

Sellafield's Rebecca sets daily science challenges for children

The coronavirus pandemic has changed many people's lives. As well as changes to their working lives, parents like Rebecca Ballantyne are also having to entertain and educate their children who are now at home during the working day.

For a science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) advocate like Rebecca Ballantyne, this is something to embrace. It's also an opportunity for her to share her skills with others who are trying to find creative, educational activities for their children.

Rebecca has been part of Sellafield Ltd's STEM programme for some time. She regularly visits schools, nurseries and even universities to share her passion and knowledge with an interested audience. She's now sharing these skills and ideas with a wider audience.

She said:

I am in awe of the workers on the frontline who are putting themselves at risk each and every day to help us. While I am not in the same position, I did want to do something to try and help people.

This is a strange time. We're all adapting to new ways of working. This is daunting for many people, but especially for parents who have children at home with minds to be occupied and a thirst for learning to be quenched.

I have spent a number of years trying to get young people passionate about STEM and I have developed some creative ways of doing with – with even the hardest to impress young people.

I know I am very lucky to be able to work from home, while some of my colleague are still at work. So, I've used some of my spare time to try and make a difference to young people in the area.

Working with her mum, who is a qualified teacher and creative, mixed media artist; Rebecca has launched a new Facebook page. 'Kreative Kidz Cumbria' will share a creative, educational activity for children each day.

The activities are all designed to be practical and easy to complete at home, using everyday items. Each activity lasts around 30 minutes and aims to encourage the creative in children.

Rebecca added:

Schools are providing work, but we all know that it's impossible to timetable a full day's work, so we aim to fill the gap with something short.

One of this week's activities will be to use items we have in the home, such as our recycling, to create musical instruments that can be used in this week's clap for carers on Thursday evening.

We have lots of other activities that I know from my own daughter are fun but are still educational. What's brilliant is that even though the site is new, we're gaining followers quickly and people are also sharing their own ideas.

Rebecca is a chemist at Sellafield Ltd, working in the company's analytical labs. She visits schools and nurseries as part of the Sellafield Ltd STEM ambassador programme. This sees employees visiting educational establishments to share their knowledge and enthusiasm with young learners. It is through this that Rebecca has honed her storytelling skills.

Sellafield Ltd has confirmed this week that any employee who isn't a key worker can volunteer to support their local community during work time. For further details, [see the employee area of our website](#).

[DVLA contact centre opening hours: Easter 2020](#)

Date	Opening hours
Thursday 9 April	10am to 4pm
Good Friday 10 April	closed
Saturday 11 April	closed
Easter Sunday 12 April	closed
Easter Monday 13 April	closed
Tuesday 14 April	10am to 4pm

Please do not call us unless you are a key worker directly involved in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Key workers can contact us [here](#).

All other customers please use our [online services](#), which are all currently available.

Environment Agency continuing its flood defence work

Work is continuing on the £40M Radcliffe and Redvales Flood Alleviation Scheme which, once completed, will better protect over 870 properties from the effects of flooding, the Environment Agency has said.

The organisation has, however, confirmed due to COVID-19 and Government advice it is postponing public meetings, including the regular drop-in sessions held in Radcliffe, until it is safe to hold them again.

Currently, work on Phase 1 of the flood defences, focused on Close Park and Morris Street will continue in line with Public Health England advice. The temporary defences that were constructed during the February 2020 floods have been reconstructed to provide the same level of protection to properties.

Once completed, this phase of the scheme, will see a permanent 2.5m flood wall built at the rear of properties in Parkside Close, and a 3m-high earth embankment on the far side of the park with football pitches acting as a natural floodplain. Work in Close Park will also include the creation of new wildlife habitat and increased amenity areas for the public including a £150,000 extension to the junior football club building which is coming out of the £2m contribution to the scheme from Bury Council.

Peter Costello, Area Flood and Coastal Risk Manager said: "We are doing all we can to ensure work continues as much as is safe to do so and that delays caused by the knock-on effects of this pandemic are kept to an absolute minimum. Our contractors on site, BMM JV have continued to construct Phase 1 of the Radcliffe and Redvales scheme. The team is working in line with Public Health England advice, and have had to reassess the work they can do safely without putting their workforce at any increased risk of Covid-19.

"As government advice changes daily, the construction process must alter to allow for safe practice, the pace may slow and the number of workforce on the site may be reduced and as such, the effects on the programme are continuously changing. Our priority in these difficult times is the health, safety and wellbeing of residents, staff and construction workers. Unfortunately, due to the number of unknown factors we are unable to provide a revised end date to Phase 1 at this time and we hope residents will understand and appreciate that we are continuing to do what we can in these unusual circumstances.

"The effect which the Coronavirus situation will have on the scheme is still unclear and will depend on developments over the next days and weeks. If our plans change significantly due to the situation we will keep the community informed. As an organisation we are doing everything we can to support our community, our government and the NHS by abiding by these measures."

In light of the Coronavirus situation, the project team are reviewing the

planned start of construction works for Phase 2 of the scheme. Work was due to start on site this month. The Environment Agency is working together with the scheme contractors to understand what operations can safely be progressed in light of the current Government restrictions. If it is deemed a safety risk to be starting new construction works, then affected works will be postponed.

Mr Costello said the project team are moving ahead with other tasks that will ensure a swift site setup when the time comes to restart construction. Including working to discharge planning application conditions, agreeing entry arrangements with landowners, tree removal and reviewing and approving detailed designs. The dates for when construction will begin are being reviewed as the situation with regards COVID-19 changes.

He also confirmed that while the project team are currently going through a period of readjustment to widespread home working, systems are being put in place to support this. Residents can still contact FloodResilienceGMMC@environment-agency.gov.uk with any questions they may have around the scheme's progress.

Bury Council's Cabinet Member for the Environment, Cllr Alan Quinn said "We were hoping to see the start of Phase 2 of the scheme start especially in light of the floods that affected Redvales in February, however I'm sure local residents will understand that construction cannot continue as normal due to the Covid 19 pandemic. Residents can be assured though that we will be doing all we can, working in conjunction with the Environment Agency and residents to get the flood defences finished."

The Environment Agency encourage people to ensure they are prepared prior to flooding taking place. People can sign up sign up the Agency's free flood warning service www.flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk or call Floodline on 0345 988 1188.

Regular updates can also be found by following the Environment Agency's local Twitter page @EnvAgencyNW

[Support towards funeral expenses to rise from tomorrow](#)



The change, announced in November 2019, means that the maximum amount families can claim for these type of costs will rise by 43 per cent. This payment is on top of existing allowances that pay for other funeral costs, such as burial or cremation fees.

Funeral Expenses Payments which are paid to eligible benefit claimants will increase for the first time since 2003, providing vital financial support to families grieving the loss of a loved one.

Information around eligibility and how to apply can be found [here](#).

Around 800 claims are received each week by the Department for Work and Pensions Bereavement Support team.

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 3267 5144

Follow DWP on:

Published 7 April 2020

Last updated 7 April 2020 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 7 April 2020

First published.

[SQP retailer premises: temporary change of premises](#)



In light of the enhanced precautions on social distancing we must take as a result of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) has relaxed the enforcement of specific provisions of the Veterinary Medicines Regulations (VMR) to allow a suitably qualified person (SQP) to supply veterinary medicines from temporary premises.

Wholesale dealers will be allowed to supply veterinary medicines to SQPs at such temporary premises.

This decision has immediate effect and will last until 31 July when we will review it.

The VMD will not issue an improvement notice if there are breaches of the relevant provisions of Schedule 3 of the VMR during this period. For further information read the [statement from the VMD](#) (PDF, 895KB, 2 pages).

This is a temporary VMD enforcement policy in relation to specific obligations under the VMR only. The VMR continue to apply. The VMD may continue to take action to enforce those obligations in cases where the procedures described in the statement are not followed.

Published 7 April 2020

Last updated 26 June 2020 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 26 June 2020

Date of temporary facilitation changed to 31 July

2. 28 May 2020

Temporary facilitation will last until 30 June when we will review it.

3. 29 April 2020

SQP retailer premises temporary change of premises – Review date now 31 May

4. 7 April 2020

First published.