued longer term delivery of our disposal mission."

Dortek, supplier of the envirodoors, was given a Positive Safety Recognition Award by NWS for their installation performance, much of which involved working at heights with heavy loads.

The installation was the culmination of RACER's current work on the Grouting facility. New cladding has also been applied to the building's exterior, with the control system and grout arm replaced and repairs carried out in other key areas.



Site records preserved in purpose-built facility in Scotland

The initial phase of a project to transfer historic records charting the progress of the LLW Repository site down the decades has been completed.

Some 96 boxes of material containing 3,622 records have been shipped to the Nucleus facility at Wick, Caithness, built to manage the nuclear industry's records.

The Records Management team on site engaged a commercial organisation Restore Digital to start the archiving process with historic drum/crate moves, regulatory records, drawings, site and waste characterisation records the first to be shipped.

"This is the first major records project which sees the transfer of historic/legacy records from LLWR to Wick," said Debbie Briscoe, Records Co-ordinator. "We are extremely pleased with how the initial phase has progressed and we would like to thank everyone involved.

"Restore assisted our Records team with the required metadata to allow for the records to be archived correctly and aided with the boxing of the hard copy records, ready for transport."

Nuclear records from across the NDA's estate are being transferred and indexed at Nucleus, where they will remain secure and accessible in line with legislation and relevant regulations.



Playing our part in reducing winter chills

We are proud to support Cumbria Community Foundation's (CCF) Winter Warmth Appeal as one of their match champions this year with a £10,000 contribution to help protect vulnerable older residents from the harsh weather.

Under the scheme, the CCF will use funding from the match champions to double the donations made online from members of the public over the four weeks of the appeal, as a way of encouraging people to help.

Awards of £200 and £300 are made to those in fuel poverty in our communities aged 60 and over to help them stay warm and healthy over winter.

These awards are handled by CCF's delivery partners, the four Age UK organisations across the county and Cumbria and Copeland Age and Advice Service.

For further information or to donate, please go to:

www.cumbriafoundation.org/winter-warmth-fund/



Learn more here:

NDA archive: Nucleus (the Nuclear and Caithness Archives) – Case study

www.gov.uk/government/case-studies/nda-archive

Pledge to our Armed Forces

We're proud to announce that NWS has signed the Armed Forces Covenant, pledging that current Service members, those who have served in the past, and their families, will be treated fairly.

In recognition of our commitment, we have been awarded a Bronze Certificate in the Covenant's Employer Recognition Scheme, and will work to achieve additional recognition.

Laura Wiseman, HR Officer, said: "At Nuclear Waste Services we are proud to begin our journey with the Armed Forces Covenant. It gives us great opportunities to recognise and appreciate our own veterans, reservists, cadet force and their families.

"At NWS we all look out for each other and ensure that the welfare of our employees is put first. We welcome ex-Forces to apply for any of our recruitment opportunities."

We recognise the contribution that Service personnel, reservists, veterans, the cadet movement and military families make to our organisation, our community and to the country and will seek to uphold the principles of the Covenant by:

- Employment support to members of the Armed Forces community by offering paid voluntary leave.
- Access to health care via our occupational health provider.
- Access to education to enhance skill sets within their roles.
- Access to mental health, financial and wellbeing support.
- Access to veterans' support and discount services.
- Providing a link to key support networks via our Armed Forces Champions actively participating and promoting Armed Forces Day.



Corbyn Parr, right, CEO, of NWS, signs the Covenant with Lieutenant Commander Ellen Shephard, Royal Navy



Looking back...

At this time of year, it's nice to look back on some of the highlights from 2022 as we prepare for a very exciting future.

We hit the ground running on our return from the Christmas break last year to finalise preparations for joining LLW Repository Ltd with Radioactive Waste Management Ltd to form Nuclear Waste Services. Throughout this year we've made good progress in aligning both organisations, while safely delivering our 'day job' at the same time; We are on track with our main objectives, including completing the final elements of the Security Enhancements Programme and setting up our new arrangements for asset care at the LLWR site.

We also finished the enabling works phase of our Repository Development programme (that will ultimately construct the final engineered 'cap' over our waste facilities). We have demonstrated our ability to safely deal with re-categorised intermediate level waste from our own decommissioning work and from our customers, alongside treatment and disposal of low level waste arising from our customer sites across the UK.

This has been a demanding year, and I'm grateful to all our employees, contractors and suppliers for their hard work and dedication. Our safety performance remains among the best in the NDA Group and our 17th consecutive Gold Award from the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) was particularly welcome in a year when construction work dominated the site.

This is the season for giving and we're very fortunate to be able to bring a little comfort and joy into the lives of people who need a helping hand. I'd like to share a few examples from this year where we've supported requests from charities and community groups around the LLWR site;

Health and care leaders in Cumbria are warning that this could be one of the deadliest winters ever for older residents, so our £10,000 contribution to Cumbria Community Foundation's (CCF) Winter Warmth Campaign is money well spent! No one should have to choose between heating and eating.

No-one wants to see a child go without a gift on Christmas Day, so we were also delighted to contribute £4,000 to Copeland Councillor Carl Walmsley's annual project to help families in the Whitehaven South ward at this time of year. Carl noted that this ward was one of the most deprived in Northwest England, and his reaction on social media to our donation was a joy to behold.

Our backing for Egremont's Winter Wonderland event in late November was also warmly received. We love to help foster community spirit and this event, the town's first post-Covid, attracted around 10,000 people.

Even closer to home – or at least to the Repository site – we're proud to support Drigg and Carleton Parish Council's Winter Warmth Hub campaign, another marvellous initiative to offer help through the cost of living crisis.

We will be back in the Village Hall on Wednesday 18 January 2023 (2pm-4pm) for an West Cumbria Sites Stakeholder Group LLWR Working Group meeting. Members of the public are welcome to attend, so please pop along if you can as we update community representatives on the latest developments and answer questions.

This will be Councillor Keith Hitchen's final Working Group meeting before he steps down and I would like to wish him a long and happy retirement.

Finally, on behalf of the entire team at Nuclear Waste Services, I wish you all a safe and peaceful Christmas and a happy New Year.

Martin Walkingshaw
Chief Operating Officer

Nuclear Waste Services

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