

News story: Dream comes true for young 'nuclear expert'

School pupil Samuel Boardman had wowed decommissioning leaders with a letter detailing how he would empty the highly-hazardous ponds.

The 11-year-old, from North Wales, came up with a proposal, using similar techniques to those already being used.

So impressed was the head of the legacy ponds, Dorothy Gradden, she offered Samuel and his family the chance of a lifetime to come and see the Sellafield site for himself.

The visit saw Mrs Gradden and Steve Cottam, head of strategy and technical for the legacy ponds, give a personalised presentation to the Boardman family.

They were also shown the Thorp viewing gallery, National Nuclear Laboratory and the underwater test facility.

Samual Boardman standing outside the Windscale Advanced Gas-cooled Reactor.

Dorothy Gradden, who was awarded an OBE last year for her services to the nuclear industry, added:

As a passionate supporter of education and training, I was hugely impressed by Samuel's detailed letter.

I value the importance of nurturing nuclear interest in youngsters, and it was a pleasure to meet Samuel so I could talk to him about his proposals and show him exactly how we are dealing with the nuclear clean-up.

It's important that the extremely challenging and complex work we already do is carried on by the next generation, so I wanted to extend the offer of a visit to Samuel, who continued to impress me with his knowledge when he came to Sellafield.

Samuel described himself as a 'nuclear physics expert' in his letter to Sellafield, and his dad Chris said:

It was a wonderful experience for Samuel and the whole family. We were amazed by complexity of the incredible work being done.

Samuel is really keen on the nuclear sector and learned an awful lot from his visit. We all did !

The effort that Sellafield put into making a little boy's dream

come true was greatly appreciated. We didn't expect anything when Samuel wrote to Sellafield, so this was an incredible experience.

Adrian Bull, MBE, director of external relations for the National Nuclear Laboratory (NNL), said:

We are always keen to encourage bright, young people to make a contribution to society by suggesting ways things could be improved – whether through the development of new technology or through the creative application of existing techniques.

Samuel has shown tremendous talent and enthusiasm through sharing his suggestions with the industry and I was delighted the he was able to visit NNL's facilities on the Sellafield site to see for himself some of the work we are doing.

Press release: Hoteliers and haulier fined after waste illegally dumped to extend hotel car park

Three North East men have been ordered to pay over £10,000 for illegally landfilling waste after a successful prosecution by the Environment Agency

David Bradley (57) and Alan Bradley (64), the brothers and joint owners of Hardwicke Hall Manor Hotel, near Blackhall in East Durham were fined £3,855 & £971 respectively. The haulier, Alan Waggott (53) of Howden-le-Wear, near Crook was fined £6,007 after appearing at Newton Aycliffe Magistrates Court today (15 August) where they pleaded guilty to various environmental offences.

Chris Bunting, prosecuting told the court that in September 2016 Environment Agency officers attended the hotel and found part of the car park, which is close to a watercourse, covered in various waste materials. Enquiries revealed that the edge of the car park had suffered from landslip, so the Bradleys had decided to repair the damaged area.

It is illegal to dispose of waste by landfilling without an environmental permit and Hardwicke Hall Manor Hotel had no such authorisations. Environmental permits safeguard people and the environment by placing controls on any activity that could pollute air, water or land.

During their inspection, Environment Agency officers witnessed a fully laden waste vehicle arrive on site belonging to Alan Waggott Haulage. The waste was

seen to be of the same type which could be seen on the ground.

Photographs showed a wide range of waste materials which should never have been deposited in such a mixed state, at such a location where no permit was in place. Traces of bonded asbestos, a hazardous waste, were identified by officers although it was made clear that Waggott was responsible for only a fraction of the total waste material which had been used.

The court heard that Waggott was contracted to remove waste from construction sites in North Ormesby and Stockton-on-Tees. Whilst paperwork issued by Waggott claimed that this waste was to be deposited at a permitted landfill site, 36 wagon loads were in fact tipped for free at the hotel.

Having ordered tipping operations to stop and given instructions for the illegally tipped waste to be removed and disposed of at a permitted facility, a subsequent inspection by the Environment Agency found that additional waste had been deposited in the car park area.

In mitigation, John Elwood for the Bradleys showed photographs of fly tipped waste which formed part of the problem, and said that they never realised at the outset that a permit may have been needed. Ben Pegman for Waggott, confirmed that his client had acted on trust, but recognised he needed to improve his working methods to ensure he was acting lawfully.

In passing sentence, the Court said there was no doubt the incident was clearly for monetary gain.

Rachael Caldwell for the Environment Agency said:

We will not tolerate abuses of the environmental permitting system. Those who ignore environmental laws can cause serious pollution to the environment, put communities at risk and undermine legitimate business and the investment and growth that go with it.

We hope that the sentencing handed down today acts as a deterrent to those who may think they can get away with it.

If you see or are aware of waste crime, you can report it by calling the Environment Agency's incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60 or call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

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Press release: Minister for Africa announces funding boost for sexual health services in Malawi

Thousands more women in Malawi will benefit from family planning services through new support announced by Minister for Africa Harriett Baldwin today.

During a visit to the Scotland Malawi Partnership in Edinburgh Ms Baldwin set out how the six year programme, called Tsogolo Langa which translates as 'My Future', will provide important sexual and reproductive health services for more than 300,000 Malawians and avoid an estimated 6,000 preventable maternal deaths.

Ahead of the visit Ms Baldwin said:

Every woman has a right to a happy and healthy life. This is about empowering women to take control of their own health and their own futures.

Malawi's long term success matters to the UK. That is why I am proud UK aid is supporting these vital services for hundreds of thousands of young Malawians, allowing them to make decisions on their families and futures in a safe and informed way.

UK aid will provide access to modern contraceptives, help clinics from running out of stock and provide accurate health information for women in harder to reach rural areas. It will also work with young people to reduce teenage pregnancies and prevent unwanted pregnancies.

The Department for International Development (DFID) will work with the Government of Malawi's Ministry of Health to deliver the programme, supporting the country's aim to reduce its high teenage pregnancy rate.

Minister of Health and Population for the Government of Malawi, Atupele Muluzi said:

This assistance is very timely as Malawi continues to further stabilise its population growth that is driven by teenage pregnancy, currently standing at 29%.

Malawi still has a huge gap in providing different choices in contraceptives and this investment will assist in helping young women have more control of their future. Malawi appreciates the support that it receives from the UK Government, as our oldest and

largest partner to our development.

DFID's family planning support in the world's poorest countries is helping women finish their education, get better jobs, fulfil their potential and in turn provide for their smaller planned families.

This latest support comes after Ms Baldwin's visit to Malawi last month during which she announced £37.5 million of new UK aid funding to support early grade learning and keep more girls in school. Ms Baldwin also visited Majete National Park to see how the UK is supporting efforts to tackle the illegal wildlife trade.

Chief Executive of the Scotland Malawi Partnership, David Hope-Jones said:

We are delighted to meet Minister Baldwin and discuss the scale and impact of the people-to-people and nation-to-nation friendship Scotland enjoys with Malawi.

We welcome these new DFID funding commitments which will have a significant positive impact in Malawi.

While in Edinburgh, Ms Baldwin also visited the Royal Hospital for Sick Children where she met with the Chief Executive of World Child Cancer Jon Rosser, and Dr Emma Johnson, a paediatric oncologist who has volunteered with World Child Cancer for eight years.

World Child Cancer works to treat children suffering from cancer in developing countries by twinning hospitals with those in richer countries to support training and improve the quality of care available to children with cancer, regardless of where they are born.

Over the last year, World Child Cancer has received UK Aid Match support, meaning for every £1 donated to them by the British public, £1 has been matched by the UK government through DFID.

Notes to editors

- The Department for International Development's (DFID) programme Tsogolo Langa (£50.1 million) will build on progress made by previous DFID family planning programmes in Malawi, in support of the UK's commitment to address adolescent and young women's sexual and reproductive health needs, particularly access to modern contraceptives.
- Tsogolo Langa will enable women in Malawi to make informed voluntary choices regarding whether and when to have children, and how many to have. DFID will work collaboratively with the Government of Malawi through the Ministry of Health Reproductive Health Directorate to deliver the programme.

- The programme is a strategic investment to help the Government of Malawi realise its goal to reach 60% contraceptive prevalence rate for all women and to reduce teenage pregnancies year-on-year by 2020, a commitment made at the Family Planning Summit 2017.
- In July 2017, the UK hosted a major international summit on family planning, in partnership with UN Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.
- The Summit brought together leaders from around the world to work together to remove barriers to family planning services so that voluntary, modern contraception could be offered to many more millions of women in the world's poorest countries across Africa and Asia.
- At the Summit, the UK committed to supporting millions of women in developing countries where there is no or poor access to contraceptives, contraceptive choices are limited or unaffordable, or women are blocked from accessing family planning services due to stigma or lack of information.