



Working in Partnership Copeland

Minutes of the 23rd Meeting of the Mid Copeland GDF Community Partnership

Held at St Mary's Room, St Mary's Church, Gosforth

On Monday 14th October 2024

Commencing at 3:00pm

Present:

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| Andy Pratt | Chair |
| Sam Pollen | Cumberland Council Lead (for part of the meeting) |
| Gillian Johnston | NWS Community Engagement Manager |
| Cllr David Moore | Seascale Parish Council |
| Julie Nugent | Chair of Beckermeth with Thornhill Parish Council |
| Karen Warmoth | Drigg & Carleton Parish Council |
| Mike Slater | Farming Sector Lead |
| Yvonne Clarkson | Business Sector Lead |
| Bob Jones | Chair of Calderbridge & Ponsonby Parish Council |
| Jonathan Cook | Cumberland Officer |

NWS Support:

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| Sue Shepherd | NWS, Community Engagement Coordinator |
| Anne Broome | NWS, Community Partnership Operations Manager |
| Jodie Dougherty | NWS, Community Partnership Assistant |
| Gill Thorne | NWS, Communications Lead |
| Amy Shelton | NWS, Principal Community Engagement Manager – Northwest |

Guest Speakers:

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| Owen Thomas | Yonder Consulting, Partner |
| Flora French | Yonder Consulting, Associate |

Apologies:

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| Jackie Atkinson | Gosforth Parish Council |
| Deborah Naylor | Youth Sector Lead |

AGENDA 1: HOUSE KEEPING, WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS TO INCLUDE DECLARATION OF INTEREST AND MINUTES/ACTION LOG OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chair welcomed the Community Partnership members and guest speakers. No members of the public were present.



Minutes from 22nd September 2024 were approved. It was noted that some actions were long standing, and NWS representatives were asked to address this.

Actions from the previous meeting:

| REF: 11092024 | MEETING ACTION LOG |
|---------------------------|--|
| Agenda 5 03 11122023 | CEM and Comms Manager to discuss with NWS potential events in the wider communities within Cumberland. Ongoing |
| Agenda 4 22042024 01 | CEM/OM to review concerns arising from Withdrawal Subgroup meeting and report findings back to Partnership. Ongoing |
| Agenda 10 22042024 01 | Former OM provide Chair with breakdown of applicants of NWS National Youth Forum by postcode/geographical area. To Identify those from Cumbria and potentially involve them in the Partnership. Ongoing |
| Agenda 4 26062023 01 | Site Evaluation Manager to provide timeline of siting activity to Community Partnership members before going on the website. Under review |
| Agenda 7 29072024 01 | CEM to arrange for Crown Estate to come along to a Partnership meeting in Autumn Ongoing |
| Agenda 4 29072024 01 | NWS to confirm the timeline to borehole aspiration by 2030. DCO team to clarify Complete – Unable to address at this time |
| Agenda 6.2 29072024 02 | CEM/CIF Manager to investigate whether it is possible to have a funded resource to help people with bigger grant applications Ongoing – CIF applicants can include PM cost in application. It was suggested NWS approached the Supply Chain. |
| Agenda 5 11092024 01 | <p>NWS PVP Scheme Officer to find out if and how long the scheme would continue if the CP were withdrawn from the process. Complete</p> <p>If a community exits the siting process before the site characterisation phase begins in that community, any applications which have been received and acknowledged by the PVP Team will continue to be processed. Any applications which have been received and acknowledged but are awaiting additional evidence before the PVP Panel’s decision, that additional evidence must be provided within three months of the date of the community’s exit from the siting process, or the application will be deemed to have been withdrawn.</p> <p>For the avoidance of doubt, only applications which have already been received and acknowledged by the PVP team prior to the date of a community’s exit from the siting process can continue through the PVP scheme in the usual way. No new applications to the PVP scheme will be accepted on or after the date on which a community is no longer participating in the siting process.</p> |
| Agenda 5 11092024 02 | A concern was raised with regards to the business ratable value being capped at £36K for PVP claims. Whilst most business within the area would be well |



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| | <p>within this limit it was noted that some could exceed this. CEM to take this to NWS. Complete</p> <p>NWS has recently launched the Property Value Protection (PVP) which is based upon previous public sector property assistance schemes such as those operated by Crossrail, High Speed 2 and National Highways. The business annual ratable value is consistent with such schemes.</p> |
| <p>Agenda 7.1 11092024 01</p> | <p>CET to share business letter with Chair and Business Lead. Complete</p> <p>Letter approved and sent out to local businesses.</p> |
| <p>Agenda 9 11092024 01</p> | <p>NDA land holding around site had options held by GDF. The NWS team were asked to confirm the NDA position on land holdings with regards to GDF.</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>The NDA has significant land holdings across the search area which is used for a range of operational and non-operation purposes. There is an area of land around Longlands Farm that is subject to a long-term option agreement dating back to Nirex in the 1990s, there are no other agreements in place for NDA or other private land. NWS collaborates across the NDA Group on land use requirements. NWS can confirm it has no property interest in the lands at Moorside.</p> |

AGENDA 2: ROUND THE ROOM INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions were made by the Mid Copeland Community Partnership members, NWS support team, and NWS guest speakers.

AGENDA 3: CHAIR'S REPORT

The Chair explained that representatives from the Community Partnership, including himself, have been invited to attend an international conference in Vienna on 20th October 2024, to discuss best practices on engagement. South Copeland and Theddlethorpe Community Partnership will also be sending representatives. Delegates from all over the world will be in attendance to give insights on best practise for Community Engagement.

The Chair attended a recent Out of Search Area event at the Beacon in Whitehaven. He said it went very well, with lots of in-depth conversations with the public. People were staying a very long time; and good feedback was received. They made good use of the VR headsets, interactive boards, videos and 3D model.

The Chair informed the Community Partnership that representatives from Theddlethorpe would like to visit Mid and South Cumbria area in November to learn more about the Partnerships, and the geographical area. The new Theddlethorpe Chair is keen to understand our processes so we can work together and share experiences.



The Chair asked the Partnership members if they thought it would be beneficial for members to visit an overseas GDF facility? Other Community Partnership members who had visited Finland thought this was very valuable and felt it had helped put it into context about the scale of a GDF and embedded their understanding.

AGENDA 4: SURVEY AND RESEARCH FEEDBACK

Between July and August 2024, Yonder oversaw a survey of 309 residents (aged 16+) via a combination of telephone interviewing and in-person face-to-face interviewing across the electoral ward of Gosforth. The programme of work replicates research conducted in 2022 and 2023 to provide updated insight into the attitudes of residents (16+) towards nuclear waste and geological disposal in the Search Area. Support for the construction of a GDF in the Search Area remained high and in line with previous surveying.

- Two-in-five were aware of the UK's current storage method for its most hazardous waste. Awareness was higher among older men and those with a direct industry connection.
- Nearly half were able to identify the accurate description of a GDF. Understanding was greater among those with a direct connection to the industry and older men.
- 75% claimed to be aware of the Search Area. Claimed awareness was higher among older men and those with a direct industry connection.
- 69% claimed to be aware of the Community Partnership. Claimed awareness was higher among older men and those with an industry connection.

They were asked a question in relation to our social media posts, newsletters and leaflets, *'Before today, have you seen or read or heard anything about nuclear waste or geological disposal or a Geological Disposal Facility anywhere over the past year? Q. When you saw or read or heard something about nuclear waste or geological disposal or a Geological Disposal Facility (GDF) over the past year, did you do anything as a result?'*

- 61% recalled seeing, reading, or hearing something in the past year. One-in-three attributed their awareness to a leaflet or newsletter
- Of those who recalled seeing, reading, or hearing something, one-in-four claimed to do something as a result
- Therefore, of the total survey sample, 16% were able to recall something and claimed to have done something in response
- The proportion of those who recalled something and claimed to do something as a result declined since 2023.

Yonder gave an update on recent audience research they delivered with under-represented people.



Between July and August, they conducted a combination of individual and paired depth interviews with twelve working age residents from across the Gosforth ward. All interviewees were in either full-time or part-time employment. Outcome from the research showed the following: -

- Personal and circumstantial factors combined with a lack of motivation prevented participation
- The length of time to a decision combined with the fact that this was not new news also deterred engagement
- Determining how to motivate the community will be a crucial step in driving engagement

AGENDA 5: VISIONING FEEDBACK AND DISCUSSION

The Operations Manager delivered a recap on all the work the visioning subgroup had completed. Community Forums were supported by Jacobs and ARUP (NWS supply chain) who are collating the information from all the visioning sessions and producing the output onto a 'Miro' Board, the findings will be 'tested' with the public in the New Year.

As well as the Community Forums, the Community Partnership has also conducted a session with Drigg Young Farmers where 36 people attended (17 from the Gosforth ward) and also delivered a small session with SASRA committee members.

The Youth lead will continue to deliver projects to local youth groups, and these will feed into the overall vision.

Common themes from the forums currently relate to transport links, health and wellbeing and lack of non-nuclear skills providers.

The Community Partnership has also put together an online questionnaire for the community to complete. This is on the Mid Copeland GDF Community Partnership website and Partnership members have been asked to promote this within their communities.

The next Visioning Forums will take place in November, a leaflet has been sent to all homes in the Search Area to advertise the forums.

AGENDA 6: AOB:

CEM advised members of a Meet the Regulator meeting with the Environment Agency on Tuesday 5th November. Details will be forwarded via email.

01 COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

The Communications Lead recapped activity since the previous Community Partnership meeting. This included development of a questionnaire on community visioning which has been added to the website and used in communications materials.



A leaflet is also being sent out this week to all homes in the Community Partnership area encouraging them to take part in the November visioning forums, plus some Facebook advertising. A newsletter is being planned and written to be sent out early December, plus an e-newsletter.

02 COMMUNITY INVESTMENT FUNDING UPDATE

To date in CIF year 3 we have awarded 22 new awards totalling £716,654.15 mainly covering the Community Wellbeing criteria.

We have one panel left for CIF year 3 on 28th October 2024, with several applications received so far to the value of £280,727.

Of the total **77 awards** made to date since formation of the Community Partnership:

- 42 awards met the Community Wellbeing CIF criteria.
- 15 awards met the Improvements to Natural / Built Environment CIF criteria.
- 15 awards met the Community Wellbeing and Natural / Built Environment CIF criteria.
- 2 awards met the Community Wellbeing and Economic Development CIF criteria.
- 3 awards met the Community Wellbeing, Built Environment and Economic Development CIF criteria.

03 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Community Engagement Coordinator recapped activity which had taken place since the previous Community Partnership meeting. The team engaged with approximately 180 people at the following events:

- Gosforth coffee morning
- Beckermets Coffee Cake and Chat
- Shackles Off 50+ Club
- Out of Search Area – Beacon (NWS event)
- Gosforth Toddler Group
- Gosforth Scouts Project
- Beckermets Drop In

Visioning Forum events: -

- 18th September Gosforth Public Hall
- 18th September Bailey Ground Hotel, Seascale
- 19th September Beckermets Reading Rooms
- 19th September Thornhill Social Club
- 1st October - Young Farmers' visioning session
- 9th October – SASRA committee visioning session



Future Engagement events: -

There are several events planned for the rest of the year, the Community Engagement Team will continue to inform Community Partnership members of these on a fortnightly basis.

AGENDA 7: ISSUES FOR ESCALATION

None

AGENDA 8: PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No members of public were in attendance although questions had been received into the helpdesk prior to the meeting. These were read out at the meeting and the Partnership will seek further clarification from Nuclear Waste Services who will send a reply. The questions were as follows: -

I would like to ask a few questions related to the video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ed46pMrGDss> recently distributed and developments in the coal mine project.

For information they were: -

When will the potential on-shore site locations referred to in the video be identified and the public informed of where they are?

Is the Partnership aware of the attached Coal Authority decision and Report on its refusal to grant coal mining licenses to the applicant, noting the concern about subsidence and the lack of engagement with other state controlled bodies in particular?

Is the Partnership prepared to consider expanding the Mid Copeland GDF search area to include the former Marchon site? If not, is the developer open to discussions with potential Interested Parties in relation to the former Marchon site

AGENDA 9: DATE AND LOCATION OF NEXT MEETING

Next Community Partnership meeting will be held:

2nd December 2024, 3pm, Seascale Golf Club, The Banks Seascale, CA20 1QL

| REF: 14102024 | MEETING ACTION LOG |
|-------------------------|--|
| Agenda 5 03 11122023 | CEM and Comms Manager to discuss with NWS potential events in the wider communities within Cumberland. Complete PCEM working on Out of Search Area strategy |



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| Agenda 4 22042024 01 | CEM/OM to review concerns arising from Withdrawal Subgroup meeting and report findings back to Partnership. Ongoing |
| Agenda 10 22042024 01 | Former OM provide Chair with breakdown of applicants of NWS National Youth Forum by postcode/geographical area. To identify those from Cumbria and potentially involve them in partnership. Complete for CP, Chair now taking this to Joint Chairs' meeting |
| Agenda 4 26062023 01 | Site Evaluation Manager to provide timeline of siting activity to Community Partnership members before going on the website. Under review |
| Agenda 7 29072024 01 | CEM to arrange for Crown Estate to come along to a CP meeting in Autumn Ongoing |
| Agenda 1 14102024 01 | Can NWS clarify the acreage on Longlands Farm Complete - ~600ha (+/- 5%). |
| Agenda 1 14102024 02 | All - Agree dates for all actions to be completed in a timely manner. Complete |
| Agenda 1 14102024 03 | CEM to arrange for Programme Director to attend CP Meeting. Agenda item for December meeting. |
| Agenda 6 14102024 | CP Assistant to send email to Members regarding Meet the Regulators meeting. Complete |
| Agenda 8 14102024 | CEM to provide NWS with public questions for approved response. Complete |
| Agenda 1 14102024 | CP members requested potential national / international familiarisation visits to other GDF sites and relevant construction projects i.e. Tunnelling Complete - PCEM to investigate further. |

NWS RESPONSE TO PUBLIC QUESTIONS:

I'm now unable to attend the meeting later today but I was intending to ask a few questions related to the video

<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ed46pMrGDss>> recently distributed and developments in the coal mine project. For information they were:

- 1. When will the potential on-shore site locations referred to in the video be identified and the public informed of where they are?**

Response:

NWS is making real progress on their work to find a site for a Geological Disposal Facility. A GDF will only be built where there is both a suitable site and willing community. Identifying a suitable site takes a number of years and NWS has been evaluating the Search Areas (based on ward boundaries) in Mid Copeland. Studies are underway to assess site suitability and help ensure a GDF can be constructed, operated, and closed safely and securely.



2. Is the Partnership aware of the attached Coal Authority decision and Report on its refusal to grant coal mining licenses to the applicant, noting the concern about subsidence and the lack of engagement with other state controlled bodies in particular?

Response:

NWS acknowledges the referenced reports and as a public body will engage with all relevant parties both statutory and otherwise at the appropriate time in the GDF Siting process as part of our approach to working in partnership.

The geological environment needs to provide a stable host environment for the waste and engineered barriers and it is important to preserve its safety functions. It is therefore a requirement that appropriate excavation and construction techniques be applied to avoid unnecessary disturbance and minimise the excavation damaged zone.

Once we understand the geology further, we will develop our engineering designs and select an excavation technique and associated ground control method that is appropriate for the location selected.

3. Is the Partnership prepared to consider expanding the Mid Copeland GDF search area to include the former Marchon site?

Response:

The Managing Radioactive Substances and Nuclear Decommissioning Policy, makes clear the Community Partnership have a role to “Review and refine the boundaries of the Search Area as NWS’s investigations progress”. As detailed in the response to Q4, NWS have no further technical information at this time that would suggest the Community Partnership should review the Search Area to include the Marchon site.

4. If not, is the developer open to discussions with potential Interested Parties in relation to the former Marchon site?

Response:

Initial discussions can be initiated by anyone with a proposal for an area to be considered for a GDF. In this case the Mid Copeland GDF Community Partnership could modify its Search Area if NWS wished to study the rocks that could be accessed from the former Marchon site or for any other reason.



To date, NWS has focused its work on the Mercia Mudstone Group (MMG) potential rocks of interest in the inshore area. It is these rocks that were the focus of the major seismic survey carried out in 2022. The potential rocks of interest that could be accessed from the former Marchon site are different and are predominantly those of the Cumbrian Coast Group (CCG). The CCG rocks were considered when the Copeland Working Group identified the Mid Copeland Search Area but not included as a potential rock of interest. This decision was substantiated when studies in the neighbouring Allerdale GDF Community Partnership area confirmed the CCG present there, although of comparable complexity to the Mercia Mudstone Group, have comparatively reduced thickness in the depth range of interest. On this basis, the CCG rocks in Mid Copeland, as in Allerdale to the north, are expected to present challenges in terms of insufficient volume of host rock as well as the ability to make a post closure safety case. A further consideration for the Marchon site would be safety navigating former coal and other mining workings. Given these expected challenges, NWS would not suggest the Community Partnership should review the Search Area to include the Marchon site.