

News story: Sellafield decommissioning reaches new heights

A chimney on top of the oldest reprocessing plant on the nuclear site, will be crunched away at a rate of 1 metre a week.

The tower will be gone by 2020, resulting in a permanent change to the Sellafield skyline.

The stack sits on top of the First Generation Reprocessing Plant and provided ventilation to a fleet of reprocessing plants.

The 60 year old structure no longer meets modern construction standards, therefore must be removed as a priority.

What went up must come down

At 61 metres tall, on top of a 61 metre building, it was the tallest structure on the site, until a modern replacement was built.

It's position on one of the most congested nuclear sites in the world has made this a complicated and lengthy process.

Conventional demolition techniques like explosives and cranes can not be used in such a crowded, hazardous environment.

Stuart Latham is head of remediation at Sellafield Ltd, he said:

Cleaning up our legacy facilities safely, quickly and cost-effectively is our absolute priority, so are delighted to now see the stack coming down after 4 years of preparation.

Given the structural integrity of the stack, its location in the heart of the site and the fact that this new technique has never been used here before, the planning has been comprehensive. The project demonstrates the challenges of decommissioning the Sellafield site.

We couldn't move a crumb of this chimney without building a modern replacement first, so this has been a complicated project, made easier by working closely with our supply chain.

Safety is the number one priority, so thorough testing has helped us ensure everything works as it should.

Sellafield Ltd has worked with Nuvia Ltd and Delta International; who have brought specialist demolition expertise and innovative ideas to the project.

This work saw Nuvia win the Technology Innovation Implementation award at the

2017 NDA Estate Supply Chain Awards.

A self-climbing platform has been designed, engineered and installed to act as a podium so that workers can safely access the 650 tonne chimney.

Using hand held tools like drills, hydraulic breakers, concrete crunching jaws and plasma steel cutting torches, workers will remove each piece of concrete and steel from the stack by hand to a waiting waste skip.

The demolition started in October, with workers accessing it from the circular platform, which is held in place by friction, and moves up and down the barrel of the stack.

Mina Golshan, Director of ONR's Sellafield, Decommissioning, Fuel and Waste Division, said: "Starting demolition of this redundant stack is a key achievement by Sellafield and another important step towards reducing the risk and hazard posed by legacy facilities on site in order to further enhance safety. This is the focus of our regulatory strategy for the site.

"Our inspectors have engaged with Sellafield Ltd during the design, build, testing and commissioning phases and gathered evidence that assured us of the suitability of the proposed demolition activity and Sellafield's supporting safety case."

[Press release: Nottingham man faces hefty fine for fishing without a licence](#)

The Environment Agency is reminding anglers of the importance of having a rod licence, after a Nottingham man was ordered to pay a fine of £346 plus costs after being found guilty of fishing without a licence.

Wayne Dickens of The Square, Bestwood Village was fined by the court to a total penalty of £1,393 after being found in breach of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act (1975) in June 2017.

The case heard at Wellingborough Magistrates Court on 9 November 2017 was brought by the Environment Agency following the discovery of the offender in Strawberry Fields, Lincoln in June 2017.

Following the verdict, Steve Powell, Enforcement Team Manager for the Environment Agency said:

It's important that all anglers understand how seriously the courts take these offences and we hope it will provide as a deterrent for

any angler thinking of fishing without a licence. All the money raised from rod licence sales is used to protect and improve fish stocks and fisheries, benefitting anglers and those cheating the system will be prosecuted.

Every year across the country, thousands of anglers are prosecuted for not having a fishing licence. As well as swindling other anglers, fishing illegally can carry a hefty penalty. Getting caught without a licence could land you with a fine of up to £2,500.

Any angler aged 12 or over, fishing on a river, canal or still water needs a licence. An annual licence costs from just £30 (concessions available) and is available from [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) or by calling the Environment Agency on 0344 800 5386 between 8am and 6pm, Monday to Friday.

Anyone with information about illegal fishing activities can contact the Environment Agency Incident Hotline on 0800 80 70 60 or anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Press release: England's bathing waters hold high standards

Standards have remained high following last year's record results which showed bathing waters were the cleanest since records began.

98.3 per cent of bathing waters tested at over 400 beaches and lakes up and down the country passed tough standards this year, following 98.5 per cent last year.

There have been huge strides made since the early 1990s, when just 28 per cent of bathing waters met the top water quality standards that were in force then; now 92 per cent are rated excellent or good.

Environment Secretary Michael Gove said:

We want all bathing waters to enjoy the high quality which the 146 million visitors to Britain's beaches every year expect and we will keep working with partners to drive up standards.

Not only does our iconic coastline generate over £3.6 billion for the economy, it is a valuable part of our natural environment and we will uphold these bathing water standards as part of our plans to deliver a Green Brexit.

Sir James Bevan, Chief Executive of the Environment Agency said:

Maintaining such high water quality standards at English beaches is a huge success and a credit to all those individuals and organisations working hard to keep our bathing waters clean. Water quality has improved significantly over the last two decades – but to protect and enhance water quality even further we will need everyone to take the small actions that will help.

The Environment Agency continues to lead efforts to ensure bathing waters are maintained and improved further, working with partners and the public to reduce pollution.

Local action plans are in place for the waters that need improvement, involving a range of partner organisations. In 2017 the public were also able to see more advice on signs at beaches and get better information online about water quality at any bathing beach.

Notes to editors:

- The Office of National Statistics have published the annual bathing water quality results [here](#)
- Information about each bathing water is updated through the season on the [bathing water explorer](#)

[News story: UK ratifies new agreement to tackle global warming](#)

The UK has today become one of the first nations to ratify a landmark agreement that will play a major role in preventing global warming by reducing emissions from appliances such as air conditioning units and refrigerators.

The Kigali amendment to the UN Montreal Protocol commits nations to reducing hydrofluorocarbon greenhouse gases (HFCs) by 85% between 2019 and 2036.

These harmful greenhouse gases could have risen by up to 11% by 2050 and the United Kingdom is one of the first countries to approve the landmark UN agreement to help prevent that from happening.

The Montreal Protocol is already one of the most successful treaties ever agreed, having phased out 98% of ozone depleting substances – including chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and hydrochlorofluorocarbons. As a result, the ozone layer is showing the first signs of recovery.

The Kigali amendment to the Montreal Protocol, which the UK has completed ratifying, goes even further and extends targets to HFCs. Although HFCs do not harm the ozone layer, they have a global warming potential thousands of times greater than carbon dioxide.

Consequently this deal is likely to avoid close to 0.5 degrees Celsius of global warming by the end of this century, making it the most significant step yet in achieving the Paris climate agreement goal of keeping temperatures well below two degrees.

Environment Secretary Michael Gove said:

Adopting this ambitious target marks the UK as a world leader in tackling climate change. This deal will reduce global greenhouse gas emissions by the equivalent of around 70 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide by 2050 – the same as more than 600 coal fired power stations would produce during that time.

The UK, along with the rest of the EU, has already begun to phase down HFCs by 79% between 2015 and 2030.

The Montreal Protocol will result in an additional UK reduction equivalent to around 44 million tonnes of carbon dioxide

Notes to editors:

- As part of global efforts to tackle climate change, countries agreed at the Montreal Protocol meeting in Kigali, Rwanda in October 2016 to phase down the production and use of HFCs. Developed countries agreed to an 85% phase-down between 2019 and 2036; most developing countries agreed to 80% between 2024 and 2045; and ten developing countries (India, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, The United Arab Emirates, Iran and Iraq) agreed to 85% between 2028 and 2047.
- For further information please contact Defra press office on 020 8225 7510 or out of hours on 0345 051 8486.

Research and analysis: Bathing waters in England: compliance reports

Updated: 2017 compliance report updated to correct the classification for Crackington Haven from “Good” to “Excellent”.

These reports set out the classifications for bathing waters in England based on monitoring.

Earlier reports are available on the [bathing waters](#) page.