

[managing radioactive waste safely]

Our Aim is "to make recommendations to Allerdale Borough Council, Copeland Borough Council and Cumbria County Council on whether they should participate or not in the Geological Disposal Facility siting process, without commitment to eventually host a facility".

E-bulletin No.7 – December 2010

Here's the latest news from the West Cumbria Managing Radioactive Waste Safely Partnership.

There's been a substantial amount of activity since the last e-bulletin we sent out. In this issue, you will find updates on the following:

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Please read on to find out what's been happening and how the second stage of our public and stakeholder engagement programme is developing.

1. Growing communications & engagement

- A key role of the Partnership is to ensure that local people have the information they need to come to their own view on whether or not West Cumbria should fully participate in the Government search for a site for a geological disposal facility.
- It's a high priority in the current public and stakeholder engagement programme (PSE2) to significantly raise awareness of the issues involved in the Managing Radioactive Waste Safely (MRWS) process.



- A West Cumbria MRWS Partnership newsletter was sent to 79,000 West Cumbrian households in early November, as well as a similar update going to all Cumbrian households in the County Council magazine, Your Cumbria. Large advertorials have been placed in all the local papers.

- The next newsletter will be distributed in mid-January to all homes across Copeland and Allerdale, and information will continue to appear in the media and other publications, as well as in places like local libraries.
- There will be a further round of public and stakeholder engagement around the middle of next year before there is any decision about whether or not West Cumbria should participate in the Government siting process.

2. Partnership community drop-in events

- Nearly 500 people have already taken part in 10 drop in events held at locations up and down Cumbria to find out more information, ask questions and put forward their views. 248 questionnaires were completed and 166 further written comments were received.



- Most people took 30–45 minutes to look around the exhibition, listen to presentations and give comments.
- Specialists from the Department of Energy and Climate Change, the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority, and the British Geological Survey were on hand at the events to answer questions about Government policy as well as technical issues. The Environment Agency also attended to represent the organisations that would regulate a repository.
- About 200 other people visited a West Cumbria MRWS Partnership exhibition stand at Dunmail Park, Workington on 27th November.

- There was a broad spread of opinion from participants on all sides of the debate. These will be analysed over the coming weeks and reported as part of PSE2.

3. Discussion groups get underway

- This stage of public engagement programme will close on 11th February 2011, but there are still many opportunities to find out more, ask questions and have your say.
- Central to this going forward is the 'discussion pack' which the Partnership has produced. This gives people the chance to find out more and feed their views into the process. It includes a 15-minute DVD and a booklet with some background information and questions.



- The packs include some questions the Partnership is looking for the public to comment on at this stage in its discussions. These include what impacts people think a repository might have, what sort of benefits they would want to see if the repository came to the area and how local people should be involved in making the key decisions (see item at the end of the e-bulletin).

“I thought the session was really useful – it got me and my classmates the chance to voice an opinion.”

Joseph Fryer, who took part in one of the first discussion pack sessions at St Benedict’s School, Whitehaven.

- Over 800 discussion packs have been distributed across Cumbria, including to schools, parishes, community groups as well as individual members of the public who could not attend a community event or wanted to take information away.
- Connexions, the advice organisation for 13 to 19 year olds, has run the first in a series of discussion pack sessions with young people this month. Discussion groups are also being organised by: the Trades Hall Centre for unemployed people; the Cumbria Farmer Network; Cumbria CVS; AWAZ, which works with ethnic minorities; and the Cumbria Rural Forum, ACT.

“The youngsters had a pretty wide range of views to express and a good few were exercised by the issues and wanted to take part in the future.”

Mike Priestley, Connexions Cumbria.

- You can arrange a small group within your organisation or with friends to have a chat about some of the issues and to give us your views.
- You can request any number of packs to be sent to you by emailing your name and address to helenf@3kg.co.uk or phoning 0800 048 8912.



4. The Partnership on Facebook & Twitter

- The West Cumbria MRWS Partnership now has a Facebook Page and a Twitter profile. You can find these at: www.facebook.com/pages/West-Cumbria-Managing-Radioactive-Waste-Safely-Partnership/169062599779322?v=wall or by following [@westcumbriamrws](https://twitter.com/westcumbriamrws) on Twitter.
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5. Increased media coverage

- There were over 40 pieces of media coverage about the MRWS process in Cumbria in the six week period after the BGS report was published. This included items on Border TV, Radio Cumbria and the BBC Politics Show in the North East and Cumbria.
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6. Stakeholder workshop

The Partnership is running a workshop for local stakeholder organisations on 13th January 2011 to help them understand more about this process and input into some key issues such as:

- How to use public views to decide whether to proceed.
- Impacts and community benefits.
- Community involvement in a potential siting process.

The workshop is designed for organisations that are formally constituted and have a role to represent others, have a clear interest in this issue and are based in or near West Cumbria. Full attendance is by invitation but members of the public are welcome to attend as observers. Details for the meeting are below:

Date: 13th January 2011 **Time:** 9.30am-4pm
Location: Hunday Manor Hotel, near Workington
(directions here: <http://www.hunday-manor-hotel.co.uk/howtofindus.php>).

If you are a member of the public who would like to attend as an observer, or a member of an organisation who would like to take part in the workshop, please contact Helen Fisher on helenf@3kq.co.uk.

7. Partnership meetings



- The latest Partnership meeting was held at the Copeland Centre in Whitehaven on 10th December 2010.
- At this meeting the Partnership examined what potential community benefits could arise from the construction of a geological disposal facility in West Cumbria. This included looking at examples of what benefits communities overseas with similar facilities have secured from their

governments. The Partnership also looked at the inventory – the types of waste that might go into a repository – and how the community could influence what would go into it in the future.

A report of the meeting will be available on the website shortly (www.westcumbriamrws.org.uk/documents.asp).

- The Partnership meets every six weeks. Members of the public are welcome to attend as observers and are also given an opportunity to ask questions. We would be grateful if anyone who is planning to attend could contact sharon.walker@copeland.gov.uk to let her know so that we can ensure that enough seating is made available. The next scheduled meetings are:

19th January 2011
The Hundith Hill Hotel, near Cockermouth. 0900 arrivals, 0930-1600

3rd March 2011
The Copeland Centre, Whitehaven. 0900 arrivals, 0930-1600

- Cumbria Tourism and Carlisle City Council have recently formally joined the Partnership.

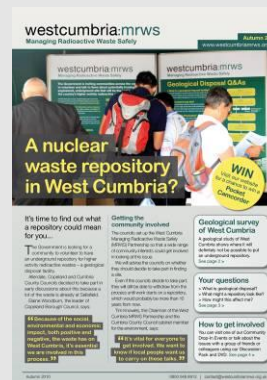
8. Making your views count

This is one of the questions the Partnership is asking the public to give views on during the current round of public engagement.

How should the West Cumbria MRWS Partnership take public and stakeholder views into account?

Talking with people is not enough. We have to be able to use public stakeholder views to inform our final recommendations to the Councils. We are developing a set of **indicators** to help us to judge whether views are credible, given public and stakeholder opinion. We currently think that if we advise the Councils to take part in the siting process, this would have to be based on the following four key draft indicators:

- 1.) **Net support** from the West Cumbrian public. This means that more people are in favour of an idea than oppose it. In this case we are proposing to:
 - Survey a wide sample of the West Cumbrian public.
 - Ask them whether they think the Councils should proceed to the next stage of the process, remembering this does not mean a final commitment to hosting a facility.
 - Compare the number of people who say yes or no (people saying don't know will not be counted in the comparison).
- 2.) **Broad support** from the key organisations engaged by the Partnership, such as local councils, community interest groups, parish councils, and so on. This is about the Partnership's judgement of the quality and strength of evidence and argument, rather than the number of people expressing a particular view.



- 3.) Evidence that **concerns raised have been or will be addressed**, including providing an explanation if specific concerns have not been addressed.
- 4.) Evidence that **reasons for opposing or supporting the recommendation have been identified, understood and taken into account** in reaching our conclusions.

The West Cumbria MRWS Partnership wants to hear what you think about how public and stakeholder views should be taken into account.

There are numerous ways to get involved, including the discussion pack (see details above), e-mail (contact@westcumbriamrws.org), phone (0800 048 8912) or by post (Freepost RSKT-LTXU-HAYC, West Cumbria MRWS Partnership, Copeland Borough Council, The Copeland Centre, Catherine Street, Whitehaven CA28 7SJ).

You can also let us know your thoughts on the discussion section of the West Cumbria MRWS Partnership page on Facebook and on Twitter.

9. Getting involved



A key role of the Partnership is to represent the views of people living in or near West Cumbria in these discussions with Government. If you want to [get involved](#) then visit the Partnership website for details or call us on 0800 048 8912.

Please pass this e-bulletin on. Thank you.

If you wish to unsubscribe to this e-bulletin and other updates please [email us](#).

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all!