

West Cumbria Managing Radioactive Waste Safely Partnership PSE Round 2 Deliberative Event Report

January 2011



For further information please contact:

Helen Bidwell or Hannah Carley
Vision Twentyone
Milton Hall
Deansgate
Manchester
M3 4BQ

Tel: 0161 200 8000
Fax: 0161 200 8010

Email: helen.bidwell@visiontwentyone.co.uk
hannah.carley@visiontwentyone.co.uk

Requested by:

Kieran Barr
Senior Consultation and Engagement Advisor
Cumbria County Council

CONTENTS	PAGE
1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
1.1 Introduction	
1.2 The geological disposal facility and the national park	
1.3 Community benefits	3
1.4 Managing difficult issues – drivers of public confidence	5
1.5 Moving forward	
2.0 INTRODUCTION	6
2.1 Setting the scene	
2.2 Purpose of the event	7
2.3 Recruitment	
2.4 Group profile	
2.5 Reasons for participation	
2.5 Appreciation	
2.6 Report structure	8
3.0 THE GEOLOGICAL DISPOSAL FACILITY & THE NATIONAL PARK	9
3.1 Preliminary answers	
3.2 Plenary discussion on the GDF	
3.3 Second Vote	11
4.0 COMMUNITY BENEFITS	12
4.1 Locating the head works and GDF	
4.2 Geographical distribution	13
4.3 Distribution over time	
4.4 Decision-making factors	15
5.0 MANAGING DIFFICULT ISSUES – DRIVERS OF PUBLIC CONFIDENCE	17
5.1 Is West Cumbria’s geology suitable?	
5.2 Drivers of public confidence	
6.0 MOVING FORWARD	19
6.1 Cross-cutting themes	
6.2 Evaluating the day	
6.3 Final thoughts	
6.4 Participants recommendations	20
6.5 Additional recommendations	
APPENDICES	21
Appendix One: Presentation slides – setting the context	
Appendix Two: Q&A session	25
Appendix Three: Reason for participation	27
Appendix Four: West Cumbria MRWS – winter 2010 newsletter	29
Appendix Five: Event evaluation feedback	34

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Introduction

- In 2008, the UK Government and Devolved Administrations in Wales and Northern Ireland launched a search for an engineered, underground site or 'Geological Disposal Facility' to act as the final home for the UK's higher activity radioactive waste. The Government is inviting communities across the country to talk to them about potentially hosting this facility.
- Around 70% of radioactive waste destined for disposal is already stored at the Sellafield site in West Cumbria. Allerdale Borough Council, Copeland Borough Council and Cumbria County Council have chosen to start talking to Government about the search for a site from an early stage.
- To ensure that a wide range of community interests are involved in discussions, the West Cumbria Managing Radioactive Waste Safely (MRWS) Partnership has been established. The Partnership has created a Public and Stakeholder Engagement (PSE) sub-group and developed a draft PSE plan setting out the three proposed rounds of engagement to be carried out before a Decision (whether) to Participate in the siting process is made.
- As part of the PSE Round 2, the Partnership re-commissioned independent research and consultation consultants Vision Twentyone to convene a further one-day deliberative event, the purpose of which was to:
 - Clarify understanding of the process and identify any areas of confusion;
 - Identify local feeling in the event the GDF is located under the boundary of the Lake District National Park;
 - Determine how community benefits might be allocated, both geographically and over time; identifying key decision making factors; and
 - Establish what would inspire confidence that the Partnership act in an open and transparent manner when presented with polarised views.
- The event took place at The Copeland Centre in Whitehaven on Saturday 8th January 2011, and was attended by 16 Allerdale and Copeland residents. Due to illness and the weather, seven participants dropped out either prior to or on the day of the event.

1.2 The Geological Disposal Facility and the National Park

- Over half (nine) participants would continue to support the decision to site an underground geological disposal facility (GDF) in West Cumbria, in the event part of the location falls within the boundary of the Lake District National Park. Two participants would no longer support the decision and a further two would continue to disagree. Three participants were undecided. Issues raised included:
 - **Continue to maintain and protect the National Park:** link the provision of community benefits with the ongoing maintenance and protection of the National Park. Viewed by some as a negative, the presence of the GDF may actually help protect the National Park, discouraging others from quarrying the area.

- **Local jobs for local people:** linked to tourism and construction, there is an opportunity now to ensure that local people are up-skilled. Given the right training, local people will be able to access jobs that will be created through the process.
- **Protect the visual landscape:** Residents raised concerns regarding excavation of the site and the negative impact this could have on the surrounding landscape, noting the need to ensure a plan is in place to protect the visual appearance of the area.
- **Research, protect and enhance tourism:** the presence of the GDF may bring further tourism opportunities if presented positively to others from the outset.
- **Reuse, recycle:** ensure where possible excavated materials are reused and West Cumbria profits from the process.
- **Underground / overground:** the majority of participants felt that it was inherently better to have the GDF than the current surface storage at Sellafield.
- **Raising awareness – perception versus fact:** approach the siting process and associated publicity in a positive manner in order to educate the UK population on the issue of nuclear waste, dispel the myths and change potentially negative perceptions of West Cumbria and Sellafield.
- **Allow a national debate:** ‘if’ the underground GDF does fall within the National Park boundary, being a national attraction people from across the UK have a right to join in the debate; that said we must not lose sight that it is the people of West Cumbria who would be most affected and must not lose local control of the debate.
- **Ongoing monitoring and maintenance:** One participant expressed concern that the waste stored within the GDF will not be accessible if the entrance to the facility is sealed after use; the need to ensure stored waste can be monitored over time was emphasised.

1.3 Community Benefits

- Any area accepting an underground GDF will receive a package of community benefits, to be received in stages. The process is split into four phases, defined as: pre construction, construction, operation and after closure.

1.3.1 Locating the Head Works and GDF

- The majority of participants agreed it would be sensible to locate the Head Works close to or at the current disposal site at Sellafield, minimising the transport of nuclear waste and maximising safety.
- The underground GDF was located by most in the South-west of Cumbria, between Egremont and Ravenglass, positioning the GDF part under the sea, part under ground.

1.3.2 Geographical Distribution

- Being the most affected, both prior to and during construction of the GDF, the Residents Panel felt the area/communities located closest to the facility should receive a higher proportion of community benefit (approximately 50%-70%) and distribute the remaining benefits proportionately across the sub-region thereafter.
- A handful of participants decided to distribute a higher allocation of the benefits available, 70%, to the rest of West Cumbria in order to reach a wider area. The group also acknowledged that construction of the GDF is likely to bring with it benefits that will automatically be focused on the immediate area.
- The Panel concluded that the remaining benefits should be distributed across the rest of West Cumbria following an assessment of 'need', based on an agreed criterion. This may then highlight a particularly deprived community and / or an area in need of new public facilities such as a community centre, new school or training provision.

1.3.3 Distribution Over Time

- When asked to distribute community benefits over time, according to the key phases of development, responses were varied:

Pre Construction

- Members of the residents' panel allocated a higher proportion of community benefit to the pre-construction phase. Reasons given include: the need to improve infrastructure across West Cumbria; a desire to front-load investment in the area, making sure that the benefits have longevity and become self-sustaining; provide training opportunities for local people; raise awareness of the facts regarding nuclear waste, changing perceptions held across the UK; and perhaps most importantly, a general lack of trust in the Government delivering the benefits it has promised through the various phases outlined below.

Construction

- Some participants were of the view that by this stage a large proportion of benefits would have been received, the area would become self-sustaining and require less investment. Others were of the view that benefits must continue and be focused on awareness raising and education, with a view to changing perceptions away from more negative perceptions.

Operation

- A small number of participants felt that benefits should be provided during operation to ensure projects established through the GDF process have access to funding on an ongoing basis. The alternative view was that by this stage in the process projects will generate their own income, be self-sustaining and therefore not need additional investment.

After closure

- The majority of the group decided to allocate little or no benefit to this stage, largely because they believe that the area and projects established will be self-sustaining by this point in the process.

- Those that did not agree thought that benefits should be aimed at the provision of training to ensure that the industry is able to advance technology and match this with the skills of the workforce.

1.3.4 Decision-making factors

- Key factors taken into account when allocating community benefits include:
 - Distance from the site: proportioning benefits to those living closest to the site.
 - Areas of greatest need: identifying communities who would benefit most.
 - Accessibility and infrastructure: making sure road and rail networks are improved and the area is accessible.
 - Education and skill sets: the need to create training and educational opportunities for the people of West Cumbria to ensure they benefit from the jobs available.
 - Environmental impact: whilst deemed important, discussions focused on visual impact.
 - Sustainability: the need to create and maintain a sustainable region, running throughout all the decision-making factors.

1.4 Managing difficult issues – drivers of public confidence

- The Partnership act as advisors in the Managing Radioactive Waste Safely process. When faced with the need to manage a set of polarised views, participants recommend that the Partnership:
 - Act in an open and transparent manner.
 - Set the scene, putting the views presented into context.
 - Present each side of the debate, acknowledge the complexity of the issue of nuclear waste and let individuals make up their own minds.
 - Invite an independent party to provide a view where possible and appropriate.
 - Above all remain unbiased, providing those you advise with the confidence that the Partnership are reaching a fair and considered conclusion.
- Many participants perceived the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) as being over-confident in their technical and scientific arguments.

1.5 Moving forward

1.5.1 Cross-cutting themes

- From the discussions, cross-cutting themes relate to:
 - The fair distribution of community benefits.
 - Maintain a balance and ensure transparency in the decision-making process.
 - The need to inform, educate and raise awareness of the process
 - Skills, training and jobs.
 - The impact on the landscape.
 - Revenue generation.
 - Sustainability.

1.5.2 Recommendations

- Continue to consult the public throughout the process, present information and keep them informed.
- Reconvene the Residents Panel once a site or choice of sites has been agreed and revisit distribution of community benefits.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Setting the scene

In 2008, the UK Government and Devolved Administrations in Wales and Northern Ireland launched a search for an engineered, underground site or ‘Geological Disposal Facility’ to act as the final home for the UK’s higher activity radioactive waste. The Government is inviting communities across the country to talk to them about potentially hosting this facility. In its 2008 White Paper on the topic¹, the Government stated that:

- It doesn’t want to force the facility upon a community: it is looking for volunteers;
- Just talking to Government about having this site does not commit anyone to it;
- It will be a long time until any construction starts, and during that time participating communities will have the right to withdraw from the process.

Around 70% of radioactive waste destined for disposal is already stored at the Sellafield site in West Cumbria and wherever the Geological Disposal Facility (GDF) is located in the UK, waste will need to be transported there from Sellafield. Consequently, Allerdale Borough Council, Copeland Borough Council and Cumbria County Council have chosen to start talking to Government about the search for a site from an early stage in the process.

To ensure that a wide range of community interests are involved in discussions, the West Cumbria Managing Radioactive Waste Safely (MRWS) Partnership has been established. The Partnership comprises the councils named above and a variety of other local stakeholder organisations, along with other organisations who attend as ‘observing members’.² Its role is one of fact-finding and research gathering, not decision-making; it will lead on initial work to gather information and eventually make recommendations to the three councils on whether or not they should participate in the siting process. The Partnership is therefore predominantly concerned with the process up to a ‘Decision to Participate’ as defined in the Government White Paper, and not beyond.

The Partnership is aware that significant public and stakeholder engagement will be required in its work programme due to the requirements of the White Paper and the sensitivity of the subject, particularly in a West Cumbrian context. It has therefore created a Public and Stakeholder Engagement (PSE) sub-group to lead on this area of work, and developed a draft PSE plan setting out the three proposed rounds of engagement to be carried out before a Decision (whether) to Participate is made.³

¹ Managing Radioactive Waste Safely: A Framework for Implementing Geological Disposal. June 2008.

² Observing members such as the Department of Energy and Climate Change and the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority are invited to attend and observe, but do not take part in decision-making.

³ Draft Public and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (October 2009). Document available for download at: <http://westcumbriamrws.org.uk/cqi-bin/download.cgi>

2.2 Purpose of the event

As part of the PSE Round 2, following the event held in February 2010, the Partnership re-commissioned independent research and consultation consultants Vision Twentyone to convene a further one-day deliberative event with Allerdale and Copeland residents. The purpose of the event was to:

- Clarify participants' understanding of the process and identify any areas of confusion;
- Identify how residents and local people would feel if the GDF is located under the boundary of the Lake District National Park;
- Determine how residents would allocate community benefits both geographically and over time; identifying the key factors taken into consideration when making their decisions; and
- Establish what would give local people confidence that The Partnership presents information in an open and transparent manner when faced with conflicting views.

The event took place at The Copeland Centre in Whitehaven on Saturday 7th January 2011, 10am-4pm. Led by experienced Vision Twentyone facilitators, the event included a series of presentations aimed at introducing the context (see Appendix One), an 'ice-breaker' session, time for 'questions and answers' (Q&A) (see Appendix Two), along with small group discussions and plenary sessions aimed at exploring residents' opinions in-depth.

2.3 Recruitment

Participants were recruited from Cumbria County Council's citizens' panel, *Community Voice*, for the PSE Round 2 deliberative event. Some members of the panel had attended the previous workshop held in February 2010. A number of new participants were recruited to deal with attrition.

The final participants comprised a split of men and women, a spread of age groups, a mix of Allerdale and Copeland residents and a range of attitudes.

2.4 Group profile

Overall, 16 of the 23 confirmed participants attended the workshop, of which eight were from Copeland and eight from Allerdale. The group included nine men and seven women, of a spread of ages; ranging from 'Under 24s' to '65s and over'. Due to difficult weather conditions and illness, seven participants dropped out of the event, on the days leading up to the workshop and on the day itself.

Participants received £60 each to thank them for taking part in the workshop and cover travel expenses.

2.5 Reasons for participation

As part of the 'ice-breaker' session participants were asked why they decided to attend the workshop. Full responses to this question are presented in Appendix Three. In Summary:

- A number of residents attended the first PSE deliberative event, were interested in the issue and wanted to stay informed on the process.
- Some residents were interested to find out more about the prospect of having a GDF in West Cumbria.
- Others wished to be involved in the decision-making process, to voice their opinions and listen to those within their community.

2.6 Appreciation

The Vision Twentyone team would like to express our sincere thanks to all of the event participants for giving up their time to share their opinions with us. Thanks also to the following individuals for taking the time to speak at the event and answer questions throughout the day:

- Kieran Barr, Cumbria County Council
- Ian Curwin, Cumbria County Council
- Richard Harris, 3KQ.

2.7 Report structure

The one-day event sought feedback from residents on three main topic areas, reflected in the structure of this report:

- **Potential impact on Lake District National Park:** The first session included an introduction to the day; presentations from Richard Harris on the national context and role of The Partnership, and Kieran Barr, reviewing the last 12 months, looking ahead to the future; followed by a question and answer session. A digital vote and plenary discussion were then used to explore participants' views regarding the potential location of the underground GDF and its relationship with the National Park Boundary.
- **Community benefits, allocation and key decision-making factors:** The second session started with an introduction by Richard Harris providing an example of community benefits received in other areas/countries through similar schemes and expectations outlined in the White Paper. Group discussions sought feedback on the allocation of community benefits, on both a geographical scale and over time. An additional session asked participants to identify and prioritise the key decision-making factors they took into account when allocating community benefits across West Cumbria.
- **Managing difficult issues:** The final session involved an introduction of two opposite spectrums of the debate regarding the safety of a GDF. The group discussion focused on how the residents feel the Partnership should respond when faced with such polarised points of view and finally, what would give residents confidence that The Partnership had reached a fair conclusion.

Findings from each session are outlined in Sections 3.0-5.0. Section 6.0 provides conclusions and recommendations grounded in this evidence base.

3.0 THE GDF AND THE NATIONAL PARK

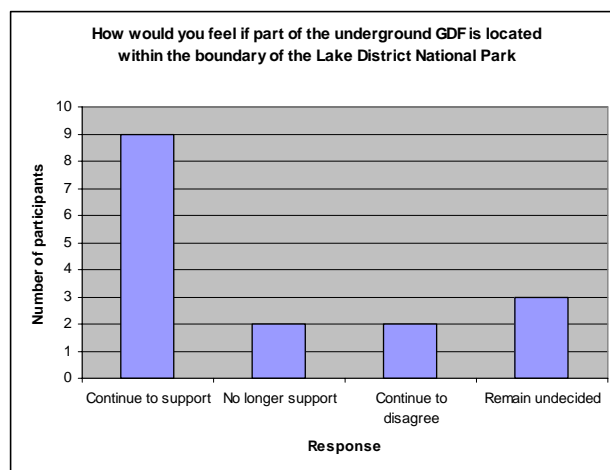
Participants took part in a digital vote that sought to explore how residents would feel if part of the underground GDF is located within the boundary of the Lake District National Park. Potential responses to this question were as follows:

- a) ... continue to support the decision to site a GDF in West Cumbria.
- b) ... no longer continue to support the decision to site a GDF in west Cumbria.
- c) ... continue to disagree with the decision to site a GDF in West Cumbria.
- d) Remain undecided.

Results were provided in real time and displayed on a screen, a plenary discussion focusing on the answers followed. The same question was then put to the participants for a second time and the vote re-run, to measure any changes in opinion.

3.1 Preliminary answers

The results from the first vote showed that over half of the participants (nine) would continue to support the decision to site an underground GDF in West Cumbria despite part of the location being within the boundary of the national park.



Two respondents voted that they would no longer continue to support the decision and a further two respondents voted that they would continue to disagree with the decision to site a GDF site in West Cumbria.

Three participants were undecided; they felt a decision could not be made unless potential sites were identified and presented to them.

3.2 Plenary discussion on the Geographical Disposal Facility

The discussion that followed highlighted the benefits of, and challenges faced by West Cumbria in hosting an underground GDF and potentially locating this facility within the boundary of the Lake District National Park (LDNP). The debate focused on the National Park itself, and the wider area of West Cumbria. The main themes to come out of this discussion were as follows:

- **Continue to maintain and protect the Lake District National Park:** the need to link the provision of community benefits with the ongoing maintenance and protection of the National Park was high on participants' agenda.

- In terms of protecting the National Park, one resident noted that locating the GDF under the LDNP boundary may be positive as its presence could lead to enhanced protection of the area.

“You are much less likely to quarry or mine areas of the National Park if there is a GDF located underneath.”

Taking an opposing view the downside is that the presence of the GDF could have a negative effect on quarrying and construction industries located in the region, limiting future opportunities for activity.

- **Local jobs for local people:** linked to tourism and construction, there is a potential opportunity to ensure that local people are up-skilled and this should be accounted for early in the process. Given the right training, local people will be able to access jobs that will be created through the process.
- **Protect the visual landscape:** Residents raised concerns regarding excavation of the site and the negative impact this could have on the surrounding landscape, noting the need to ensure a plan is in place to protect the visual appearance of the area.
Another resident noted that excavation may not necessarily impact on the LDNP as it is likely that the head works will be located outside the boundary.
- **Research, protect and enhance tourism:** protect the tourism industry and ensure this is enhanced both prior to, and during the construction phases of the GDF; this is a lengthy process and to ensure we generate continuous income for the area we must seek to gain as much as we can from potential tourism. There is an opportunity to learn from others, for example the Eden Project and charge members of the public a small fee to view construction. Participants felt that there is a need to research the potential impact of a GDF on tourism and to ensure the outcomes are factored into the decision-making process.
- **Reuse, recycle:** ensure that where possible excavated materials are reused and West Cumbria profits from the process. As early as the pre-construction phase profit could be made from the sale of excavated materials to the construction industry, and / or could be used to build new facilities such as a new community centre or school.
- **Underground / overground:** the majority of participants felt that it was inherently better to have the GDF than the current surface storage at Sellafield.
- **Raising awareness – perception versus fact:** perceptions across the UK are affected by the presence of Sellafield, and a GDF may increase negative perceptions of the area. This highlights the need to approach the siting process and any associated publicity in a positive manner and use this to dispel the myths associated with nuclear waste.

- **Educate:** Linked to the last point, the debate highlighted the need to educate the UK population on the issue of nuclear waste, emphasising the facts regarding waste management and safety with a view to minimising potentially negative perceptions. Misunderstanding regarding the form radio active waste will take when stored was evident throughout the discussion, with some participants presuming this would be in a gas form and others, a solid. The need to ensure this issue forms one of the key messages was evident.
- **Allow a national debate:** the group were asked how they would feel if the discussion grew into a national debate due to the impact the GDF location may have the LDNP. Consensus was that the LDNP is a UK wide attraction and people have a right to join in the debate at the national level, though fundamentally it is the decision of West Cumbrians' as they will be the most affected.

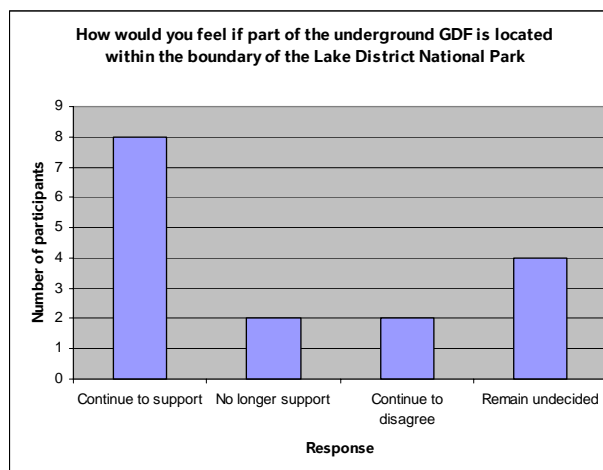
“Whilst other people have the right to have a say about the country they live in, it is important that we keep local control over the debate as we will be the ones most affected.”

3.3 Second vote

The results from the second vote highlighted a change in thinking of one participant who moved from ‘continuing to support’ the decision to site the underground GDF in West Cumbria if part of the GDF was located within the boundary of the National Park, to ‘undecided’. The reason for this related to the current uncertainty regarding the safety and ongoing management of such a facility. The participant had not previously realised that access to the GDF may not be permanent in the event the entrance to the site is blocked up after use; and this could prevent the waste from being monitored on an ongoing basis, to ensure it continues to be safe. For this reason they grew wary of the long-term safety of the site.

“I thought the waste was going to be managed constantly... I think it would be a bad option to just leave it and forget about it. It’s important that it’s monitored.”

To clarify this point the group were informed that work is ongoing and the team continue to build ideas and concepts into the design of the GDF; retrievability of waste material is just one of the options presented and will continue to feature in the discussions. The group felt that as the process continues, the design concept should be kept flexible so that in the future, decisions can be made based on the wealth of information provided.



4.0 COMMUNITY BENEFITS

Any area that accepts an underground GDF will receive a package of community benefits to be received in stages, beginning early in the decision-making process. The process is split into four distinct phases, to include:

- Phase one: pre construction
- Phase two: construction
- Phase three: operation
- Phase four: after closure.

Whilst the exact form of community benefits is undecided, examples from elsewhere include the provision of community managed funds, training programmes provided through grant allocation and financial support to, for example provide facilities such as a new school, community or health centre. In this instance the aim was to steer the discussion away from the provision of ‘direct benefits’ received through the construction phase, such as transport improvements associated with the site and job creation brought during the construction and operational phase of development. In reality, participants found it difficult to separate the different types of ‘benefit’.

The Residents Panel took part in small group discussions aimed at gathering feedback on the distribution of community benefits to the area of West Cumbria. Participants were asked to act as members of the MRWS Partnership and distribute ‘weights’ of community benefit across the region. Participants were asked to complete a number of tasks, allocating community benefits geographically and over time. They were then asked to identify key factors they took into account when considering distribution.

For this task, participants were given an interactive map, together with ‘shapes’, representing the head works and GDF, and a number of blank community benefit cards. Initially, participants were asked to locate the head works and GDF on the area plan. They were then asked to distribute each weight of community benefit across West Cumbria, stating the reasons behind their decisions.

4.1 Locating the head works and GDF

All three groups allocated their Head works at or near to the current nuclear disposal site at Sellafield. Participants explained that the decision to locate the head works in such close proximity to Sellafield was to minimise the transportation of nuclear waste and maximise safety when transporting highly radio-active waste.



Two groups placed the underground GDF on the South-West coast of Cumbria, between Egremont and Ravenglass, positioning the GDF part under the sea and part under land. One group did not place the GDF on the map.

4.2 Geographical Distribution

The geographic distribution of community benefits in West Cumbria differed between the groups. Some participants felt that the majority of benefits (between 50% and 70%) should be placed closest to the underground GDF and the immediate surrounding area.

“I think 50% of benefits should go to the immediate locality around the GDF, they’re the ones who are going to be most affected.”

Some participants felt that the other 30-50% of benefits should be distributed across other parts of West Cumbria. One group suggested that the most effective way to distribute the remaining benefits would be to allocate them following an assessment; using a number of criteria, this would highlight which areas were ‘in greatest need’. A decision should then be taken on where remaining benefit is distributed and what form this takes, e.g. training courses, or public facilities such as a new Walk-in Centre, school or community building.

“You’ve got to look at the region and find the communities that need it the most, the most deprived areas should get more weights of benefit.”

A handful of participants felt that the immediate area surrounding the GDF should receive a smaller proportion of the benefits, around 30%, leaving the remaining 70% to be distributed proportionately across the whole of west Cumbria.

“If you invest in community benefits over a wider area [West Cumbria] it will provide the most effective benefit locally.”

There was also the assumption that the knock on benefits brought during the ‘pre-construction’ phase, such as infrastructure improvements, would automatically be focused on the immediate area.

4.3 Distribution over time

Participants were asked to distribute community benefits over a time frame, allocating units of benefit in to four key phases, to include: pre construction, during construction, during operation, and after the closure. Participants were reminded to keep in mind that this will be a very lengthy process, for example, the time leading up to construction (i.e.) researching geological formations etc, could take between ten and fifteen years.

4.3.1 Pre-construction

Many participants allocated a large proportion of benefits to this early stage of the process. Though opinions differed between and within groups, the majority of participants agreed that this was the phase that should receive the most benefit. The reasons for this are as follows:

- **Lack of trust in the national government:** a large majority of participants expressed a lack of trust towards the government and as such, would request more benefit be given before construction begins. Participants felt that if they don't take the benefits when offered they could as easily be withdrawn at a later stage. It was viewed as politically beneficial to ensure benefits are received at an early stage, increasing confidence felt by the West Cumbrian community in the Government and the process overall.
- **Poor infrastructure:** a number of participants noted the poor infrastructure across West Cumbria and felt that in order for anything to begin, infrastructure across the region needed to be improved and updated.
- **Front-load to ensure a sustainable future:** some participants felt that benefits should be 'front-loaded', with a greater proportion received at an early stage in the process. The group felt that knock-on benefits brought as a result of early investment in the area would accrue over the length of the project and by the end of the operational phase; the area should be self-sufficient and therefore sustainable. As part of this discussion, the participants emphasised the need for individual project plans established through community benefits to include plans to become self-sufficient. It was also noted that all projects should undergo continuous review throughout the lifetime of the project.
- **Education and perception:** participants thought it was necessary to push education at this early stage and inform people of the facts regarding nuclear waste in order to change perceptions of West Cumbria. It was felt that this would prevent the potentially negative impact on the tourism industry. In addition, the group emphasised the need to ensure that local people receive training early on in the process to ensure that they are well placed to gain from the jobs the GDF will bring.

4.3.2 Construction

It was viewed by some participants that because a large proportion of benefits will have been received 'pre-construction', by the construction and operational stages the area would become self-sustaining and require less investment. Others believe that benefits must continue to be provided during the construction phase, as many parts of West Cumbria would see high levels of disruption due to construction of the GDF and felt that as a result compensation should be offered at this stage.

A small proportion of participants thought it would be important to continue to raise awareness of the facility itself during construction, educating people about the facts, thus working to change nationwide perceptions of nuclear waste, moving away from negative associations. The need to provide continuous access to training was again emphasised as part of this phase.

4.3.3 Operation

A small number of participants felt that benefits should be provided during this phase to ensure projects established through the provision of community benefits have access to funding on an ongoing basis. The alternative view was that by this stage in the process projects will generate their own income, be self-sustaining and therefore would not need much external investment.

4.3.4 After closure

Most participants decided to allocate little or no benefit at this stage in the process, largely because they believe that by this point in the process projects established through, or as a result of the GDF will be sustainable. Significant investment early on in the construction of the GDF will mean that little investment will be needed after closure.

“Benefits given at the earlier stages should be as long lasting as possible - it has to be sustainable, and so the area shouldn’t need heavy investment after it’s closed.”

Some participants however, did not agree and held the view that some benefit should be saved for this stage, and were of the opinion that this is needed to ensure long-term sustainability. Funds should be guaranteed in case there is a need to advance technology or the skills of the workforce in the future.

“There should be enough to ensure a viable workforce and community developments for the future.”

A small number of participants felt that there should be an even weight of benefit spread across all four stages and that there was no one stage that should see a disproportionate share.

4.4 Decision-making factors

Following on from the previous two tasks participants were asked to think back to their previous discussions and look at how they decided to allocate the weights of community benefit; identifying ‘key factors’ they took into account in reaching their decisions. The decision-making factors participants took into account are summarised below:

- **Distance from site:** the issue of distance proved important to the majority of participants; who felt it necessary to give a higher proportion of benefit to the community living nearest the site as they would be immediately affected by the GDF.
- **Areas of greatest need:** key to the decision-making process, the issue of ‘need’ was taken into account by all those participating; holding the view that the most deprived areas of the community should benefit the most, wherever they are located in West Cumbria. Participants felt that areas with, for example, high rates of unemployment or are lacking basic services/facilities should be taken into account.

- **Accessibility and infrastructure:** the need to improve and develop infrastructure across West Cumbria was a key factor discussed by the majority of participants. Assuming the site is located at or near to Sellafield, it was felt that the existing infrastructure, whilst built to service Sellafield would benefit from improvement, as would the rest of West Cumbria. Improvements made to road and rail networks within the region will enable the work at the GDF to run smoothly, decrease the volume of traffic, minimise destruction around the site and increase accessibility to the area.
- **Education and skill sets:** the need to train and educate people, both along ‘the energy coast’ and within West Cumbria is important. As a priority, training should be provided to ensure the local population are up-skilled and able to access the jobs created as a result of the decision to participate, be that manual and/or specialist. It was felt that this would benefit the business community and the economy of the area as a whole.
- **Sustainability:** the need to create and maintain a sustainable community/region was a key decision-making factor taken into consideration by the whole group and was a key theme running throughout the days deliberations. Presenting itself in a number of different forms, themes covered the need to:
 - sustain employment and skills within the area;
 - prolong the positive impact accrued through the provision of community benefits, be that through improvements to infrastructure, or the provision of new facilities;
 - protect and enhance the existing environment, minimising the visual impact on the area; and finally
 - sustain and increase the current level of tourism in the region, a vital industry in West Cumbria.
- **Environmental impact:** whilst deemed important, discussions around the environment during this session focused on the visual impact, which was assumed will be minimal due to the assumption that the majority of the site will be located underground and in itself a positive.

5.0 MANAGING DIFFICULT ISSUES – DRIVERS OF PUBLIC CONFIDENCE

The aim of this session was to provide The Partnership, as independent advisors on the process, with a steer on how members of the community feel they should react when faced with conflicting views and the need to manage difficult issues. Initially Kieran Barr and Richard Harris presented the opposing views of Professor David Smythe (Emeritus Professor of Geophysics, Glasgow University) and Alun Ellis (Repository Director at the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (the NDA)) respectively. Both articles are included in the MRWS newsletter, winter 2010 – see Appendix Four.

The session then moved to a plenary discussion, aimed at exploring the groups reaction to the topic and the views presented, gathering feedback on the evidence presented as well as identifying the drivers of public confidence.

5.1 Is West Cumbria's geology suitable?

5.1.1 No – Professor David Smythe

Professor Smyth believes that West Cumbria is geologically unsuitable to host a GDF. He argues that West Cumbria, along with the entire UK, was 'screened' geologically 25 years ago and was found to be unsuitable because the rocks and the underground flow of water are too complex and unpredictable. David Smyth believes that efforts should be concentrated in regions which do have safe potential, such as Eastern England.

5.1.2 Yes – Alun Ellis

West Cumbria is the only community to come forward after the Government led a site selection process based on voluntarism and partnership with potential host communities. Following on from this, the British Geographical Survey published a report, highlighting areas in West Cumbria where the geology of the area is unsuitable and would not be able to host a geological disposal facility. The next stage is to make a full safety case. However, an assessment using the wealth of information gathered from previous investigations at Sellafield show groundwater flows and flow paths are consistent with the safe disposal of intermediate-level waste at the site and as such the provision of a GDF is a possibility.

5.2 Drivers of public confidence

5.2.1 Variety

Participants felt it important that if the information exists, the public should have the opportunity to hear a range of views, presenting a spectrum of opinion where possible. The way in which information is presented was viewed as an important consideration, acknowledging that in some instances, information can be presented in a way that is meant to persuade the reader to adopt one particular point of view.

Participants' felt that it is the role of the Partnership to ensure that each side of a debate is presented and that they ensure information provided is done so in a fair and transparent manner. As such they would be expected to set the context and present an array of information or judgments, emphasising their neutral position as and when appropriate.

"If you don't put other opinions in you'll look biased. You've got to make it balanced, not just one-sided and it's got to have credibility behind it, not just represent the loud-mouths. You need to show that these are the opinions out there and how weighted it is."

5.2.2 Acknowledging the complexity of the issue

Participants were aware that some views may be complicated and specifically those that are scientific, however they were adamant that this should not cause the Partnership to 'water down' arguments. Participants would prefer the Partnership to present the views/opinions/articles as they arise and acknowledge the complexity of the issue. This will allow members of the community to form their own opinion based on the information provided. In this instance they felt it important for the Partnership to set the context.

"This is such a huge issue; people need to be given the chance to decide for themselves."

5.2.3 The role of independent experts

The vast majority of participants agreed that in their role, the Partnership would be doing a fair and reasonable job if they do not present an opinion one way or the other, unless this is backed up by fact. Where facts are not clear, it is important that the Partnership present the views of independent experts, as well as those of the opposing views, rather than provide the view of the Partnership. This would present an independent voice to the community of West Cumbria that is not already polarised or aligned with one campaign.

"Scientists have a reputation that they'll keep to and they will speak out against an organisation if it's wrong."

Many participants perceived the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) as being over-confident in their technical and scientific arguments.

5.2.4 Transparency

It was also important to participants that the Partnership remained transparent, so that members of the community can reach their own decision. It was agreed that if the Partnership shows transparency, then it will give the people in West Cumbria confidence that they will reach the right decision and present the best and most correct information. Some participants felt it would be beneficial if the Partnership explained the process they went through and the information they took into consideration when justifying or disregarding an opinion; people can then use this to form their own judgements.

6.0 MOVING FORWARD

6.1 Cross-cutting themes

To summarise, a number of key themes formed the basis of the discussions throughout the day, relating to:

- Fair distribution of community benefits.
- Maintain a balance and ensure transparency in decision-making.
- The need to inform, educate and raise awareness in order to dispel the myths and minimise negative perceptions of West Cumbria.
- Provide local people with the skills and training required to gain from future employment opportunities.
- Reduce potential negative impact on the landscape.
- Ensure where possible that the GDF brings revenue into the area and benefits local people.
- All projects and activities are designed to be sustainable.

6.2 Evaluating the day

- Participants were generally positive in their evaluation of the event. They felt that the event was interesting, worthwhile and helped to increase their understanding of the process.
- The majority found the pace of the event ‘just right’ and felt the discussions were facilitated in a fair and unbiased manner, with plenty of opportunity to feed their views into the discussion.
- The vast majority would be interested in attending future events and would like to be kept informed of the process.

6.3 Final thoughts

The following comments or ‘final thoughts’ were presented through individual’s evaluation forms:

- In the absence of a safe site in West Cumbria, the Government will have to act in the interest of the UK as a whole and determine where a suitable repository might be sited.
- Safety in West Cumbria must not be compromised.
- Continue to communicate with the citizens of West Cumbria. Provide facts not opinion.
- Keep the process going.
- Find a way of REALLY engaging public opinion ‘en masse’.
- Maintain the independent stance. Continue to present both sides of the argument to allow for informed decision.

6.4 Participants recommendations

Echoing thoughts presented as part of the previous event, those participating recommend that the Partnership continue to consult the public throughout the process, present information to them and keep them informed. They felt that they should continue to hold more in-depth discussions with the residents' panel as the process moves forward, and more information becomes available.

In addition to the above, topics for further discussion should include:

- How to address environmental impact.
- Storage of waste, costs involved.
- Political issues – at a national and local level.
- Additional use of digital voting technology.
- Review the basics each time, for example what nuclear waste looks like waste looks like.

6.5 Additional recommendations

Different in both style and content to that of the previous event, held in February 2010, the day ran smoothly with participants' actively feeding back throughout the discussions. Moving forward, Vision Twentyone recommends that the Partnership continue to communicate with the public, both through the panel and the variety of community activities taking place across West Cumbria.

In addition Vision Twentyone recommend that once the Partnership has a clear idea regarding the location or potential locations of the proposed GDF, that they revisit the community benefits activity with the Panel, explore what the community benefits might be and how they could be distributed.

APPENDIX ONE:
Participants' questions

Q & A Session: Comments, Questions and Points of Clarification

- Is West Cumbria the only community to have come forward?
- In the previous meeting we were told that the storage of nuclear waste, if not stored underground, will be over ground and will be in Cumbria; is this correct?
- Is it a done deal? I feel that it has been decided already. There is a lot of pressure to say that it is going to be here in West Cumbria.
- Parts of West Cumbria are areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. What about places that are not suitable for other reasons?
- They've clarified its safer underground so if we want to be safer surely this is what we will have to do? What's the alternative?
- Where will the waste be stored in the interim?
- How long will the excavation process take?
- Does the higher level waste include intermediate waste and does it include high level waste?
- Other than geologically excluding areas, why not have a map that that shows areas that are unsuitable for other reasons?
- What form is the waste in when it is stored? Is it stored in a gas, liquid or solid form? We need to communicate clearly what this is.
- What about potential earthquakes?
- Politics will feature heavily in the debate, particularly with Council elections coming up – politicians will be looking to prolong their political lives.

APPENDIX TWO:
Reason for participation

Reasons why participants decided to attend the event...

- To listen to the views of everyone regarding the issues of nuclear waste.
- Curiosity.
- To find out more about the proposal and voice my opinions and questions and listen to others opinions.
- Trade is instrumentation, affects future. Home is close to Sellafield.
- To have an input in a big community decision.
- To find out the best solution to a problem that will not go away.
- To express the opinions of my local community.
- Interested in consultation process, involved in design process.
- I am interested in the future of the area/employment opportunities and how this will affect my children's future.
- An opportunity to be involved in policy making.
- Came to the last debate and found it very informative and interesting.
- Continuity and to understand.
- Invitation – have been to an earlier meeting regarding possible methods of disposal – Blackbeck near Sellafield). An important issue for West Cumbria and nationally.
- Came last time and am interested in the discussion. I think that you need to take every opportunity of being involved in such discussions etc.

APPENDIX THREE:
Event evaluation feedback

In total 16 residents attended the event. Feedback gathered through the evaluation forms is summarised below:

- Overall 11 participants found the event ‘very interesting’, five ‘quite interesting’.
- Nine Participants found the event ‘very worthwhile’ and six ‘quite worthwhile’; one participant described the event as ‘average’.
- Eight participants found the information presented on the day helped improve their understanding of the process ‘a lot’ and seven ‘a little’. One participant said the event did not improve their knowledge too much; however this was because they knew a lot about the subject already.
- All those participating (16) found the pace of the event to be ‘just right’. When asked if more or less time should be spent on a specific topic, the feedback provided was as follows:
 - A little bit more to address environmental impact
 - Storage of waste, costs involved
 - Political issues – nationally – BUT particularly local issues
 - Just fine but more on vote
 - No, well organised
 - About right.
- The group (16 participants) felt the event was facilitated in a fair and unbiased way and felt that they were given an opportunity to feed their views into the discussion.
- When asked if they had any other comments about the event, feedback provided was as follows:
 - Outcome – nuclear waste stays in West Cumbria whatever the locals say!! If, no ‘safe’ site is available the Government will have to govern in the interests of the UK as a whole and determine where a suitable repository might be sited. Safety in West Cumbria must not be compromised.
 - Well thought out and well presented.
 - Good mix of participants, enjoyed the company.
 - Keep the process going.
 - There really needs to be more basic knowledge imparted! Many people have no conception of what this waste looks like – e.g. that it is solid waste, not a gas or liquid.
 - It was very informative, everyone was very welcoming and I felt my opinion was valued.

- Given the opportunity to provide a 'final piece of advice' to the Partnership as they move forward with the process, participants said:
 - Perhaps we could have access to someone who could give answers to technical/scientific/engineering questions.
 - Continue to communicate with the citizens of West Cumbria. Provide facts not opinion.
 - Find a way of REALLY engaging public opinion en masse.
 - Very interesting range of discussion and consensus was reached on some basic issues. Maintain the independent stance. Continue to present both sides of the argument to allow for informed decision.

APPENDIX FOUR:
West Cumbria MRWS
Winter 2010 newsletter

westcumbria:mrws
Managing Radioactive Waste Safely



newsletter

Winter 2010
www.westcumbriamrws.org.uk



westcumbria:mrws
Managing Radioactive Waste Safely

Nuclear waste Going underground?

Most people have a view on programmes like Britain's Got Talent and Strictly Come Dancing. You also have a say about one of the biggest issues facing people in this area – whether we should consider having an underground repository for higher activity radioactive waste in West Cumbria.

A repository would affect many generations of people in this area. Would it be good or bad for West Cumbria and other parts of the county?

The West Cumbria Managing Radioactive Waste Safely Partnership has been set up to look at the issues and to make sure local people are involved. This newsletter tells you about some of the issues, how you can find more information and how you can get involved.

There are a lot of questions to think about including: Could it be safe? Would it bring more jobs? Don't leave the decisions to other people.



Get involved and tell us what you think.

Why geological disposal? p2

Can a repository be safe? p2

Is West Cumbria unsuitable for a repository? p3

Plus...

- More questions
- How to get our discussion pack and DVD
- What next?

westcumbria:mrws newsletter

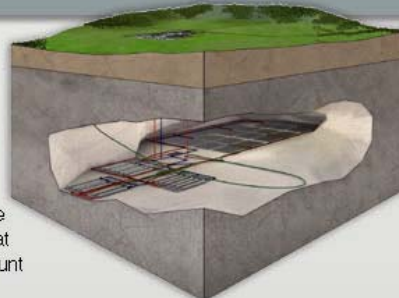
Your questions...

The Partnership, the councils and the public need to consider a range of issues before there is a decision about whether or not West Cumbria should take part in the Government's search for somewhere to locate a repository.

? Why are we looking at an underground repository?

In 2006 an independent committee of experts, the **Committee on Radioactive Waste Management** (CoRWM) recommended that geological disposal was the best available long-term approach compared to other ways of managing this waste. They had looked at a wide range of options for the long term management of higher activity radioactive waste and considered evidence in the UK and overseas.

Higher activity radioactive waste is currently stored above ground at sites around the UK. A large amount of it is at Sellafield. CoRWM said geological disposal would be safer in the longer term than storage above ground for example because of the risk of terrorism and climate change. They also suggested it is fairer for future generations. In particular it would avoid the need to build new storage buildings every 100 years or so and the need to



repackage the wastes.

Some people and organisations are not convinced about the long term safety of geological disposal. However, CoRWM's integrated set of recommendations received wide ranging support from experts and the public.

It will be for the people in this community to decide whether or not they would be happy for detailed investigations to be carried out to identify a possible site for a geological disposal facility in West Cumbria.

For more information visit www.corwm.org.uk

Opponents of geological disposal in Kendal last year



? Can a repository be safe?

Safety is the overriding issue for all of us.

The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA), the organisation that would implement geological disposal, says a repository would be designed to use both natural barriers (the geology) and man-made barriers (the waste container, materials placed around it etc.) to ensure no harmful amounts of radioactivity reach the surface.

Critics of geological disposal argue that a repository could not be safe. An organisation called Nuclear Waste Advisory Associates published a report about their concerns in 2010. This is one of the pieces of evidence we will

be looking at and asking the NDA to respond to.*



NDA diagrams (and above) showing what the facilities might look like.

We will only give our advice on whether or not the area should take part in the search for a site when we feel

we have enough information on safety. It will not be possible to have absolute certainty about this, or many other issues, before we make this decision. The NDA can only do specific work on designing a repository if we make a decision to proceed further, as the design will be affected by the geology of the site that is considered.

However, an area can withdraw from this process up to work starting on a repository, probably over a decade from now. If a community was not entirely confident at that stage that the repository would be safe it would not agree to have the facility sited there.

*www.nuclearwasteadvisory.co.uk

On page 2 we look at why geological disposal is being discussed and whether a repository could be safe. On this page we ask a geophysicist to say why he believes the area's geology is unsuitable for a repository and the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority to explain why they think it may be worth carrying out more detailed geological tests in parts of West Cumbria.

? Is West Cumbria's geology unsuitable?

Prof David Smythe (Emeritus Professor of Geophysics, Glasgow University) worked for Nirex when they looked at an area near Sellafield as a possible site for a repository in the 80s and 90s. He was later an objector at the planning inquiry that ended the Nirex process. He says:

Political memories are short. West Cumbria was 'screened' geologically not just in 2010, but also 25 years ago, along with the entire UK.

£400 million was subsequently spent in the Sellafield area, at a site chosen on political and not scientific grounds.

But the 1995-96 Planning Inquiry (a legal court) concluded that scientifically ALL of west Cumbria is unsuitable. The rocks and the underground flow of water are too complex and unpredictable.

So why do this again? Because some local councillors think they can ignore the world's best science evidence, and are 'volunteering' their communities? Because the government thinks it can ignore international guidelines for nuclear waste disposal?

If deep nuclear waste disposal is indeed to go ahead – Sellafield was only one of several options proposed by an independent investigation – then effort should be concentrated in regions which do have safe potential, such as eastern England.

Alan Ellis is the Repository Director at the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (the NDA), the organisation that would implement geological disposal. He is a Chartered Engineer, a Fellow of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers and a Member of the Institution of Engineering and Technology. He says:

Government is leading the site selection process based on voluntarism and partnership with potential host communities.

West Cumbria is currently the only community to express an interest in participating.

The British Geological Survey recently published its report which shows the areas in west Cumbria unsuitable for a geological disposal facility.



Map showing the geological survey results in 2010
Excluded area in pink



Candidate sites that are eventually identified by a local community and agreed by Government will be evaluated for suitability including geological and hydrogeological characteristics. Furthermore, before a facility can be developed, a full safety case must be agreed by the independent regulators.

An assessment published by Nirex in 1997 (after the Public Inquiry) used the complete suite of information from its investigations of a site near Sellafield. It showed groundwater flows and flow paths consistent with the safe disposal of intermediate-level waste at the site. If west Cumbria decides to participate, such information would be scrutinised under the siting process described above.

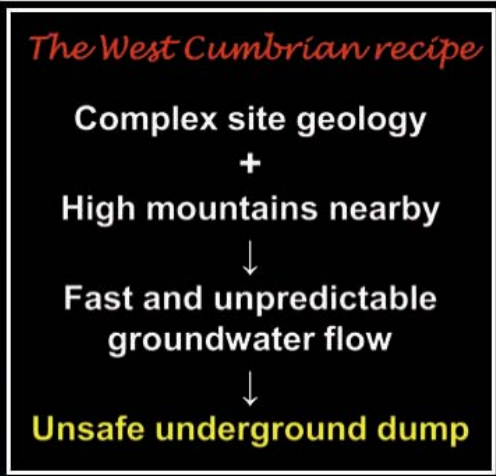


Image provided by Professor Smythe.

Please visit www.davidmysmythe.org for more extensive information.

For more information on the Government's MRWS process see www.decc.gov.uk/mrws

westcumbria:mrws newsletter



Question time for Cumbrian students

School students in Cumbria are among those who have been finding out more and asking questions about a possible repository at drop-in events we organised across the county or by using our discussion pack.

Students from **Nelson Tomlinson School** in Wigton (above) took part in a drop-in event in the town last November.

After listening to presentations from the Government and the Partnership, Trent Warmate said:

"I want to know the impact on tourism, how much land it's going to take, whether or not it's going to be safe and how it's going to impact us".

Will Middleham also wanted to know:

"What kind of jobs could be created and what benefits could we get from having a site like that".

Maisie Lear thought it was particularly important for young people to get involved:

"It's going to be us who are going to be making the decisions when we're older so it's better that we learn about it now".



All the answers to this quiz are in the newsletter, so you can find out more about this important issue and have the chance to win a great prize.

1. Which school did students at the Wigton drop-in event come from?
2. In which year did CoRWM recommend geological disposal?
3. What do the initials NDA stand for?

? More of your questions



What benefits might an area get for having a repository?

The Government says it would provide additional benefits to any community that 'decided to fulfil such an essential service to the nation'. The Partnership is looking at questions such as what these benefits might be, which parts of the community the benefits should go to and how they could be guaranteed into the future.

What is higher activity waste?

This is the most radioactive kind of waste. Some of it remains hazardous for thousands of years and some of it produces heat. Put simply, it is a combination of nuclear materials and other materials, such as fuel packaging and equipment, which has been contaminated with significant amounts of radioactivity.



It's good to talk

To get our discussion pack and DVD email your name and address to contact@westcumbriamrws.org.uk or call **0800 048 8912**. You will need to return your responses before 11 February, but you can also send us comments and questions at any time.

What happens next?

During the spring and summer we will consider your views together with the other evidence we've been gathering, for example by speaking to experts and commissioning research.

After that we'll let you know our initial thoughts on whether the area should take part in the search for somewhere to locate a repository, without making any commitment to have it, and we'll also ask what you think. Then we'll give our advice

to Allerdale Borough Council, Copeland Borough Council and Cumbria County Council who will make the final decision.

If we do take part in this process there would be studies looking in more detail at geology, as well as social, environmental and other factors to identify possible sites. We would be able to withdraw up to the point where work could start on building a repository, probably more than a decade from now.

Contact the Partnership

You can find out more by visiting:

www.westcumbriamrws.org.uk

You can also contact us by calling our free helpline on:

0800 048 8912

or by emailing:

contact@westcumbriamrws.org.uk

APPENDIX FIVE:
Presentation slides
Setting the context


West Cumbria MRWS Partnership [Managing Radioactive Waste Safely]



westcumbriamrws.org.uk westcumbria:mrws

Why West Cumbria is involved

- AllerdaleBC, CopelandBC, CumbriaCC made expressions of interest
- Partly because a lot of the waste is already at Sellafield



westcumbriamrws.org.uk westcumbria:mrws

The Partnership

- Partnership set up to involve a wide range of community interests
- The Partnership will advise the councils on whether they should decide to take part in the siting process, without commitment



westcumbriamrws.org.uk westcumbria:mrws

Who is on the Partnership



westcumbriamrws.org.uk westcumbria:mrws


What are we doing?

- Looking at the range of issues involved in taking part in the siting process
- Placing strong emphasis on involving the public
- **Not** deciding whether there should definitely be a repository here or where it might go



westcumbriamrws.org.uk westcumbria:mrws

Key work areas




1. Safety, security and environment
2. Geology
3. Impacts / Community Benefits
4. Design and Engineering
5. Process
6. Public views

westcumbriamrws.org.uk westcumbria:mrws

What's happened so far

- A preliminary look at a number of issues
- Carried out first stage of Public and Stakeholder Engagement programme
- Adapted our work programme to reflect comments so far
- Geological screening



[westcumbria:mrws](http://westcumbriamrws.org.uk)

What happens next?

Share results of BGS study + seek views

- Community Events
- Discussion pack & DVD
- Newsletters
- Newspapers, radio
- westcumbriamrws.org.uk
- Email updates



[westcumbria:mrws](http://westcumbriamrws.org.uk)

1 - Taking account of public views?

Two main suggestions:

1. Net support from West Cumbrian public: *"more support than oppose"*
2. Broad support: *"balance of evidence/argument"*

→ Your questions?

[westcumbria:mrws](http://westcumbriamrws.org.uk)

2 - Impacts and Community Benefits

Would be impacts, both good and bad

Additional 'community benefits' are available

1. Any impacts we're missing?
2. The idea of community benefit
3. What kinds of community benefits?

→ Your questions?

[westcumbria:mrws](http://westcumbriamrws.org.uk)

3 - Community Involvement in the Siting Process

Siting process, even if it starts, is long

Communities need to be involved

1. How should communities be involved?
2. What other than geology should be considered in choosing a site, if it continues?

→ Your questions?

[westcumbria:mrws](http://westcumbriamrws.org.uk)

What is MRWS?

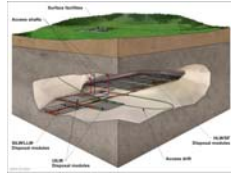
- Government search for final home for higher level radioactive wastes
- Communities invited to talk, *without commitment*, about a 'geological disposal facility'
- Based on voluntarism: Can withdraw



[westcumbria:mrws](http://westcumbriamrws.org.uk)

What is geological disposal?

- It involves putting the waste in an engineered underground facility deep inside a suitable rock formation
- Recommended by CORWM and is also preferred internationally



westcumbria:mrws

westcumbriamrws.org.uk

What a facility might look like



- The Government say there would be offices and a tunnel entrance etc. above the ground
- Underground repository extending over several square kilometres

westcumbria:mrws

westcumbriamrws.org.uk

The MRWS process



westcumbria:mrws

westcumbriamrws.org.uk

Geological screening

- Government requires a basic geological screening
- To ensure whole area is not 'clearly unsuitable'
- Using available information
- Not intended to show where a repository may go
- Surface facilities could go in areas unsuitable for a repository

westcumbria:mrws

westcumbriamrws.org.uk

