

Press release: Sellafield's 'locked vault' ready to be emptied

Engineering teams have installed equipment to scoop up and remove material from Sellafield's Pile Fuel Cladding Silo.

Safely decommissioning the 70-year-old facility is one of the highest priorities for Sellafield Ltd and the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority.

The building was originally designed to be permanently sealed, meaning innovative ways of accessing and removing its inventory have had to be developed.

The retrievals equipment is contained in 9 huge modules.

It has been lifted into place on top of a modern 'superstructure' built on the side of the building.

Waste retrieval trials are expected to begin later this year, moving into larger scale waste removal in 2020.

Kevin Brown, Head of the Pile Fuel Cladding Silo programme at Sellafield Ltd, said:

The teams are incredibly proud to have completed one of the most complex challenges in the site's history.

We have opened up a building designed to be sealed forever and engineered a way for getting the waste out.

After years of intensive planning, preparation and investment, seeing the retrievals modules in place next to the Pile Fuel Cladding Silo is a huge moment for those involved.

It has been a real example of collaboration, working together with Bechtel Cavendish Nuclear Solutions to take us one step closer to significantly reducing the UK's nuclear hazard.

The nuclear site is moving into a 100-year programme of environmental remediation, which means speeding up the decommissioning of old facilities and moving the waste into safe containment for centuries to come.

The Pile Fuel Cladding Silo was built in the 1950s when the site's purpose was to make material for nuclear weapons.

In 2016, six holes were cut into the side of the silo, the first breaking of the structure since it was built.

Six giant steel doors were then installed to provide a safe barrier between

the outside world and the waste inside the silo, until it starts to be removed by the 'grabbing' machine.

To remove the waste, a crane will extend through the hole in the side of the silo, a grabber will be lowered to scoop the waste up, the grabber then lifts and retreats back through the hole before depositing the waste in a specially-designed metal box, for safe and secure storage in a modern facility which is currently being built at the site.

The work is being carried out in collaboration with Bechtel Cavendish Nuclear Solutions, a US-UK joint venture appointed by Sellafield Ltd to help design, manufacture, test and install the machinery needed to empty the silo.

The equipment has been trialled at Rosyth, Scotland at a mock-up model of the silo. It took 18 months to design and 18 months to manufacture, test and commission – an incredibly tight timescale for a nuclear process.

Paul Smith, managing director of nuclear services at Cavendish Nuclear said:

Cavendish Nuclear is committed to driving down the cost of decommissioning by delivering innovative nuclear clean-up solutions that are faster, safer and more economical.

Our collaboration with Bechtel and Sellafield Ltd on a project of a strategic national importance is set to give Sellafield the tools it needs to accelerate hazard reduction at the site.

[News story: Studland Bay dinghy sailors rescued](#)

A member of the public had seen the three men in difficulty in the water and contacted the Coastguard at 4.30 pm on 03 March by calling 999.

Swanage Coastguard rescue team and Swanage all weather RNLi lifeboat went to the scene, whilst the Swanage national coastwatch Institute kept a visual watch on the three dinghy sailors.

By the time that the lifeboat arrived on scene, the three men had managed to climb onto a yacht that was at anchor. They were cold and wet but uninjured. The lifeboat retrieved the three from the yacht and took them back to shore and into the care of an awaiting ambulance.

Aimee Neale, for HM Coastguard says:

“The conditions for sailing a small dinghy this afternoon were particularly

challenging with a south westerly force 7-8 wind and a moderate to rough sea. We strongly recommend that people heed weather warnings and do not venture out to sea in small boats in such conditions.”

Press release: Mismanaged charity shows signs of improvement following regulator's inquiry

The Charity Commission has today (08 March 2019) published a [report](#) of the findings of its statutory inquiry into [One Nation](#), a charity with objects to provide relief of hardship to people around the world.

The inquiry, which was [opened on 16 November 2016](#), uncovered serious unmanaged risks, and concluded that there had been misconduct and/or mismanagement in the administration of the charity. Other failings by the trustees meant that volunteers with declared convictions and motoring offences were allowed to participate in aid convoys, despite the Commission previously alerting charities to the risks of aid convoys. The trustees also failed to account for all of the charity's income, including the contents of containers sent to Syria.

The inquiry also found that there had been unauthorised trustee benefit of around £13,000 due to the employment of a former trustee in a senior management position. There was no evidence that this conflict of interest was properly managed, and the trustees failed to obtain necessary consent from the Commission.

Furthermore, despite claiming that it operates a '100% donation policy', the trustees had failed to account correctly for restricted funds, and provided incorrect information to the Commission in the charity's accounts for the financial years ending 30 September 2014, 2015 and 2016, which did not comply with charity law.

The Commission had concerns about the charity before it was registered, and provided regulatory advice and guidance on several occasions to its trustees. The trustees failed to act on this advice and the investigation found numerous breaches of trustee duty – including a lack of review and scrutiny of individuals involved with the charity and failure to act responsibly or diligently.

The inquiry therefore issued an Order under Section 84 of the Charities Act 2011 directing the trustees to take a number of actions to improve the governance of the charity. As a result of the Commission's Order, the trustees have evidenced some improvements in the way the charity is run, including its recruitment and assessment of volunteers, due diligence on

partners, and accounting for aid donated to the charity. The charity no longer organises or participates in aid convoys.

Michelle Russell, Director of Investigations, Monitoring and Enforcement at the Charity Commission said:

At the time of opening our inquiry the governance and administration of this charity was inadequate. By failing to carry out appropriate checks or act responsibly, these trustees exposed their charity to serious undue risk, undermining the purposes for which this charity was established and falling short of what the public expect of a charity.

These risks could have been easily avoided through better management and administration of the charity. Our intervention has shone a light on past failings and led to improvements in the charity's governance. We expect the trustees to continue to strengthen the charity's operations so that the charity can maximise its impact on people's lives.

We want to see charities inspire trust and make a valued difference to the communities they serve; this inquiry highlights the importance of robust management, oversight and due diligence in achieving that.

The regulator has issued further regulatory advice to address some remaining deficiencies in relation to the charity's accounts and policy documents.

The full report is available on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

Ends

[News story: Women peacebuilders tell their stories to mark International Women's Day 2019](#)

Women and girls continue to be under-represented at all levels of decision-making, in both formal and informal spaces.

Supporting women and girls' meaningful mobilisation and participation is essential to building lasting peace and stability. This includes democratic processes, mediation, conflict prevention, peacebuilding and in post-conflict processes to rebuild their countries and communities.

Taking on Boko Haram

[The Woman Taking on Boko Haram](#)

Hamsatu Allamin is challenging the ideology of Boko Haram in Nigeria and supporting the survivors of their brutal attacks.

Making peace in Sri Lanka

[Making peace in Sri Lanka](#)

When Visaka Dharmadasa's son went missing during Sri Lanka's civil war, she led other mothers to search for answers, peace and healing. Visaka has dedicated her life to bringing peace and reconciliation in Sri Lanka.

[News story: Ayrshire Growth Deal agreed](#)

Today [08 March 2019] Scottish Secretary David Mundell was joined by council leaders and the Scottish Government's Cabinet Secretary for transport, infrastructure and connectivity, Michael Matheson, to sign a transformational growth deal for Ayrshire.

The deal will see the UK government invest £103 million into the region over the next 15 years. This figure will be matched by the Scottish Government, and bolstered with further investment from regional partners bringing the total to more than £250 million.

The multi-million pound investment will help drive economic development across the region, boosting jobs, creating opportunity and encouraging further inward investment.

Ayrshire comprises the three local authority areas of East Ayrshire, North Ayrshire and South Ayrshire and is home to approximately 370,000 people. The growth deal will invest in growing sectors including aerospace, energy and life sciences as well as building on Ayrshire's existing strengths in food and drink, manufacturing and engineering.

Some of the projects, which are all subject to approval of final business cases, include:

- £80 million investment to position Ayrshire as one of the UK's leading centres of aerospace
- £23 million to build on Ayrshire's proud history of manufacturing
- £24 million to help harness the potential of local energy generation
- A further £18 million to create a Centre for Research into low carbon

- energy at the Hunterston industrial hub
- £14 million investment in improving the region's digital connectivity and infrastructure

The full [Heads of Terms](#) document sets out further details of the projects being proposed.

Scottish Secretary David Mundell said:

“It’s fantastic news that the UK Government is to invest more than £100 million to grow Ayrshire’s economy, create jobs and boost prosperity. This investment will transform the Ayrshire economy over the coming 15 years.

“We are investing in a raft of exciting and ambitious projects right across Ayrshire. Initiatives include an aerospace development at Prestwick, a low carbon energy scheme at Hunterston, a local electricity supply project in Cumnock, a manufacturing corridor in Kilmarnock, and a digital subsea cable to dramatically improve connectivity.

“The Ayrshire growth deal brings UK Government investment in growth deals in Scotland to £1.3 billion, a huge commitment to growing Scotland’s economy.”