

**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.11 – June 2011

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Artist's impression showing what the surface facilities for a repository might look like (NDA).

### 1. Manpower and skills



Artist's impression showing what the surface waste receipt facilities might look like (NDA).

The Partnership's most recent meeting, at Braithwaite Village Hall, near Keswick on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2011, included a presentation by the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) on the [manpower and skills requirements](#) for a geological disposal facility.

The NDA said they estimate that the average annual manpower needed from the start of surface based investigations to the closure of a repository could be about 555

people. The peak employment could be over 1,000 people during the initial construction phase.

There were a number of questions from Partnership members about the figures. A couple of people commented that many of the jobs would probably go to people outside the area and others said that if a repository did come to West Cumbria it would be important to ensure that local people had the right training to secure the jobs.

A report of the latest Partnership meeting is available on the [Partnership's website](#).

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## 2. Principles for community benefits



The latest Partnership meeting also featured discussions on the [Principles for Community Benefits](#) which have been drafted by the Partnership's Community Benefits Sub-Group.

The Partnership identified at an early stage that it needed to finalise 'a set of principles by which community benefit would be discussed, agreed and potentially administered' if there was a decision to participate.

A series of 12 principles have been developed, outlining the views and intentions of the Partnership regarding any potential community benefits package. This process took on board views from the first two rounds of public and stakeholder engagement.

There were a number of questions and comments before the principles were formally adopted. Representatives from Cumbria Tourism and the Chamber of Commerce stressed the importance of mitigating against the reputational effects of taking part in the siting process itself. A number of people also emphasised the need to ensure that any agreement on benefits was 'guaranteed' and that benefits were genuinely additional to things that would be happening anyway.

One member of the public commented that the distribution of benefits should take account of the needs of host communities and wider interests.

The Government will be asked to agree the principles as a basis for negotiations if a Decision to Participate is taken and the public will have a chance to give their views during the next round of public and stakeholder engagement.

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### 3. Public and stakeholder views



Several items on the agenda at the last Partnership meeting concerned public and stakeholder holder views.

A [report](#) setting out how the Partnership will decide whether its recommendations are credible given the views of the public and stakeholders was formally adopted at the meeting. The approach that has been agreed includes carrying out a large scale, statistically representative, opinion survey to test whether people in Allerdale and Copeland favour or oppose taking part in the search for a site.

A member of the public asked about the fairness of the opinion surveys and in particular about the number of Sellafield employees that are included. The Partnership's Programme Manager stressed the importance of ensuring that the surveys are robust and reliable and said he would check this particular point with Ipsos MORI, the polling company that has been carrying out the surveys.

The Partnership discussed and adopted its [formal response to the issues raised during the second round of public and stakeholder engagement](#) which ended in February.

Partnership members also discussed the outline plans for the third round of public and stakeholder engagement (PSE3) (available shortly in the [documents section](#) of the website in the Public and Stakeholder Engagement section) which will take place in the autumn. This will again include a wide range of activities to help inform people about what is happening and the issues involved, as well as providing opportunities for people to ask questions and tell the Partnership what they think.

Partnership members discussed some of the methods it is planning to use to ensure people have a number of opportunities to find out more and get involved. These included young people, the business community, membership organisations and harder to reach groups.

In PSE3 the Partnership will place a greater emphasis on briefings and presentations to different groups in the area. It will have more exhibition stands in shopping areas and at events in West Cumbria and posters and newsletters will again be put into places like libraries and leisure centres. There are also plans to do some advertising on TV and radio.

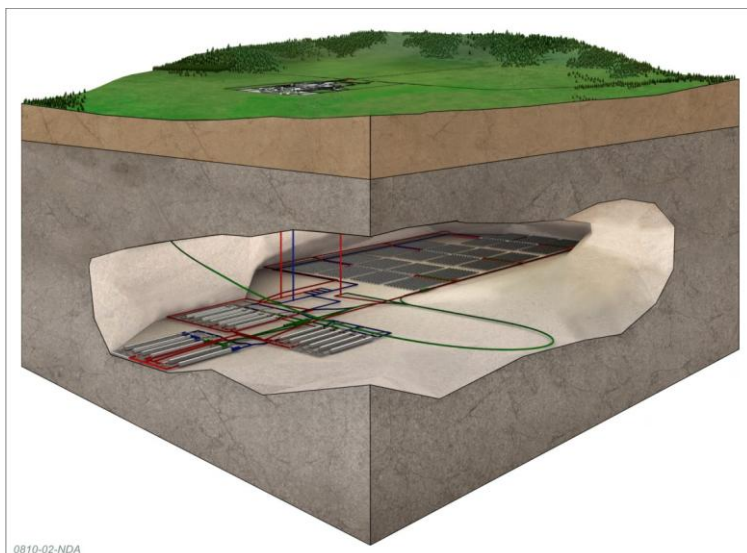
There were comments from a couple of members of the public about the importance of ensuring that consultations are genuine. One person argued that there had not

been enough scrutiny in the process and that there needed to be recognition of 'conflict' over this issue if the consultations are not to be tokenistic.

There was also a comment about the resources provided by the Government for this process needing to be what is necessary for the task.

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#### 4. Focus on geology



Artist's impression showing what a repository might look like (NDA).

The Partnership is holding a seminar on geology in Whitehaven at 6.30pm on Monday 20th June which will be open to the public.

As part of its work programme the Partnership needs to decide whether it is satisfied that sufficient areas are remaining in West Cumbria after the initial screening by the British Geological Survey to make further progress worthwhile. [During the second round of the Partnership's public and stakeholder engagement programme](#) there were repeated assertions from some members of the public 'that Nirex has already ruled out West Cumbria as being suitable for a repository'.

This view is largely based on arguments presented by Professor David Smythe. A number of other people and organisations have argued that this is not the case. For example, the Committee on Radioactive Waste Management (CoRWM) has said: 'Our position is that there is presently no credible scientific case to support the contention that all of West Cumbria is geologically unsuitable'. Copies of these documents are available on the [Partnership's website](#), under the sub heading 'external documents'.

The aim of the seminar is therefore to give Partnership members and the public the opportunity to better understand some of the issues involved.

The speakers will include:

- The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority
- Dr Jeremy Dearlove, who is the Partnership's peer reviewer
- Dr Adrian Bath who was a member of the panel that selected the criteria for the study by the British Geological Survey.

The seminar will be held at Whitehaven Civic Hall. If you would like to attend the seminar please contact [jenny@3kq.co.uk](mailto:jenny@3kq.co.uk) so we can make sure enough seating is available.

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## 5. The Partnership on tour of West Cumbria



The third round of Public and Stakeholder Engagement in the autumn will be the key point at which people should give their views. However, we will be providing a number of opportunities over the next few months for people to find out more about this process and the issues involved. This includes a series of exhibition stands in town centres and at events across West Cumbria.

The most recent of these exhibition stands were at the markets in Keswick and Whitehaven in late May.

The Partnership will also have a stand at the Whitehaven Festival on the weekend of 18th and 19th June, and then at other locations across Copeland and Allerdale will feature over the summer. Keep an eye on the Partnership [events](#) page for further information.

As well as picking up information from the stands, people will be able to fill in a comment card and take part in a competition.

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## 6. Future Partnership meetings



Members of the public are welcome to attend [Partnership meetings](#) as observers and are also given an opportunity to ask questions at the end of the morning and afternoon sessions.

We would be grateful if anyone who is planning to attend could contact [catherine.little@copeland.gov.uk](mailto:catherine.little@copeland.gov.uk) to let her know so that we can ensure that enough seating is made available. The next scheduled meeting is:

- 23rd June 2011, Market Hall, Egremont, 0845 arrivals, 0900-1530

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## 7. Getting involved



A key role of the West Cumbria MRWS Partnership is to represent the views of people living in or near West Cumbria in these discussions with the Government.

As well as the exhibition stands and newsletters you can find more information on our website and we will be sending another newsletter to all homes in West Cumbria later in June.

You can send us your views by using e-mail [contact@westcumbriamrws.org.uk](mailto:contact@westcumbriamrws.org.uk), freephone (0800 048 8912) or freepost (Freepost RSKT-LTXU-HAYC, West Cumbria MRWS Partnership, Copeland Borough Council, The Copeland Centre, Catherine Street, Whitehaven CA28 7SJ).

The West Cumbria MRWS Partnership also has a Facebook Page and a Twitter profile. You can find these at: <http://on.fb.me/fbZzir> or by following [@westcumbriamrws](https://twitter.com/westcumbriamrws) on Twitter.

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## 8. Frequently Asked Questions

In each of these e-bulletins we include two 'Frequently Asked Questions'. You can find more of these [Q&As on our website](#).

### Q. Who will regulate the safety of any geological disposal facility?

**Answer provided by the Environment Agency and the Office for Nuclear Regulation:**

**A.** The Environment Agency, the Office for Nuclear Regulation, and the Department for Transport will regulate any geological disposal facility in England and Wales. We are working together to make sure that the design and operation of any facility meets our high standards for environmental protection, safety, security, waste management and radioactive waste transportation.

Before developing, operating or closing any geological disposal facility, the developer needs to apply for permits and licences. Before issuing a permit or licence, we need

to be satisfied that the developer's safety cases are consistent with our regulatory requirements. These requirements take account of international standards and guidance, our knowledge and experience, and, in some cases, responses to public consultations.

We review our requirements periodically to ensure they remain consistent with current knowledge and understanding.

For further information, see our joint website: <http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/geological-disposal>

**Q. What would happen if there was a decision to take part in the search for somewhere to put a repository?**

**A.** It's important to understand that a decision to participate would not be a decision to host a facility. At this stage we are simply looking to make a decision in principle about whether we are prepared to consider hosting a geological disposal facility somewhere in West Cumbria.

If West Cumbria does make a decision to participate, a Community Siting Partnership would be established to build on the work done by the current Partnership. Ongoing Partnership discussions would be coupled with the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority looking at a wide range of criteria, including detailed safety, social, environmental and geological assessments to begin to narrow the focus to potentially suitable areas.

At each stage increasingly detailed assessments would be made of potential areas, with resources becoming focused on investigating those that are most likely to be suitable. The community would be able to withdraw from the process right up to the point when a planning application is made to start work on building a facility, probably more than a decade from now.

For more information on the site assessment process see the NDA paper on Site Assessment Methodologies, which is Document 56 in the [Documents section](#) (under criterion 5 – Siting Process).

**Please pass this e-bulletin on. Thank you.**

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