



# On the Level

News and views from the LLW Repository site

## Celebrating 19 years of top site safety

**Nothing is more important to us at Nuclear Waste Services (NWS) than safety, which is why our latest accolade from the internationally renowned Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) means so much to us.**

The Repository site has recently secured a RoSPA Order of Distinction and our 19th consecutive Gold Award for Health & Safety performance, and we are all very proud of this achievement, not least Mike Pigott, Director of Sites and Operations.

Mike has thanked all colleagues who played their part in securing this achievement by working safely every day, including during periods of increased risk, such as through our first grout campaign in four years, construction activities, confined space entries, electrical work and working at height.

Gill Bradley, Head of Environmental, Health and Safety, is also thrilled, and said: "We are delighted to receive this ultimate symbol of achievement in safety due to the unwavering commitment of everyone. Safety is a responsibility of us all and this achievement should be celebrated by all, as it demonstrates that everyone is providing a safe workplace."

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**Nigel Lister, Executive Director, Safety, Security, Health, Environment & Quality, added: "To get a 19th consecutive Gold Award is a fantastic achievement.**

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"I am hugely proud of the work the team do to ensure NWS has the very best Health and Safety arrangements, advice and support, but we all recognise this is a much wider award – reflecting the work of our many teams across the organisation, including all of our operations and programme resources who are routinely delivering work safely, each and every day."



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**We are all very proud to have received our 19<sup>th</sup> Gold Award**

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# Are you curious about Capping Operations?

Activity onsite continues to increase as the next important phase of our Capping Operations begins, with the deliveries of aggregate and other materials for our Southern Trench Interim Membrane (STIM) project due to start in February.

Once this four-year project – which will see a protective layer placed over our legacy trenches – is complete, Vault 8 and the adjacent trenches will be one step closer to the placement of the final cap.

As STIM works take place, the Repository site will essentially become a construction site, and you will see increased activity during this time. We are expecting to receive multiple rail deliveries of material four days per week, work to create additional drainage, transferring aggregate to the southern trenches and more.

As always, we remain committed to being good neighbours to our community and are hosting drop-in sessions to talk about what you can expect to see while the work is taking place. We will also have representatives from the project to answer any questions and provide more information on this phase of capping.



A CGI of the work that will take place on the legacy trenches

The drop-in events will be held at Drigg Village Hall on **Wednesday 15 January** between 1pm – 5pm and **Wednesday 22 January** between 10am – 3pm. You can also contact us via email with any questions: [info@nuclearwasteservices.uk](mailto:info@nuclearwasteservices.uk)

## Keeping an eye out for our close-up

In October, we welcomed ITV Science's Martin Stew to the Repository site to film a segment on our Capping Operations. We were pleased to welcome the team to our site, and it will be great to see the Repository site featured on ITV News at Ten soon.

Martin Walkingshaw, our Chief Operations Officer, and Mike Pigott were happy to be in the spotlight and share more about the major project and our wider mission to become the one-stop shop for the UK's radioactive waste management and disposal solutions.

We're eagerly keeping our eyes peeled for the feature, and don't worry if you miss it as we'll let you know when and where to view it on catch-up in our next edition.



Martin Walkingshaw taking his turn behind the camera

## Spreading festive joy with gifts

Our colleagues have once again supported Family Action's Christmas Toy Appeal, buying an extra gift or two while shopping to donate to the charity's cause.

It's a fantastic initiative, as each toy and gift voucher will be gifted to a young person who otherwise might not receive a present on Christmas Day.

Kerry Jewell, Family Action's Child & Family Support Service Manager – Copeland, said: "We started this work five years ago to make sure that no child goes without at Christmas. We know that Christmas can cause a huge strain for families when worrying about where presents are coming from or putting food on the table, and this can also impact parents' mental health or see them in huge amounts of debt.

"With support from the community through the toy appeal, we aim to make Christmas more enjoyable and less expensive for families by taking away that worry and pressures they may face. We want to see more smiles at Christmas and fewer sad faces."

If you would like to get involved, the team has drop-off centres for gifts at their South Whitehaven Centre on Whinlatter Road, Mirehouse, with the Egremont Centre also open for donations on Fridays at Southey Avenue, Orgill. Tesco, Asda and Morrisons across the area also have donation points for Family Action.

We are proud to have supported Family Action's project for another year and with the help from our workforce, hope to be able to support the charity who make a real difference to our local community at Christmas for years to come.



Our colleagues are proud to support the brilliant initiative

# Say hello to our smiley scarecrow!

**It's always a pleasure to get involved with community initiatives, and the Drigg & Carleton Scarecrow Festival is no exception.**

A team of colleagues from across NWS came together to create a cheerful scarecrow to take part in the event, along with a Graham Construction Ltd digger to keep it company.

A number of our apprentices also enjoyed rolling their sleeves up and getting stuck in to help build the scarecrow, which was kitted out in full hi-vis jacket and trousers, safety gloves and boots.

Seeing the range of displays created during the festival put a smile on our faces, and it was great to take part for another year. Well done to everyone who built their own impressive scarecrow and helped spread some joy throughout the village!



The team worked hard to create the perfect Repository site scarecrow

## Did you know...

**Maintaining safety on the Repository site remains our top priority, and we work hard to keep our colleagues and community safe at all times.**

Just a few examples of how we do this include:

- Our Drive Safely campaign included speed monitoring checks through Drigg village. It also highlighted the importance of speed awareness and respecting the standards of road safety both on- and offsite.
- Our Winter Safety campaign, which is being supported by Cumbria Fire & Rescue and Cumbria Police. This initiative has been launched to raise awareness of the safety guidance on navigating winter weather, preventing slips, trips and falls, staying safe over the festive period and more.
- Aligning with the STIM physical works beginning in the coming months, we are also running a safety campaign on risk management with our colleagues and contractors, preparing us all for the changing risks that come with the Repository site becoming a construction site during the project.

## Mike's reflection on 2024

**As we reach the final weeks of 2024, I naturally begin to reflect on the progress we have made this last year, and reassuringly, how we have achieved that safely, securely and sustainably on our Repository site. However, we are not complacent.**

I'm proud to see our safe work being acknowledged, from our Green 'routine attention' rating in the Office for Nuclear Regulation's Chief Nuclear Inspector Annual Report – with the Repository Site requiring no additional regulatory focus – to us once again receiving our NWS Repository Site RoSPA Order of Distinction (and 19th consecutive Gold Award), for Health & Safety performance. We will continue to further improve our performance to ensure the protection of our workforce.

We should also note we secured these accreditations during an increasingly busy period of work, with the nature of work on the site changing. Across various projects, including the disposal of 1,068 Treated Radwaste Store drums of waste, disposing of containers into Vault 8, enhancing our Leachate Management System (working at height, in confined spaces, and radiologically controlled areas) and more, we have worked hard to uphold our safety and environmental record and navigated any potential risks without any accidents.

**Following our successful year, we are ready for another safe 12 months of productivity, particularly as STIM works begin to ramp up and the risks onsite during 2025 evolve.**

While continuing to uphold our safety performance as a nuclear licensed site, we understand and will mitigate the potential hazards of working on a construction site as work progresses.

Having worked with GRAHAM – whom we have awarded our STIM contract to – many times before, I am confident that safety onsite as well as consideration for our local community will be upheld throughout the project, and I look forward to seeing what we achieve this coming year together.



Mike Pigott, Director of Sites and Operations

# And finally...



## Another year has flown by, and it is satisfying to look back on 2024 and what has been achieved at the Repository, in our Waste Services organisation and especially with our Geological Disposal Facility project.

We've completed some great projects on site – as highlighted in Mike Pigott's reflection – delivering important work for the NDA Group, but the things I'm proudest of are the activities that bring benefit to the communities where we work; our LLWR Socio-economic Fund, Copeland Community Fund and three GDF Community Investment Funds are making a real difference to people's lives. With just short of £5 million this year going to organisations that really know how to put the money to good use, the past 12 months have been ones to remember.

I'm especially proud of our involvement with Cumbria Community Foundation and Cumbria Youth Alliance's Better Tomorrows programme, which helps young people across the county fulfill their potential by providing opportunities to complete youth work and gain accredited training.

Our funding helped to launch this programme, and we're now signed up to continue our support for another three years. Since 2021, Better Tomorrows has created 42 new youth work jobs, providing a core

of experienced, qualified and highly motivated youth workers who are now improving the lives of hundreds of young people across Cumbria.

As we look forward to 2025 with its new challenges, we also prepare to say goodbye to our Chief Executive Officer, Corhyn Parr, following her recent announcement that she will be stepping down in March 2025. During her six years with the NDA Group, Corhyn has overseen the formation of NWS Ltd and has done a brilliant job bringing two organisations together to form one team. It's a mark of Corhyn's integrity that she has made her intentions known so far in advance, ensuring we have time to prepare and deliver a smooth transition. The NDA have begun the process to select a new CEO – and Corhyn is going to be a very hard act to follow!

I'm very pleased to be working with Cumberland Council on the business case for investment in the Cumbria Coastal Rail Line. Not only is the line important to communities across the county, it's also vital to our work at the Repository and to Sellafield – and will also be important for the GDF, no matter where in the country it finds a home. We are now supporting Cumberland Council with revising the business case, which will be ready for Spring 2025.

Speaking of working with local government, I was fortunate enough to attend MP for Workington and Whitehaven Josh MacAlister's recent Nature and Environment Roundtable, organised to discuss nature and environmental issues with

local authorities, developers, charities and landowners. It was good to see so many projects underway, and to see our work to protect the natural environment in and around our Repository site acknowledged. Be assured, we'll be approaching our GDF work with the same high standards we apply at our existing site.

Finally – I'd just like to say thank you on behalf of everyone at NWS for the support this community has given us this year; We try our best to be good neighbours, but I know our work can sometimes cause inconvenience.

Your tolerance is appreciated and we will never take it for granted. Wishing you all a wonderful festive season and a safe and happy New Year. Merry Christmas!

**Martin Walkingshaw,**  
Chief Operating Officer

### Nuclear Waste Services

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