

Local vision

Youth groups help to create a Community Vision
Page 2

Business call

Cyber security event for businesses
Page 3

Areas of Focus

NWS identifies Areas of Focus in Mid Copeland
Pages 4-6



**Mid Copeland
GDF Community
Partnership**

MID COPELAND



News

Issue 6: Summer 2025

Supporting community engagement about a Geological Disposal Facility



£3million Community Investment Funding for Mid Copeland over past three years

PLAY PARKS, lifesaving equipment, community hall revamps, activities for young people and health and wellbeing services – these are just some of the enhanced amenities provided across the area over the past three years. They have been funded from the £1million available annually through Nuclear Waste Services’ Geological Disposal Facility (GDF) programme and awarded by Mid Copeland GDF Community Partnership. In year three, 33 grant awards totalling £1million were made to local organisations. Further grants are currently being awarded by the Partnership, which is now into its fourth year, as discussions progress around

what hosting a facility could mean for the Mid Copeland area. In addition to funding for local facilities and services, one of the projects funded will help those who may want to apply for Community Investment Funding but need some help and support. This £40,000 funding has been awarded to Cumbria CVS (Council for Voluntary Service) to provide development support for a year within the Mid Copeland GDF Search Area. This will help charities, community groups and social enterprises to apply for funding pots (including GDF Community Investment Funding) to bolster their organisation, increase economic opportunities and

help create employment. Support is being delivered by locally-based CVS Development Officer, Gareth Cavanagh, who will work closely with communities and organisations, helping them achieve growth and sustainability. It will help community organisations thrive by offering them training, business advice; supporting them to find and apply for funding opportunities, strengthen policies and procedures and recruit volunteers. Gareth said: “Charities, social enterprises and community groups can receive support with governance, training, policies and procedures and funding. “Volunteer recruitment initiatives will also benefit individuals who are

interested in gaining new skills and experience, as well as the organisations who need their support.” Partnership Chair, Andy Pratt, said: “This is a great service to be able to offer through Community Investment Funding. Not only will this help other organisations come forward to be supported in the application process for different pots of grant funding, but it will also give these organisations the support they need in other areas to ensure they are sustainable – business planning, economic growth opportunities and marketing.”

Continued on Page 7, including details of how to contact Gareth.

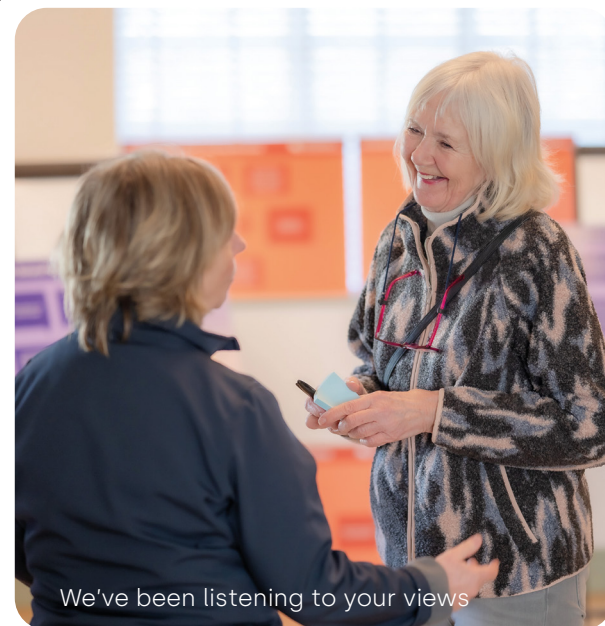
Read more about Community Investment Funding on Pages 7-8



Gosforth Scouts have made their voices heard

Pictures by Tom Kay

You've been telling us what matters the most to you



We've been listening to your views

THANK you for the time and effort so many people have given in helping us to start creating a Community Vision for this area as part of the GDF programme.

We've been asking people what matters to them in the near and long-term by gathering a range of views and ideas from across the local community through a number of visioning events – during which a wealth of ideas have been provided.

Earlier this year we have been back out into the community with some further feedback events to reflect those conversations and gather more views.

Themes so far have included the need for improved transport links and infrastructure; cycle paths; easier to reach health and wellbeing services; more local education and employment including offer of skills and trades.

Significant Additional Investment will be made available in a community that hosts a GDF. This investment will be shaped by a local community vision and could include, for example: local education and skills capacity, transport infrastructure or recreational facilities.

In addition, the Partnership's youth

engagement has also formed a large part of this work around a community vision.

Recently we have worked with Beckermat Youth Group and 1st Gosforth Scouts Troop.

Beckermat Youth Group provided presentations in the Reading Rooms to feed back their ideas which included better transport connectivity to access services, jobs, and social opportunities. They would also like improved recreational facilities to promote wellbeing and an active lifestyle; as well as exploring affordable, modern housing to accommodate the growing needs of the community.

Gosforth Scouts displayed their proposals for a new scout hut which included hopes for a climbing wall, large kitchen/dining room for cookery events, underfloor heating, disabled access, sleeping space, wall partition and storage, plus an outside area with nature garden, greenhouse, pond, picnic benches and a firepit.

Sue Shepherd, Community Engagement Co-ordinator for Nuclear Waste Services, said: "We have been

looking at what ideas young people have both now and also for the future in their communities.

"The groups have been really enthused. In Beckermat, there were some brilliant futuristic ideas and shorter-term plans to enhance their village and in Gosforth they focused on what a new scout hut could look like for them including practical, fun and sustainability ideas."

Deb Naylor, Area Operations Manager for Inspira and Youth Lead on the Partnership, added: "It's really important to us to gather the views of the local young people as they are our future.

"They are brimming with ideas and suggestions to help enhance their local areas and they have been a pleasure to work with. We are really keen to continue hearing the voices of young people as part of our work with the GDF programme."

The Community Engagement Team has continued to take the visioning feedback presentation boards out into the community to gather further feedback which is being discussed by the Partnership.



Beckermat Youth Group has taken part



Enjoying the Gosforth Scouts event

A word from our Chair

WELCOME to our latest printed newsletter from the Mid Copeland GDF Community Partnership. We're now halfway through our fourth year as part of the GDF programme.

The aim of the Partnership is to share information, discuss concerns and find answers to questions the community has about all aspects of the siting process, including what hosting a GDF could mean and how the community could benefit.

Nuclear Waste Services (NWS) announced its Areas of Focus at the beginning of this year and has been holding drop-in events and speaking with local people. Identifying Areas of Focus is the work of NWS, as the GDF developer, to look closer at the area, see where the possibilities are and where it will prioritise its studies.

I attended all of these events, you can read some feedback and initial thoughts on p6 of this newsletter. I'm sure discussions will continue for some time as we move forward.

I also attended the NWS' Research Support Office (RSO) Annual conference 2025 and was astounded at the level of work going on behind the scenes at universities around the subject of GDF.

The RSO is a collaboration between the University of Manchester and the University of Bristol to help support radioactive waste management solutions. These students are looking at a lot of the varied technologies around GDF and the enthusiasm is great to see.

I even left them with a challenge – to think about how they would speed up the GDF process as it's a question we get asked a lot at local events – why does it take so long?

As we're into our fourth year, we're also into our fourth year of granting Community Investment Funding locally and therefore the fourth million pounds is in the process of being awarded.

There's plenty of time to get your organisation to put in an application for this and there's lots of information on our website including getting in touch with the local team to have a talk through your ideas. We held a funding event earlier in the year to



explain more about how people can get involved.

You will also see from this newsletter that we have awarded funding to Cumbria Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) so they can bring their expertise to help local groups and organisations in Mid Copeland.

This will help them with a range of aspects of their organisation and sustainability and also with funding bids.

My challenge to this community is – think big! Both when thinking about the benefits that Community Investment Funding can bring in the shorter term but also what having a sustainable Community Vision could provide in the longer term. What will make this area sustainable for 150 years or more? What would a future community want?

Part of our work includes starting to piece together a vision to benefit our area – feedback so far includes requests for improved transport, access to employment, plus health and wellbeing services. Youth groups helping with this work are giving us their views and hopes which includes quality affordable housing, extra amenities and recreation facilities

We're also hearing that some people are happy with things as they are now and the benefits that living in a rural setting with a rich cultural heritage brings.

As we move forward your input and feedback continues to be vital, whether that is having conversations at events, providing us with your views, taking part in surveys, or asking for a presentation for your local group. Whatever it may be – please keep in touch and ask your questions – we will always endeavour to help.



The Partnership's Meet the Funders event was held earlier this year

Free cyber security guidance for businesses

THE PARTNERSHIP is holding two events for local businesses to come along and tell us what you think a Geological Disposal Facility (GDF) could mean for the area. You can help create a Community Vision by letting us know what's important to businesses in Gosforth electoral ward.

Business lead for the Partnership, Yvonne Clarkson, said: "As well as having a conversation about GDF, Nuclear Waste Services is on hand to offer practical cyber security advice plus a chance to take part in an interactive 'escape room' to help protect businesses in the digital age."

Location: Seascale Golf Club, Seascale, CA20 1QL
Date: Thursday, 3 July 2025
Time:

- 3-4pm – with option to join Cyber Security Escape Room 4-5pm
- 5.30pm-6.30pm – with option to join Cyber Security Escape Room, 6.30-7.30pm

Community Vision

Tell us your views around GDF, ask your questions and help create a Community Vision for the area by letting us know what is important to local businesses. How can we help businesses to grow and be resilient? What is important to you now and in the future?

Cyber security

Receive valuable, tailored advice from the NWS cyber security team on how to safeguard your business against ever-evolving digital threats.



Escape Room:

Option to join the Cyber Security Escape Room afterwards – Code Red is an interactive experience where teams collaborate to solve cyber-related challenges, raising awareness of weak spots and cyber threat.

Register by Monday, June 23:

Please let us know which event you would like to attend and also whether you would like to take part in the Cyber Security Escape Room experience afterwards by emailing:

GDFInfo-MidCopeland@nuclearwasteservices.uk FAO: Yvonne Clarkson or calling **0300 369 0000**.

NWS is the developer of a GDF, which is an underground facility designed to safely and securely dispose of the most hazardous radioactive waste.

Partnership meetings in public 2025

The Community Partnership has agreed to future meetings being quarterly and they will be as follows:

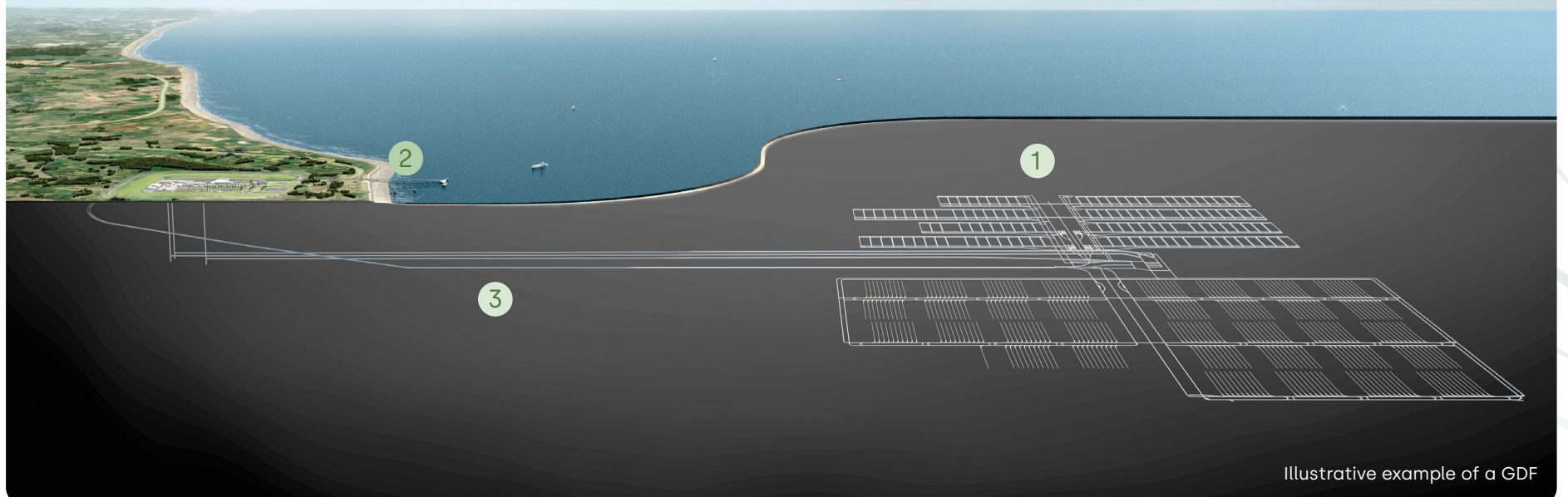
Wednesday, September 3, 1pm-3.30pm, Calderbridge and Ponsonby Village Hall

Monday, December 1, Seascale Golf Club, time to be confirmed (please check website for details).

News from NWS: GDF progress as Areas of Focus identified

Geological Disposal Facility for the most hazardous radioactive waste

1. Sub-surface
2. Surface
3. Accessways tunnels connecting surface site to disposal area



GDF developer takes forward studies and investigations

NUCLEAR WASTE SERVICES has published Areas of Focus in the search to find a suitable site and a willing community to host a Geological Disposal Facility (GDF). The areas are within the three communities currently involved in the process – Mid Copeland and South Copeland in Cumbria, and in East Lincolnshire.

Areas of Focus will enable NWS to focus more in-depth studies and investigations to help understand and consider the potential for an area to safely and securely host a GDF. They have been identified using a range of information, such as geological data, areas of environmental protection, and consideration of built-up areas.

Identification of Areas of Focus does not mean a GDF will be sited in these areas. Construction will only start when a suitable site is identified, a potential host community has confirmed its willingness to host the facility, and all necessary consents and permits have been obtained.

A GDF requires three key elements – the right sub-surface geological environment deep underground, a suitable surface location, and the ability to connect the two areas with accessways.

Two surface Areas of Focus have been identified in Mid Copeland – Land East of Sellafield and Land East of

Seascale. The sub-surface Area of Focus in the deep geology off the coast is the same for Mid Copeland and South Copeland.

Identifying these areas enables NWS to focus site evaluation studies, such as transport and environmental surveys, and the site characterisation work needed to consider the potential for an area to safely host a GDF.

WHAT ARE AREAS OF FOCUS?

These are smaller areas identified by NWS within the Search Area and inshore as the first step in the process of determining potentially suitable locations for a GDF in Mid Copeland.

The process NWS has followed in identifying Areas of Focus is similar to the approach taken by other large infrastructure projects. It has identified areas, based on current information, that may have the potential to host project infrastructure, taking into account potential constraints such as areas with environmental protection, close to settlements, or areas of flood risk. Some studies and investigations will continue across the Search Area and beyond – for example, to understand the wider geology and the potential benefits and impacts of a GDF.

THREE ELEMENTS OF A GDF



Step 1 – Identifying Sub-surface Areas of Focus

At the initial stage, NWS uses the outputs of the National Geological Screening, alongside other existing geological data and information, to identify the areas that are more likely to have the characteristics to host a GDF.



Step 2 – Identifying the Surface Areas of Focus

Once a Sub-surface Area of Focus has been identified, NWS considers surface locations within the Search Area, that have the potential to host the surface facilities of a GDF. NWS identifies land-use constraints based on the assessment principles, ‘impact topics’ and decision-making criteria set out in the National Policy Statement for Geological Disposal Infrastructure.



Step 3 – Identification of Accessway Areas of Focus

Once potential Sub-surface and Surface Areas of Focus have been defined, NWS identifies a potential accessway area using community considerations and geological characteristics – a corridor within which the surface site could be connected to the Sub-surface. This could consist of inclined tunnels linking to a surface portal, or shafts with connecting tunnels below ground, or a combination of both.

FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS IN IDENTIFYING AREAS OF FOCUS

NWS reviews potential Areas of Focus against its Six Siting Factors (Safety and Security, Community, Environment, Engineering feasibility, Transport, Value for Money) and considers relevant information from technical studies to date. This includes the proximity and viability of routes to transport networks, e.g. the road and rail network, the design and assessment of which will follow subsequently; other nearby major development/ project plans and the stage to which they have progressed; and the relative accessway distances between various areas under consideration.

All Areas of Focus, (Sub-surface, Surface and Accessway) are larger than required to allow for flexibility as NWS progresses with the studies and into design. The current estimate of the size of the surface site during the operational phase is about 1km² although this size could vary during construction.

The Sub-surface Area of Focus off the coast is approximately 300 km². The full area would not be needed, it’s currently estimated 20 km² – 50 km² would be required.

Potential identified accessways would avoid, where possible, tunnelling beneath settlements and urban areas. The full area identified would not be needed, it is currently estimated the final accessway corridors required would be between 250-500m wide.

HOW NWS IDENTIFIED AREAS OF FOCUS IN THE MID COPELAND SEARCH AREA

Sub-surface Area of Focus

Alongside the National Geological Screening data, in Mid Copeland, NWS looked at legacy 2D seismic data, and 3D seismic survey data collected by NWS in August 2022. This indicates that there may be a volume of rock with suitable geological characteristics to develop a GDF, which could be accessed from a surface site. Further studies will continue to develop understanding of this Sub-surface area as a potential host geology.

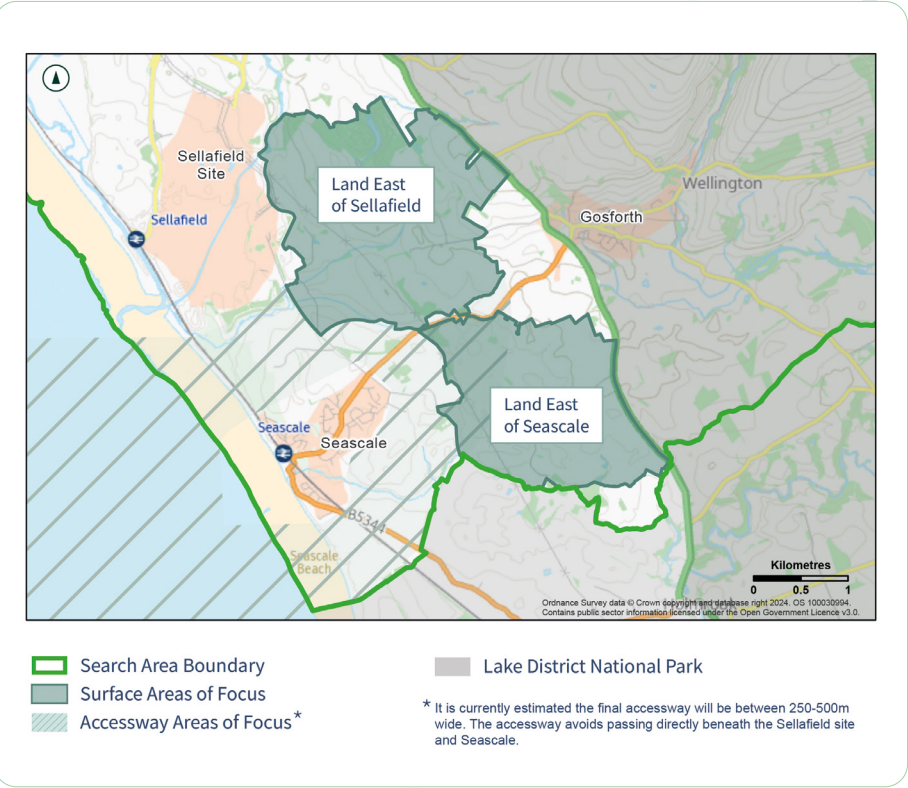
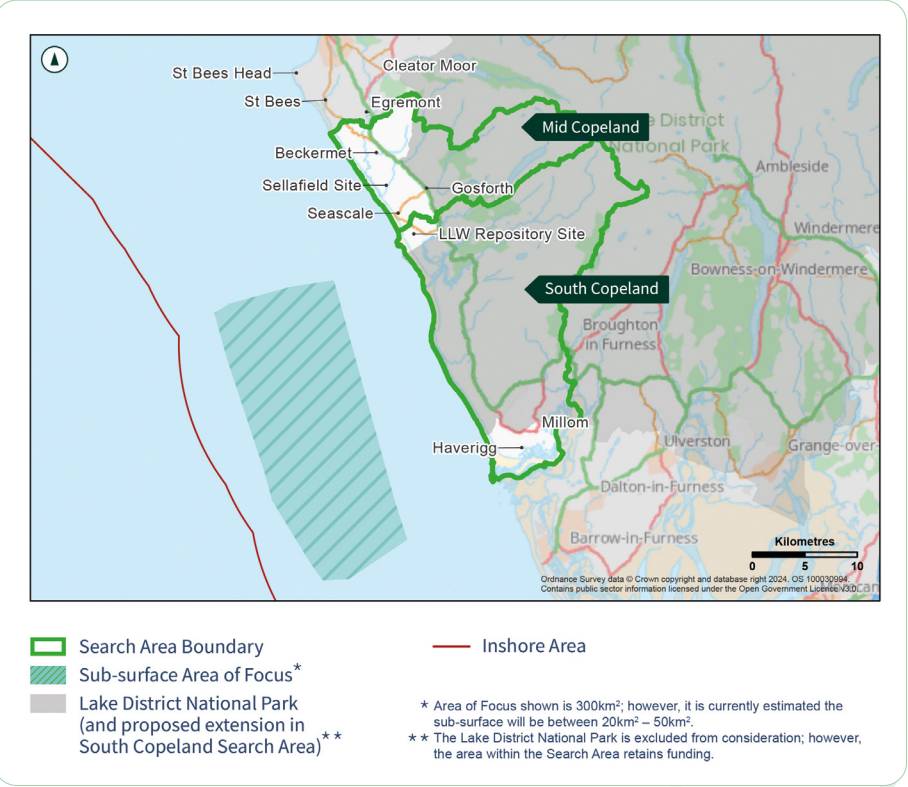
Surface Areas of Focus

Through the application of the Areas of Focus methodology, a number of potentially suitable and less constrained areas were identified in the Mid Copeland Search Area. Further consideration of these areas that took into account NWS’ Siting Factors, as well as

community and programme considerations, resulted in the identification of two Surface Areas of Focus in Mid Copeland that NWS will prioritise and consider further at this time.

Land East of Sellafield: This Surface Area of Focus is to the east of Sellafield and between the A595 and the B5344. This land is owned by NDA Properties Limited, which is part of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority, and is approximately 4 km². The area is adjacent to the boundary of Sellafield. A buffer of approximately 500 metres has been applied from Seascale and Gosforth. Other considerations mean that Ponsonby Church, Greycroft stone circle, the ancient woodland at Calderbridge and Seascale Golf Club are not included within the Surface Area of Focus.

Land East of Seascale: This Surface Area of Focus is approximately 3.2 km² of land to the south of the B5344. It is bounded by the A595 in the east and the Search Area boundary to its southern edge. A buffer of approximately 500 metres has been applied around Seascale. This constrains the shape of remaining land between the south and east of Seascale and the Search Area boundary, and is therefore excluded. An approximate 500-metre buffer has also been applied around Gosforth. The Hallsenna Moor Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is excluded from the Surface Area of Focus.



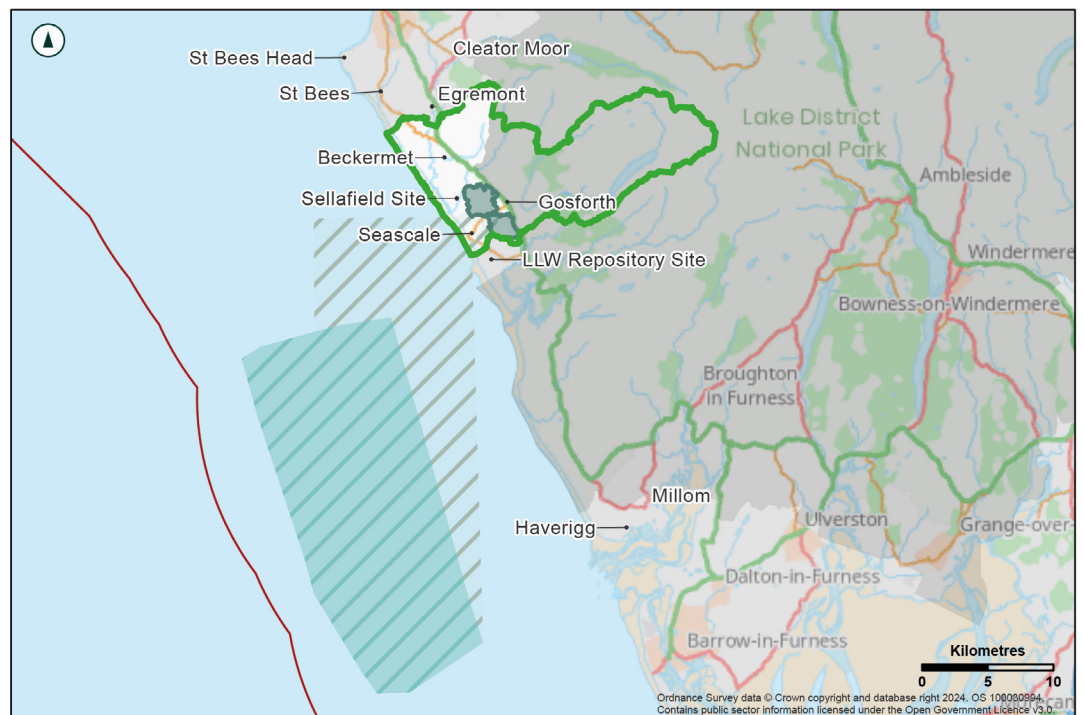
News from NWS: GDF progress as Areas of Focus identified

ACCESSWAY AREAS OF FOCUS

Applying the Areas of Focus methodology, NWS has identified potential accessways, within which the connection tunnels could be constructed, joining the Sub-surface Area of Focus to the Surface Area of Focus. This is significantly wider than will be required to allow for flexibility; it is currently estimated the final accessway corridor will be between 250-500m wide. For the onshore part of the accessways, NWS has sought to avoid passing directly beneath the Sellafield site and Seascale.

AREAS OF FOCUS GOING FORWARD

As NWS' Site Evaluation work progresses and engagement activities continue to provide a better picture of the potential of the area to host a GDF, revisions to the Areas of Focus may be necessary. Areas of Focus will support further investigative and technical studies to inform NWS' decision on which areas to take forward to Site Characterisation, which is more detailed investigations.



- Search Area Boundary
- Surface Areas of Focus
- Accessway Areas of Focus
- Sub-surface Area of Focus

- Lake District National Park (and proposed extension in South Copeland Search Area)*
- Inshore Area

* The Lake District National Park is excluded from consideration; however, the area within the Search Area retains funding.

Community feedback

NWS hosted local drop-in events and webinars updating communities on Areas of Focus and this engagement continues.

More than 200 people attended six events in Mid Copeland – four in Seascale, one in Gosforth and one in Beckermest. A further 46 people attended a joint event in Drigg for people living in Mid and South Copeland Search Areas. 73 people also attended to two joint webinars.

Areas of Focus were identified by NWS as part of its work as the developer of a GDF.

Discussion and feedback from events so far includes transportation of waste, investment into roads and rail, environmental impacts, timeline, accessways and site suitability.

Some Community Partnership members want to explore with NWS alternative suggestions for Areas of Focus instead of agricultural land. Seascale Parish Council said it felt that the areas put forward were not the most appropriate choices in the Mid Copeland Search Area and would like other areas, including Moorside next to Sellafield, considered.

Partnership members also wanted to understand how the Areas of Focus would be accessed by road and rail and what the route for construction and excavated materials would be. An article on how excavated material would be managed can be found here: [www.midcopeland.workinginpartnership.org.uk/your-questions-answered-by-](http://www.midcopeland.workinginpartnership.org.uk/your-questions-answered-by-nws-how-will-excavated-material-be-managed-in-a-gdf/)

nws-how-will-excavated-material-be-managed-in-a-gdf/

As it is a very long-term project, NWS said it won't have answers to some of the topics for some years, for example, details of construction. However, it will continue to explain what studies and investigations are taking place in the nearer term and will help the Partnership members have useful dialogue with local people, answering their questions.

NWS has confirmed that it is prioritising the identified two surface Areas of Focus in Mid Copeland at this time. Information on why these areas were prioritised over other areas, including Moorside, are summarised in this newsletter and also in the Mid Copeland brochure: www.nuclearwasteservices.uk/communities/mid-copeland/areas-of-focus-in-mid-copeland/

Partnership Chair, Andy Pratt, said: "I've attended all of NWS' Areas of Focus events in Mid Copeland to date and I was pleased to see a lot of local people, who may be affected, come along to find out more.

"There were concerns from people, however, I think the majority I spoke to gained much from the events and seemed to leave better informed at this stage in the Areas of Focus process. Many still have further questions which will need answering as work continues.

"I hear the concerns of the community, and the Partnership will



work with NWS to consider local issues. I think, understandably, people want answers to questions around where roads and rail may go and other details. This is a very long-term project and many of these details may not be available for a long time but I think it will help the Partnership and the community to understand the broad approach to the project and how it progresses."

Webinar recordings can be viewed at www.nuclearwasteservices.uk as well as further information on Mid Copeland Areas of Focus, including brochures (for this, go to the Communities section and click on Mid Copeland). In addition, details of NWS' Property Value Protection scheme can also be found on the NWS website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/property-value-protection-scheme

Although the identification of Areas of Focus is not a formal consultation, NWS is listening to the community and views are being taken into consideration as the siting process continues.

Meet the Funders event

AROUND 30 people attended a Partnership drop-in to find out how to apply for Community Investment Funding.

The 'Meet the Funders' event, in Gosforth Public Hall, also included representatives from Cumberland Council and Cumbria CVS (Council for Voluntary Service) to speak about their available grant funding.

Some of the successful organisations awarded GDF Community Investment Funding – Wasdale Mountain Rescue Team, Beckermets Village Association and Florence Arts Centre – attended to showcase what they had achieved.

Helen Conway, Grants Manager for Mid Copeland, said: "The room was

really buzzing, and we had some great conversations with people who've already received grants, plus organisations from Mid Copeland wanting to discuss potential new applications.

"I think people received a lot of information which will be invaluable when they are piecing their projects together and applying for funding.

"We offer support and help and now with the extra resource of Cumbria CVS, organisations can access a wealth of practical advice and information in a way they can understand and apply to their projects.

"Huge thanks to all the community organisations supporting the event as

well as Cumberland Council, Cumbria CVS and Partnership members."

"The room was really buzzing, and we had some great conversations with people who've already received grants, plus organisations from Mid Copeland wanting to discuss potential new applications"

— Helen Conway, Grants Manager for Mid Copeland



Pictures by Tom Kay

Funding is on offer for community projects, so get in touch

Continued from Page 1

Community organisations in the Mid Copeland area can access support by emailing: Gareth.cavanagh@cumbriacvs.org.uk or calling: **07356 148808**.

The Mid Copeland GDF Search Area covers the electoral ward of Gosforth which includes Seascale, Gosforth, Beckermets, Calderbridge, Haile, Thornhill, Nethertown and Braystones. The Lake District

National Park is excluded from consideration to host a GDF – however, Community Investment Funding can be used for eligible community projects benefiting any part of the Search Area.

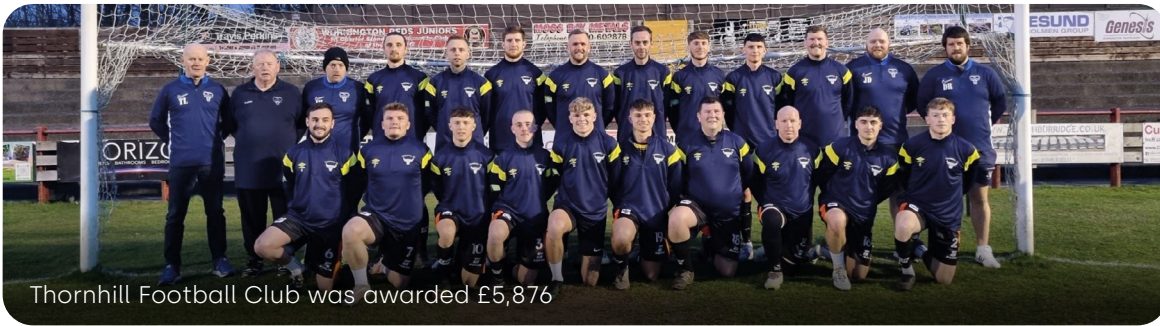
Up to £1m of funding is available annually per community, rising to up to £2.5m if deep borehole investigations take place in a community to assess the geological suitability of a site.

A GDF is an underground facility designed to safely and securely dispose of the most hazardous radioactive waste.

Deep geology beyond the coast is being considered for siting the underground elements of a GDF in Mid Copeland. This means a surface facility on, or near, the coast would provide access to a disposal area deep in rock beyond the coast.

The GDF programme requires both a suitable site and a willing community and is still in the early stages. Construction will only start on a GDF when a suitable site is identified, a Potential Host Community has confirmed its willingness to host the facility through a Test of Public Support, and all the necessary consents and permits have been obtained. These steps could take around 15 years.

Funding is fantastic!



Thornhill Football Club was awarded £5,876



Egremont Town Band received £1,065



Seascale School received £48,000 for an outdoor learning area

MUCH of the community funding awarded over previous years has now been spent with new facilities and services provided. This includes Seascale School which received £48,000 for an outdoor learning area.

It includes a climbing area, covered sandpit, riverbed, fire pit area, a willow tunnel, and footpaths for the children to enjoy.

The school's Early Years Lead, Jacqui Merry, said: "We now have a wonderful outdoor space that actively promotes wellbeing, that encourages risk taking, that provides opportunities for problem solving, creativity and negotiation, develops physical skills, communication and language skills and has opportunities for open-ended play.

"This huge project has been made possible with support from Mid Copeland GDF Community Partnership through the Community Investment Funding. For this we are extremely grateful."

The outdoor area has also been enjoyed by other local groups in the wider community.

Mrs Merry added: "Outdoor learning is proven to help build self-confidence, self-esteem and motivation. Alongside this it promotes healthy, active life styles and provides opportunities to help develop those critical skills of co-operation, interaction, negotiation and self-regulation. All these aspects are of utmost importance for the development of our children."

Thornhill Football Club was awarded

£5,876 for new modern-style goal nets on wheels to allow them to be removed from the pitch following matches. It has also purchased new corner flags and provided the Sunday League squad with matching training tops.

Community Investment Funding can also be awarded to organisations outside of the Mid Copeland Search Area as long as it is used to benefit the people living there. One such example is Egremont Town Band which received £1,065 towards rental costs of the rehearsal room and insurance of the equipment. Nine band members are from Mid Copeland and they perform in the area at events including Beckermets Christmas Lights switch-on, Gosforth Show and Seascale Gala.

What's been awarded as grants in year four so far

We are now halfway through Year 4 and funding totalling £286,874 has been awarded from the Mid Copeland GDF Community Partnership through the NWS GDF programme. The organisations below have been awarded funding so far. This doesn't include all the very latest grants, as this newsletter started to be put together some weeks ago. These will be updated on our website.

Seascale Golf Club: £99,000 for construction of six covered driving bays, plus a teaching room.

Beckermets Reading Rooms CIC: £120,499 for the venue's third phase of its refurbishment programme which will include redesigning and landscaping the front of the building, including creating a useable outdoor space, a second access and installing a disabled access lift.

St Olaf's Wasdale Head Parish Church Management Committee: £2,700 for tree surgery to improve the churchyard to enable work to begin on the restoration of the church building.

PCC of St Cuthbert's, Seascale: £4,189 towards start-up costs for a parent and toddler group in Seascale, to include

toys, crafting supplies, refreshments and kitchen equipment.

Gosforth Parish Council: £986 for an extension to the village shop fire recovery bus service.

Seascale Parish Council: £16,500 for free multi-sport activity camps for children in the Mid Copeland area, providing 30 days of activities for 20 children each day.

Florence Arts: £43,000 for creative wellbeing activities including weekly Make Space sessions and craft cafes. This includes activities to inspire and develop young people's talent with schools, families and outreach sessions at Beckermets Reading Rooms and Shackles Off.

How to apply for Community Investment Funding

Funding is available to support projects in Mid Copeland that provide economic development opportunities, enhance the natural and built environment or improve community wellbeing. For further details, visit our website at midcopeland.workinginpartnership.org.uk or get in touch by email at: communityinvestment-midcopeland@nuclearwasteservices.uk

