

# South Copeland GDF Community Partnership Newsletter



Welcome to the seventh newsletter from the South Copeland GDF Community Partnership. We're now into our third year as part of the GDF programme.

## Contents

The Journey to GDF	4
South Copeland's geology	6
How is nuclear waste transported?	10
Aerial surveys identify local wildlife	12
Supporting South Copeland with Cumbria CVS	14
Apply for Community Investment Funding	17

As a Community Partnership we aim to assist everyone in the local community through the Geological Disposal Facility (GDF) process, by seeking out and sharing relevant information, discussing concerns and answering your questions about the siting process and what hosting a GDF could mean for South Copeland.

We provide communications, deliver engagement activities and award Community Investment Funding (CIF) via the Community Investment Panel. The Partnership also shares information on siting activities in South Copeland – such as studies and surveys being undertaken by Nuclear Waste Services (NWS), the GDF developer.



### Engagements

Number of local events attended: **63**

Number of people spoken to individually: **906**

### Newsletter subscribers

**3** newsletters and **4** information leaflets delivered to

**5,478** households



Number of e-bulletins:

**4**

**422** social media posts



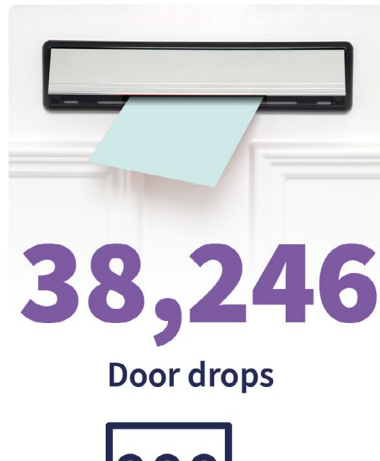
**108**

Contact Centre enquiries

Three-in-five,

**60%**

of people attributed their awareness of GDF to a newsletter or leaflet in the post (November 2023)



**38,246**

Door drops

### Community Investment Funding

**51**

enquiries

**23**

awards



**12** small grants below **£10,000**

**6** medium grants between **£10,001 and £50,000**

**5** large grants above **£50,000**

**9,268**

Web page views

**1,909**

Website users



Number of e-bulletin subscribers:

**644**

Number of **times social posts** have been seen

**1,051,628**



“Whatever your views on a GDF, we want to hear them – and it’s important to have these conversations throughout the process so that we, Cumberland Council and NWS, understand all local views”

A suitable site and a willing community have to be identified in order for a GDF to be built (more on this on page 4).

The Community Partnership will work to ensure that whether a GDF is delivered in South Copeland or elsewhere, there will be benefits and a positive legacy for our community. We’re now starting to think about what the future of our area could look like, and we’ll be progressing this visioning work and involving local people in the discussions in the coming months.

In this issue, we take a closer look at what the journey to GDF will involve, provide an update on South Copeland’s geology and the aerial surveys, answer a frequently asked question on nuclear waste transportation, and explore the positive impact of CIF locally.

If you’re interested in learning more or staying up to date, please do keep an eye on our website news page where we provide a range of useful links and resources, and information on particular subject areas. You can also sign up to our e-bulletin and follow us on social media.

I hope you find this issue interesting and informative. As always, do get in touch if you have any questions or feedback.

**Ged McGrath,**

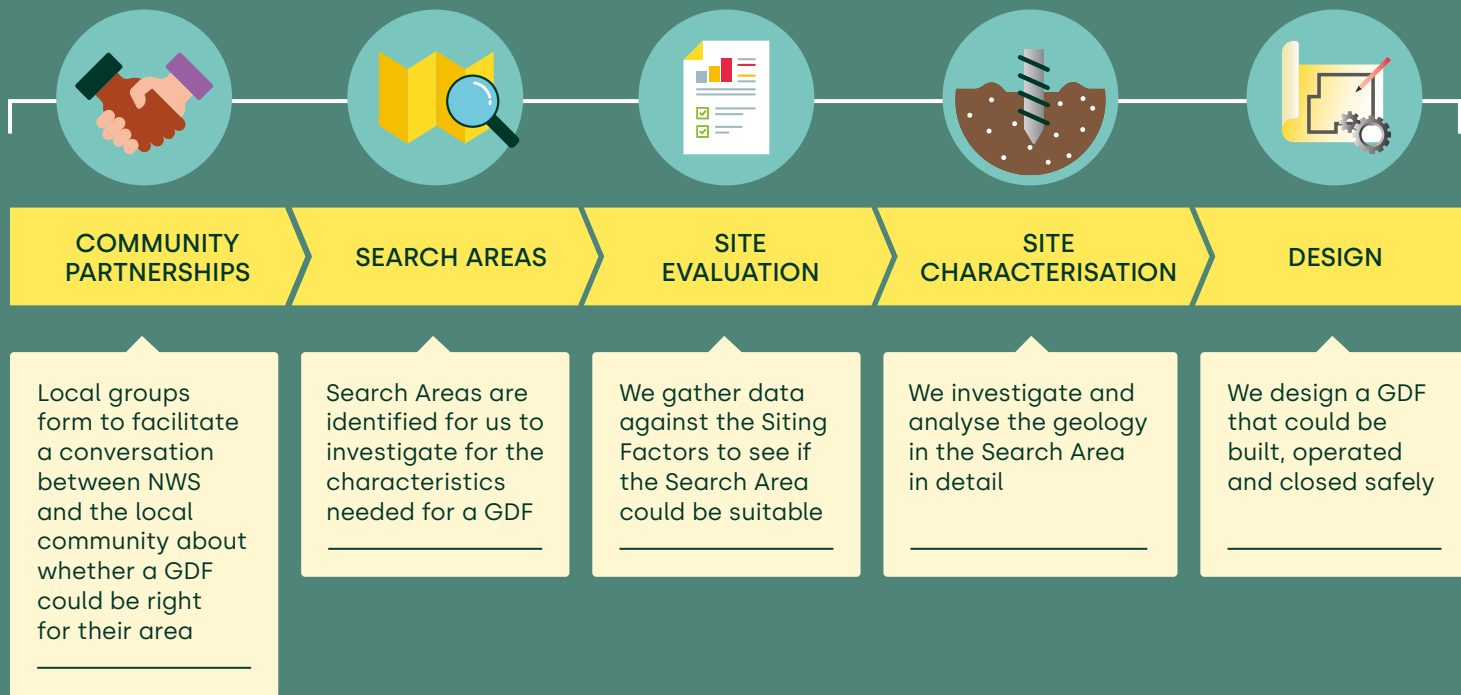
Chair, South Copeland GDF Community Partnership



# News from Nuclear Waste Services: The Journey to GDF

Selecting a Geological Disposal Facility site

up to **20** years



A GDF needs both a suitable site and a willing community, who has expressed consent in a Test of Public Support.

A GDF is a facility designed to safely and securely dispose of the most hazardous radioactive waste in highly engineered vaults and tunnels deep underground.

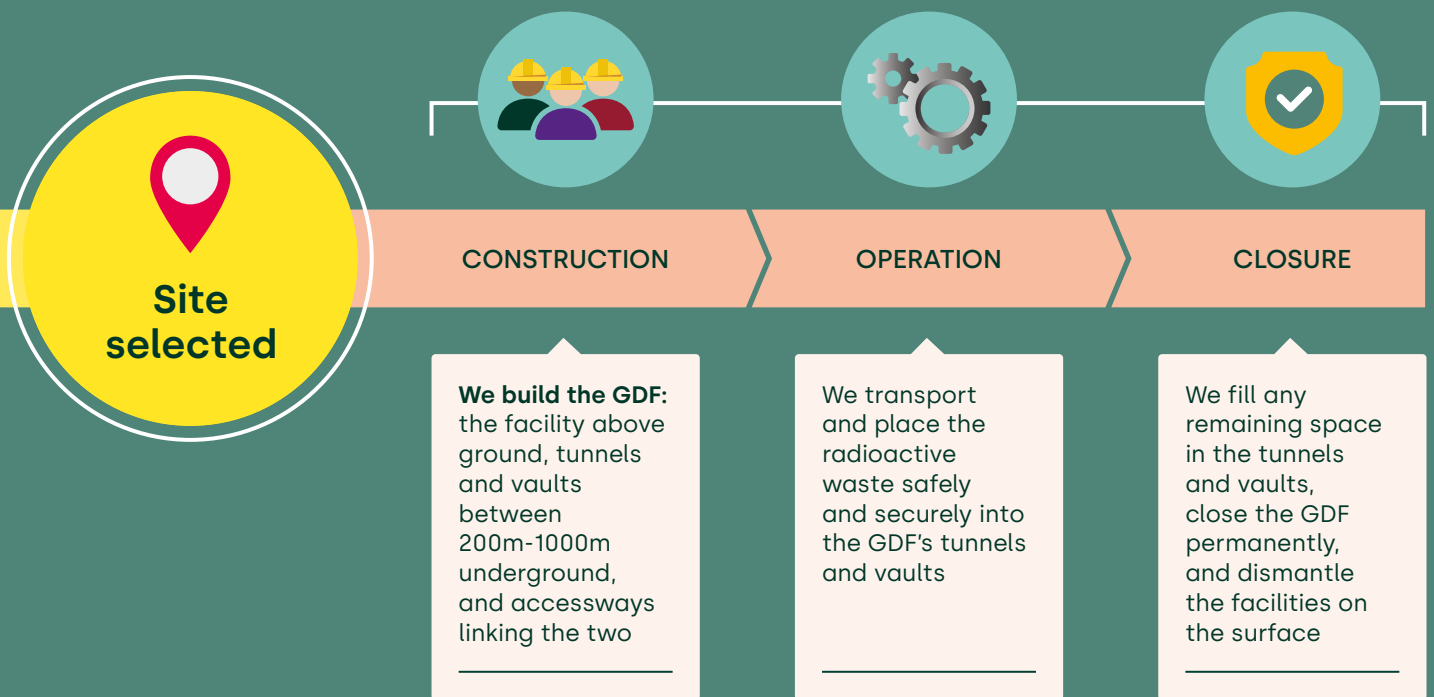
The GDF programme requires NWS to find both a suitable site and a willing community and is still in the early stages.

GDFs are internationally recognised by governments, technical experts and scientists as the best solution for the safe, permanent disposal of our most radioactive waste.

NWS is the developer of a GDF and, as part of its process to evaluate the three existing Community Partnership Search Areas in Mid Copeland and South Copeland in Cumbria and Theddlethorpe,

# Making radioactive waste permanently safe

150 years



A video on the Journey to GDF can be found on our YouTube channel by following the QR code:



in Lincolnshire, will gather data to understand if an area could be suitable to host a GDF. There will also be a Test of Public Support to determine whether the Potential Host Community is willing to host a GDF.

NWS will evaluate each potential area, through its site evaluation process, to establish its

suitability based on six siting factors: safety and security, community, environment, engineering feasibility, transport, and value for money.

Detailed studies and investigations will be conducted over a number of years to help ensure a GDF can be constructed, operated, and closed safely and securely.

# Members learn more about Copeland's coastal geology at BGS visit



**Members of the Community Partnership recently visited the British Geological Survey (BGS) in Nottingham to help understand the methods and techniques used to interpret geological and geophysical data.**

The BGS is one of several organisations providing geological support and expertise to GDF developer, NWS, as they undertake investigations to determine whether South Copeland could potentially be a suitable site.



During their visit, members examined data from a Marine Geophysical Survey conducted in the Copeland inshore area in August 2022. They also discussed how this data is interpreted and used in NWS assessments of the areas potential geology for hosting a GDF.

During the March visit, the Partnership group toured BGS' facilities, including rock laboratories and the National Geological Repository (NGR), the UK's largest collection of geoscience samples. They viewed rock samples being assessed by the GDF programme from the inshore Copeland area.

NWS has indicated that initial work in Mid and South Copeland shows potentially suitable geology in the inshore area, and their work continues to develop understanding of the subsurface. As a Partnership, we will update you as and when more information becomes available.





“The visit to BGS showed the members of the Community Partnership the extensive work that has been done to understand the geology offshore. The process is continuing and evolving as engineers look at how the geology affects the design and construction of a facility designed to last thousands of years.”

Chris Gigg, Drigg & Carleton Parish Council and Community Partnership member



# Progress in understanding South Copeland's geology: Video

Following a public event in February looking at progress on studies to understand the rocks in the Copeland and East Irish Sea areas, the geology experts from NWS have created a video describing their work to date.

This video looks at NWS' ongoing work to develop geological understanding. This understanding is being developed from the evaluation of seismic data, from both the NWS Marine Geophysical Survey and other surveys undertaken in the past by oil and gas companies. This is being integrated with further information, including data from old oil and gas boreholes in the East Irish Sea region, as well as studies of comparable rocks in other parts of the country.



Scan the video QR code and find out what work has been undertaken to build understanding of the geology in Copeland.

## What you said about the event:



“Well presented and thorough explanation of the process”

“Excellent presentations run by experts”

“Very informative event”





# Your questions answered: How is nuclear waste transported?

A question that has cropped up regularly has been about the transportation of radioactive waste and whether this is safe.

If a GDF is built in this area, transport connections will be needed – which could include improvements to the existing transport infrastructure as well as new rail lines and other infrastructure to link the site with the national transport network.

‘Nuclear trains’ run on the same lines as normal trains daily and span almost all of the UK rail network.

Here, Sarah Bryson, a Transportation Specialist with NWS, reveals more about what is involved.

Sarah said: “A GDF would receive nuclear waste from around 20 sites across England and Wales. There would be in the region of five trains per week carrying radioactive waste packages to a GDF.

“Nuclear Transport Solutions, as the transport operator, is looking to transport approximately 2,200 packages a year. Waste packages will generally be manufactured from steel or concrete and weigh between 40 and 65 tonnes. Most [waste packages] will be around 2.2 metres tall and from two to four metres long.”

## Is it safe?

Sarah said: “In 2014, Public Health England estimated that, each year, approximately 110,000 transport containers were moved on the road, with 1,500 moved on the rail network.

“They have all occurred without a single major safety incident, since nuclear transport began in the 1960s.

“This unblemished safety record is due to robust management and packages undergo rigorous testing to ensure they remain safe no matter what happens to them.”

Sarah explained that to help ensure safety, “packages [of waste] undergo drop testing from [heights of] 1.2 to nine metres. Fire testing is carried out at 800°C for 30 minutes.

“All testing is recorded and can be scrutinised by the Office of Nuclear Regulation [ONR]. Transport containers are manufactured to strict conditions, and these are also put through tests. Containers are loaded to strict procedures and checks are made before transport.”





## Transport Statistics

### 20 sites

A GDF would receive nuclear waste from around 20 sites across England and Wales, but over 80% of it is at Sellafield in Cumbria



**800°C** packages are tested at extremely high temperatures to ensure safety



### 5 trains

Around five trains each week will transport packages of nuclear waste to the GDF site

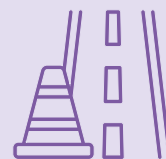
In 2014, Public Health England estimated that, every year, approximately

**110,000 transport packages**

of waste were moved on the roads, and approximately

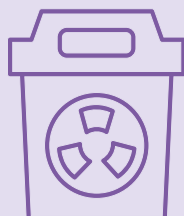
**1,500 packages**

are moved on the Rail Network



### 2,200 packages

of nuclear waste are anticipated to be transported each year (approximately)



**40-65 ton** weight of waste packages, which are made from steel or concrete

### 100% safety record

with zero incidents, but emergency plans are in place in the unlikely event that a transport issue does arise



## What happens during transport?

Highly trained specialists plan and control movement of waste and operate under a nuclear transport security plan approved by the ONR.

Sarah said: “Only those who need to know are aware when transport shipments are happening and where they are going, and some shipments will have an armed escort.

“We are proud of our 100 per cent safety record but we have emergency plans in place and practise so everyone knows what to do should an issue arise.”

Learn more at [nucleartransportsolutions.com](http://nucleartransportsolutions.com).





# Aerial surveys continue to identify local wildlife



**NWS has carried out eleven marine aerial surveys off the coast of Copeland between October 2023 and August 2024. These surveys have provided information about the birds and marine wildlife in the inshore area and, together with other environmental surveys, will provide baseline data as part of work to understand if an area is suitable for a GDF.**

Two planes fly once every month, during daylight hours, using high resolution video cameras to take pictures of the different species in the air or on/in the water. These images are then looked at by computer software and trained ecologists.

These aerial surveys are an important part of gathering the data needed to understand the environment of an area. The plane flies at a low altitude yet is high enough not to disturb the wildlife being observed. At this stage NWS are not looking for any specific species although the data will be used to get a better understanding of protected species using the area.





## Birds and wildlife spotted



**Guillemot**



**Oystercatcher**



**Harbour porpoise**

Information from the surveys show which species have been identified so far. Harbour Porpoise have been spotted, and the most common birds seen are Guillemot, Herring Gull, Oystercatcher, Razorbill.

The surveys were initially carried out for six months, during the autumn and winter months. Data to cover all the seasons is needed, so a second phase of environmental baseline surveys began in April 2024. These will run until October 2024 to capture data from the spring and summer season, and further surveys after October 2024 are also being considered.

Similar surveys are being carried out off the coast of East Lindsey, Lincolnshire.

Dr Jessica Burrows, Environmental Assessment Manager, said: “The aerial surveys currently being undertaken by NWS provide valuable data on the birds and marine mammal species currently utilising the area. This data will provide a robust baseline for our systematic environmental assessments to support one of the largest environmental protection programmes in the UK. We will be pleased to share the results of the surveys as soon as we are able to.”

# Supporting South Copeland with Cumbria Council for Voluntary Service

Berry Moyle Rosser, Development Officer at Cumbria Council for Voluntary Service (Cumbria CVS), is giving a boost to the Charity Sector in South Copeland, thanks to Community Investment Funding (CIF) awarded by the South Copeland GDF Community Partnership Investment Panel.

CIF of up to £1 million has been made available to the Community Partnership by NWS as the area participates in the siting process for a GDF.

The grants are designed to empower local projects that create economic opportunities, enhance the natural and built environment, or improve community wellbeing.

The focus is on sustainability and leaving a lasting legacy, and in December 2022 Cumbria CVS was granted £148,824 CIF to cover a three-year period.

This funding resulted in the employment of **Berry Moyle Rosser**, a dedicated Development Officer based in Millom, and a commitment to ensure 40 Third Sector groups in the South Copeland area receive the support they need over the next three years. So far, 45 projects have benefitted.





**The support provided includes:**

- Funding advice: Assistance with funding searches and application support
- Governance support: Help with trustee recruitment, training, and reviewing governing documents and policies
- Project/business planning: Guidance on developing robust plans
- Volunteer recruitment: Strategies to attract and retain volunteers
- Project monitoring and evaluation advice: Ensuring projects meet their goals effectively

The organisation also holds local training and networking events, and volunteers are provided with placements and training to increase skills and confidence.

Below, Berry shares insights on what this means for the people and charitable organisations in South Copeland – and how your organisation could benefit from the support offered.

## **Tell us about your work at Cumbria CVS...**

My role is varied and no two days are the same! I support voluntary groups in South Copeland, from Millom, where I am based, to Eskdale Green. I assist with finding and applying for grants, recruiting trustees or volunteers, and providing training in voluntary management and governance. This includes helping to start charities, drafting constitutions, and developing five-year plans. Thanks to the Community Investment Funding, our service is free, and I enjoy working in this beautiful part of Cumbria, meeting people where they are.

## **What types of funding and funders can voluntary organisations access with your support?**

I have access to an online directory to find grants which are suitable for specific projects. NWS makes up to £1 million available annually to South Copeland (Community Investment Funding), but there are many other local and national funding streams available that I can provide understanding on and access to. By discussing project scopes and needs, I help identify suitable funders to benefit the project. Since starting in July 2023, I've helped secure £230,000 for local groups and initiatives.

## **How are local projects benefitting from the additional support services on offer?**

The work I do is varied depending on the needs of the individual or group. I have helped eight village halls upgrade their audio visual and conference facilities to improve sustainability and increase usage, supported heritage centres in community outreach, assisted tourist attractions in finding volunteers, secured two years of funding for a charity's work combatting loneliness, and funding for an accessible footpath. Earlier this year, a colleague of mine and myself held a training course on volunteering management, and I am helping organisations to become more sustainable by developing their business plans or setting up Community Interest Companies enabling them to trade for the good of the community they serve in.



## What stands out to you about the Voluntary Sector in South Copeland, and how do you see it developing moving forward?

One thing which stands out for me is the resilience and ‘can do’ attitude, which is so positive and infectious. You know you will achieve results, it’s just a matter of finding the right way of doing things, and this is so refreshing. Even if a community group gets knocked down – maybe they did not get the money they needed – they pick themselves up and try again, and if it means looking at different opportunities and trying a different approach, they do.

I’ve worked with over 40 organisations in 10 months and one thing I’m aiming for is to foster more networking among groups. I recently held a networking event with over 25 community groups who learnt from each other over tea and biscuits. The atmosphere in the room was fantastic and I would love to grow and develop these networking opportunities over the coming year, not just by providing opportunities for people to meet in person, but also by introducing a bi-monthly newsletter sharing news from different groups, helping to make sure everyone feels included, connected and informed in what is an incredible part of Cumbria.

If you are interested in learning more, working with Berry, or benefitting from the services on offer, he can be reached at the Millom Community Hub where he has an office in the Duddon Room. He can also be reached on 07826284929 or email at Beresford.

[MoyleRosser@cumbriacvs.org.uk](mailto:MoyleRosser@cumbriacvs.org.uk). His working days are Monday, Tuesday and Thursday.





## Other projects benefitting from CIF so far this year:

So far in 2024, funding totalling £512,000 has been awarded by the South Copeland GDF Community Partnership Investment Panel from the GDF programme:

- Bootle Village Hall: £50,000 for a play area next to Bootle Village Hall
- Cumberland & Westmorland Archaeological & Antiquarian Society: £1,020 additional funding to research the history of Irton
- Eskdale Mill Heritage Trust: £4,000 funding to contribute towards volunteer training and costs
- Millom Baptist Church: £46,089 for audio visual equipment
- Millom Bowling Club: £16,000 for a new greens mower
- Millom National Children's Choir: £5,000 for children to attend national Children's Choir residential
- Millom RLFC: £45,739 for the installation of Solar Panel System
- Millom Striders Running Club: £2,536 to provide funding for a running event from Millom up the West Coast
- Millom Town Council: £8,847 funding to replace public seating and place new seating around the lagoon
- Silecroft Village Hall: £27,964 for village hall audiovisual enhancements
- St Paul's Church: £400 for Phase 1 of the Anglian Cross & Crusaders Slab Conservation
- West Lakes Rotary Club: £4,295 funding to contribute towards Interpretation Boards for St Paul's Church to Irton Hall walk



## How to apply for Community Investment Funding:

Funding is available to support projects in South Copeland that provide economic development opportunities, enhance the natural and built environment or improve community wellbeing.

For further details, visit our website at [southcopeland.workinginpartnership.org.uk](https://southcopeland.workinginpartnership.org.uk) or get in touch by email at [communityinvestment-southcopeland@nuclearwasteservices.uk](mailto:communityinvestment-southcopeland@nuclearwasteservices.uk)











**South Copeland**  
GDF Community Partnership

## Helpdesk

Managed by NWS

 0300 369 0000

 [gdfinfo-southcopeland@nuclearwasteservices.uk](mailto:gdfinfo-southcopeland@nuclearwasteservices.uk)

 Freepost SOUTH COPELAND  
COMMUNITY PARTNERSHP

### Follow us:

 [South Copeland GDF Community Partnership](#)

 [South Copeland GDF Community Partnership](#)

 [@CopelandS\\_CP](#)

**Data Protection and GDPR** Your information will be processed in accordance with UK Data Protection laws and we have robust systems in place to keep your information safe. Your information will be stored on our secure systems and shared with relevant individuals where necessary to process your query.