

# [News story: The new robot helping clean up Sellafield](#)

The 'Avexis' will help dislodge and clear waste from the Magnox Swarf Storage Silo.

[Watch the robot enter the plant for the first time](#)

It has been developed by Cumbrian firm Forth Engineering with support from the University of Manchester.

The company was launched in 2000 by former Sellafield apprentice Mark Telford.

The Maryport business is now a global specialist in remote tooling, deployment methods, and sensor systems.

Mr Telford said:

Having Sellafield on our doorstep gives a huge advantage.

It's a testbed where we can develop unique skills and technologies.

The site needs innovative technology to undertake engineering tasks in harsh environments underwater.

Successfully deploying our technology at Sellafield means we can then transfer it to other industries like marine and oil and gas which are looking for similar products.

The Avexis is already generating interest from potential clients overseas.

The Magnox Swarf Storage Silo was built in the 1960s to store waste from the UK's earliest nuclear reactors.

It closed in 2000 and has now been prioritised for clean-up by the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA).

Rebecca Weston, Strategy and Technical Director for Sellafield Ltd, said: "The Avexis is a great example of the supply chain helping us to reduce the UK's nuclear hazard faster, cheaper and more safely.

"And, on top of that, companies are developing products and skills that can be exported all over the world."

The Avexis offers the ability to 'see' inside the silo via cameras attached to its body.

It can also clear away small bits of waste clinging to the silo wall.

Its key feature is its size – it is small enough to fit through spaces of just 150mm space.

It is the first robot of its kind to go from concept to market within five years. At just £10,000 it is also the cheapest of its kind.