

# [Press release: Invite to Bedford energy from waste drop-in](#)

A community drop-in is being held in Marston Moretaine for the public to find out about the Environment Agency's role in the energy from waste (EfW) incinerator facility proposed at Rookery Pit, Stewartby.

The Environment Agency will be asking people for comments on the applications for an environmental permit it has received from Covanta Energy Limited.

The event is being held at Forest of Marston Vale Centre, Station Road, Marston Moretaine, Bedford, MK43 0PR on Wednesday 20 September, 1:00pm – 7:00pm.

The Environment Agency's role is to make sure that energy from waste facilities are designed, built and run to meet legal environmental standards ( the Industrial Emissions Directive) and to meet the conditions of their environmental permit (the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2016).

If a permit were to be issued the Agency would be the regulator for on-going compliance monitoring of the incinerator.

The Environment Agency will only issue a permit if it is satisfied that the plant will be designed, built, operated and maintained in such a way that the requirements of the relevant EU Directives are met and that human health and the environment are protected. This will be decided following consultation with the relevant Local Authorities and their Health Departments, the Food Standards Agency, Public Health England, the Health and Safety Executive and other identified statutory consultees.

The public consultation period will run from 11 September to 23 October 2017.

The start of the consultation period has also been advertised on the Environment Agency website on gov.uk.

## **On-line option**

People unable to attend the drop-in or wanting to provide formal comments to be considered during the determination by the Environment Agency, should send them to [psc@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:psc@environment-agency.gov.uk) or write to: Environment Agency, Permitting Support Centre, Land Team, Quadrant 2, 99 Parkway Avenue, Sheffield, S9 4WF. Please quote permit application number EPR/WP3234DY/A001.

To provide comments online and to view the documents that form part of this consultation, follow this [link](#)

Interested parties can also make an appointment to view a copy of the draft permit and draft decision document at the local Environment Agency office, located at: Bromholme Lane, Brampton, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, PE28 4NE.

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## **[Consultation outcome: Water quality: updating the public and private drinking water regulations](#)**

*Updated:* Summary of responses added.

We want to know what you think about our plans to update the Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations 2016 ('public regulations') and the Private Water Supplies (England) Regulations 2016 ('private regulations'). These changes will only apply to England.

The changes will bring the regulations in line with the [Drinking Water Directive](#). The Drinking Water Directive was updated to reflect World Health Organisation principles for the risk based sampling and analysis of drinking water supply.

We'll also be updating the public regulations for when a sample must be taken from a tanker and making retail licensees prepare and maintain further documentation.

The private regulations will also make changes to the limits on charging and will allow local authorities to restore a water supply.

Both regulations will also clarify certain aspects of the 2016 Regulations, such as definitions of terms used.

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## **[News story: Free at last as jammed fuel is lifted out](#)**

*Updated:* Updated the link to the longer version of the video

When the dome-shaped experimental reactor closed in 1977, most of the core fuel was removed.

But follow-up work came to a halt when some of the metallic casings in the zone surrounding the core were found to be swollen and jammed. Almost 1,000 – around two-thirds of the total – were left in place.

Made of stainless steel, the casings, known as breeder elements, contained natural uranium and were designed to produce more fuel for use in other reactors.

Now, after many years of work to design and test remotely operated equipment, a decommissioning team has started to recover the elements.

Decommissioning the 50-year-old reactor is one of the most technically challenging projects in the NDA estate and removing the breeder elements has been a top priority.

The removal work is expected to take less than 3 years, after which dismantling of the landmark reactor can begin.

David Peattie, NDA Chief Executive, said:

Dealing with this material is one of the highest priorities anywhere for the NDA, not just at Dounreay but across our UK sites. The safe and timely retrieval of the breeder material is crucial to both the site's closure programme and the national defueling programme.

I am very pleased with this achievement which is a great example of how the Dounreay team and the NDA can work together to deliver results of national importance.



MP Jamie Stone looks on as team members monitor removal of the breeder material

During a visit to the reactor, Jamie Stone, MP for Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross, said:

Actually watching on screen the removal of an element from the reactor core was fascinating. Seeing the intricate techniques and skills, and the special locally designed equipment being used was absolutely inspirational.

In an age when sometimes you begin to wonder where British technology is going, it is hugely encouraging to see what is being done at Dounreay. I take my hat off to the workforce.

When the damaged elements were discovered, decommissioning effectively stopped for 20 years, until the decision was taken in 2000 to close down Dounreay and the creation of the NDA a few years later gave fresh momentum to the task.

The elements were immersed in some 57 tonnes of highly reactive liquid metal which had to be removed and destroyed before remotely operated cameras could inspect the condition of the material. This difficult, hazardous programme took more than 10 years.

Now, following extensive research and development trials inside the plant and at a test rig on the outskirts of Thurso, work has started to remove the

remaining breeder material.

[Watch the DFR breeder material removal process](#)

## **Dounreay Fast Reactor**

After removal, the elements are being transferred to a purpose-built facility, where they are being cut open to remove the uranium fuel, cleansed of any traces of liquid metal and packaged in containers for dispatch to Sellafield. About 40 tonnes of breeder recovered previously has already been sent there.

When all the breeder material has been removed, work can begin on taking the reactor apart.

Main support contractor: JGC Engineering & Technical Services Ltd

## **About the Dounreay Fast Reactor (DFR)**

- the DFR was built during the 1950s at a time when there was a world-wide shortage of uranium for electricity generation
- It became the world's first fast reactor to provide electricity to a national grid, providing enough power for a small town like Thurso (population approx 9,000)
- DFR's reactor core was surrounded by a blanket of natural uranium elements that, when exposed to the effects of the radiation, would 'breed' to create a new fuel, plutonium
- UK experimentation with fast breeders came to an end in the 1980s
- decommissioning DFR is one of the most significant challenges in the UK today. It was one of only two fast reactors ever built in the UK, both at Dounreay.
- when the breeder material is all removed, the reactor and its circuits will be dismantled, followed by final decontamination of the structures
- the dome and associated structures will be demolished

## **Dounreay Site Restoration Ltd (DSRL)**

DSRL, a company owned by Cavendish Dounreay Partnership, is responsible for decommissioning the UK's former centre of fast reactor research on behalf of

the NDA.