

Half the fuel gone from iconic Dounreay reactor

DFR with its famous dome once led the world in fast breeder technology.

The reactor was built in the 1950s at a time when there was a worldwide shortage of uranium for electricity generation. Its 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. After the reactor closed in 1977 most of the core fuel was removed. But work to remove elements from the breeder zone came to a halt when some were found to be swollen and jammed. Almost 1,000 – around two-thirds of the total – were left in place.

Decommissioning the 60-year-old reactor is one of the most technically challenging projects in the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority estate and removing the breeder elements has been a top priority.

After designing and testing remotely-operated equipment, a decommissioning team began recovering the elements in 2017, using purpose-built tools that reached down into the reactor to cut the breeder elements free and lift them into a flask for removal to the next stage of the process.

The success of the locally manufactured tooling has played a big part in the successful removal of half the remaining radioactive fuel inventory inside the reactor vessel. Local companies who manufactured mechanical equipment to demanding timescales included JGC Engineering and Technical, Precision Machining Services, and Calder Engineering. Contec Design Services carried out electrical, control and instrumentation works.

Senior Project Manager Raymond Hill commented:

This is a challenging project and I am pleased that we are making good progress on the removal of the elements, which is contributing towards the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority’s mission to clean up the UK’s nuclear legacy.

View the breeder elements being removed from the reactor here: [Material being removed from the Dounreay Fast Reactor](#)

New Charity Inquiry: CWM Harry Land

Trust Limited

The Charity Commission has opened a new statutory inquiry into CWM Harry Land Trust Limited ([1100899](#)), an environmental charity whose objects also include the education and rehabilitation of prisoners and ex-offenders.

The charity was previously included in a class inquiry in November 2018, which was opened to examine charities which had repeatedly failed on their reporting requirements. As part of the class inquiry the Commission issued an order directing the trustees of the charity to provide information by specified dates, including the charity's annual accounts for the financial years ending 31 March 2016 and 2017. However the trustees failed to comply. The charity has failed to file financial information in line with statutory requirements for 3 consecutive years, raising serious concerns over the charity's administration, accountability and transparency.

The Commission also has concerns over a number of related party transactions, including payments to a trustee and two loans to the charity from a company where one trustee was a director.

The inquiry will examine the extent to which:

- the trustees are complying with their legal duties in respect of their administration, governance and management of the charity.
- any failings or weaknesses identified in the administration of the charity during the inquiry were a result of misconduct and/or mismanagement by the trustees.
- the trustees responsibly managed the charity's resources and financial affairs, in particular with respect to how they have managed conflicts of interest and/or loyalty.

It is the Commission's policy, after it has concluded an inquiry, to publish a report detailing what issues the inquiry looked at, what actions were undertaken as part of the inquiry and what the outcomes were. Reports of previous inquiries by the Commission are available on [GOV.UK](#).

Ends

Notes to Editors

1. The Charity Commission is the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales; our role is to regulate charity trustees' compliance with the charity law framework.
2. Double defaulters are charities that have defaulted on their statutory obligations to meet reporting requirements by failing to file their annual documents for two or more times in the last five years.
3. Shortly after the opening of the inquiry, the charity filed its accounts for FYE 31 March 2016. The charity continues to be in default of its filing obligations for FYE 31 March 2017 and 2018.

Equipment explosion on an empty passenger train



Damage to the vestibule end and debris in the saloon (left image courtesy of CrossCountry, right image courtesy of Bombardier Transportation UK).

At around 06:11 hrs on 26 September 2019, an explosion occurred in an electrical equipment cupboard located in a coach vestibule as an empty train departed from Central Rivers depot. The explosion resulted in considerable damage to the vehicle interior, which was not discovered until the driver moved through the train to change ends at Birmingham New Street station.

We have undertaken a [preliminary examination](#) into the circumstances surrounding this accident. Having assessed the evidence which has been gathered to date, we have decided to publish a [safety digest](#).

The safety digest will be made available on our website in the next few weeks.

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New A14 bypass to open a year early

- key section of UK's biggest road upgrade to open a year ahead of schedule – delivering a boost to the [government's plans for an infrastructure revolution](#)
- Roads Minister Baroness Vere visits 12-mile bypass for Huntingdon, part of project which will save drivers up to 20 minutes on each journey
- route to benefit the whole UK by improving access to and from key ports such as Felixstowe

Drivers across the East of England will benefit from a brand new dual carriageway opening a full year ahead of schedule in December 2019.

The 12-mile bypass is part of a wider 21 mile scheme in Cambridgeshire which will save drivers up to 20 minutes per journey, benefitting people living and working across the entire region.

It will also support the whole UK by boosting access to and from the country's biggest and busiest container port at Felixstowe – crucial as the UK looks to a bright future after Brexit.

The opening of the bypass follows confirmation last week that [18 new road schemes](#) have been given the go ahead by the Department for Transport, in addition to the £25.3 billion that has already been committed for investment in the strategic road network between 2020 and 2025.

Roads Minister Baroness Vere said:

This government is committed to delivering an infrastructure revolution and it's fantastic that a key section of this vital route will be delivered a year ahead of schedule, helping people travelling in the east of England get to their destination quickly and safely.

The A14 upgrade will not only improve the experience for local drivers but will also boost access between the region's ports and the West Midlands – a key logistics hub.

I look forward to seeing the benefits in action in December and to seeing similar infrastructure schemes developing around the country as we improve links and spread growth opportunities.

The bypass is part of a [£1.5 billion project to upgrade 21 miles of the A14 in Cambridgeshire](#), the biggest upgrade of its kind in the UK.

It had been due to open in December 2020, but excellent progress made by the Highways England-led team means that the road will now be ready for drivers to use this December.

To take advantage of the early opening, the road will open as a best-in-class A road rather than a motorway as originally planned, but the design will remain the same.

Highways England project director David Bray said:

I'm delighted that we will be able to deliver the benefits of this key section of the project so much earlier than originally planned. As well as a significant improvement for drivers, this major milestone will start to realise some of the benefits of the upgrade for residents and communities along the A14 too.

And it will mean that we are able to start work sooner on the improvements we are making to local roads in and around Huntingdon as we start to dismantle the old viaduct over the train station, which will be a real boost for local communities.

Work on the upgrade has progressed at pace, with around 10 million cubic metres of earth having been moved – more than 4 times the great pyramids of Giza.

The full project remains on track to open to traffic by the end of 2020.

Rugby World Cup 2019

Many fans will be travelling to Japan to watch the tournament. Here are some tips to help make your visit safe and enjoyable.

Before you go

Below is information to help you plan your visit to Japan. Subscribe to our [travel advice](#) and follow our social media channels for important updates.

Facebook: [UKinJapan](#)

Twitter: [@UKinJapan](#)

Helpful Information for your trip to Japan

The following publications contains our key tips and information which you can download before your trip.

Useful tips to avoid pitfalls from Award-winning, UK-based Japanese comedian [Yuriko Kotani](#)

Official World Cup information

Information on venues, matches and ticketing can be found on the [official Rugby World Cup website](#) and 'RWC 2019' app.

You can also follow this twitter account for live information during the tournament [@Japan2019_ENG](#).

Bronze Final and Final

The bronze final is held at Tokyo stadium on Friday 1 November and the final will take place at the International Stadium Yokohama (NOT Yokohama stadium).

Check these links for transport information. Allow enough time to get to the stadia as trains may be crowded and delayed closer to kick off time.

Passport/Carrying Identification

Make sure you carry your passport at all times during your trip to Japan. It is a legal requirement and local police may ask to check your identification. Your passport should be valid for the duration of your stay.

British tourists can enter Japan visa free for up to 90 days. If you plan to travel to other countries in Asia during your trip, be sure to check the passport validity requirements visa requirements of each country.

Lost your passport?

You will need to apply and pay for an Emergency Travel Document (ETD) in order to return home or continue your onward journey, this may mean change or delay your travel plans. You will need to apply for a full replacement passport.

ETDs are issued in Tokyo only.

You can [apply online](#) or contact us on +81(0)3-5211-1100.

The embassy will be closed on Monday 4 November, as it is a bank holiday in Japan.

Local laws and customs

“Travel global, think local”

[Travel aware: local laws and customs](#)

- Be responsible and respectful
- There is a [zero tolerance](#) towards all drugs including recreational drugs such as marijuana. Penalties for possession, use and trafficking of illegal drugs can result in long jail sentences and heavy fines. For further information, please refer to our Travel Advice page
- Penalties for most offences tend to be more severe than in the UK. Detention, including for minor offences, is generally longer than in the UK
- Drinks and meals are paid for at the end of your visit. In some places, prices can be high. Disputes over bills can lead to arrest
- Bowing is the common way for Japanese people to greet each other and

show respect. Public displays of affection are less common than in the UK

- Tipping is not customary
- Be aware that English is not widely spoken outside of Tokyo
- Tattoos have a historical association with organised crime in Japan. You may be refused entry to hot springs, gyms or swimming pools if you have one

Staying and travelling in Japan

There will be an increased demand for flights, trains and hotels in Tokyo in the run up to the final. Plan ahead and book as early as possible to avoid disappointment. Check the [official tournament website](#) and useful information from the [Japan National Tourism Organisation](#).

Accommodation

On the run-up to the World Cup, accommodation facilities might fill up to capacity really fast, especially in more remote areas like in Southern Japan.

If you haven't secured accommodation, you should aim to do so quickly. Accommodation is at a premium, especially in Southern Japan. Please check the list of [RWC 2019 Hosting Cities](#) (PDF, 71.2KB, 1 page) websites that can help you with your search. Accommodation in Oita is particularly limited.

Did you know? In Japan there are a number of different type of accommodation:

- Hotels are mostly of western standard.
- Ryokans are a Japanese-style inn, with traditional flooring and futons to sleep on. It has been an important part of Japanese culture for centuries, and often include onsen (Japanese hot-springs). There are many styles, for every budget, but English may be limited. Please be mindful that some onsen will not accept customers with tattoos.
- Capsule hotels are very popular. Budget friendly, they are a good place to rest for one night if you find yourself needing urgent accommodation. To note: the capsule hotels are rarely mixed.
- Airbnb, due to strict home-sharing regulations, has a very limited supply of listings.

Driving

If you plan to hire a vehicle during your stay, check the [Japan Automobile Association](#) website for information on driving licence requirements and road safety rules in Japan.

Insurance

The standard of medical facilities in Japan is high but can be costly. Make sure you have comprehensive travel insurance that covers pre-existing conditions and accessible funds to cover the cost of any medical treatment abroad and repatriation. In some hospitals you may need to pay in advance before claiming back from your insurance company. Find more advice on [getting the right travel insurance](#).

Cash

Japan is a cash-based society and overseas cards may not always be accepted. ATMs in convenience stores are available 24 hours a day and should accept overseas credit cards. Amount of cash per withdrawal will be limited. You might want to advise your bank you are travelling abroad to ensure your cards will be operational in Japan. Check our [travel advice](#) for information on using cash, credit and debit cards in Japan.

Diversity

Homosexuality is not illegal in Japan; currently there are no provisions in Japanese law guaranteeing freedom from discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation.

Find more information on [Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender foreign travel advice](#).

Prescription and over-the-counter medicines

The use or possession of some common prescription and over-the-counter medicines are banned under Japan's strictly enforced anti-stimulant drugs law and ignorance may not be considered a defense. More advice and information on banned medicines can be found on [our travel advice](#) and on the [Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare webpage](#).

Watch [Travel aware: bringing medication to Japan](#)

Typhoon season and earthquakes

Be prepared before your trip to Japan: read up on how to [stay safe](#) in the event of an earthquake or other natural disasters. Make sure you follow our [travel advice](#) for updates.

For live updates in English, check out the [Safety Tips app](#) and subscribe to the JNTO twitter account [@JapanSafeTravel](#)

Emergency contacts

Most visits to Japan are trouble free but if you do need emergency assistance, call 110 for police and 119 for ambulance (Kyukyu-sha) or fire

services (Kaji). Ask for English language assistance.

Links

Hosting cities websites

[RWC 2019 Hosting Cities](#) (PDF, 71.2KB, 1 page)

Disclaimer

This information is provided as a general guide and is based upon information provided to the embassy by the relevant local authorities and may be subject to change at any time with little or no notice. The FCO and the British embassy will not be liable for any inaccuracies in this information. British nationals wishing to obtain any further information must contact the relevant local authority.