



*Nuclear Free Local Authorities Steering Committee*

# information

**For immediate release, 21<sup>st</sup> April 2009**

**A nuclear waste repository in Cumbria? What are the implications for the North West? Does it pave the way for nuclear new build?**

The Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NFLA) English Forum will meet this **Friday, 24<sup>th</sup> April, in County Hall, Preston Lancashire**. The Forum is holding a special seminar on radioactive waste management and new nuclear build with three distinguished speakers – Professor Andrew Blowers (formerly of Nirex and the Committee on Radioactive Waste Management - CORWM), Professor Brian Clark (CORWM) and Jean McSorley (Greenpeace).

For over 50 years, the nuclear industry has been creating substantial amounts of radioactive waste. A consultation period is currently ongoing seeking local communities to 'volunteer' as a location for a radioactive waste depository, in return for socio-economic grants and financial support. Presently the only Councils that have 'expressed an interest' in potentially hosting a repository in the future are in Cumbria. However, on the last occasion that a repository was being discussed – when NIREX put forward Cumbria as a location in 1997 – the Government rejected the possibility of locating it in Cumbria, particularly due to concerns over the geology of the area.

Is Cumbria therefore the right location for a waste depository? How should Councils consult their communities on the sensitive issues that locating a repository in the North West of England raise? What will be the impact on the wider economy and transport infrastructure of the North West by locating a repository in this region, particularly in adjoining areas to Cumbria? What impact does potential new nuclear build in Cumbria have on the future waste legacy? This **free NFLA** seminar will seek to consider these questions.

The three speakers are foremost experts in radioactive waste management and will provide an interesting perspective on how to deal with the huge waste legacy. Professor Blowers and Jean McSorley will provide a critical view of the current policy process, while Professor Clark will independently note how the Committee on Radioactive Waste Management are seeking the most publicly acceptable and transparent way in managing such waste safely.

NFLA member and seminar chair, Councillor Don Yates, Lancashire County Council, said:  
"I am delighted that we have such knowledgeable speakers informing the NFLA English Forum of the implications of locating the national nuclear waste repository in Cumbria. As a Lancashire councillor I am concerned that there will be a major increase in nuclear materials being transported through the county to any new repository.

The Nuclear Free Local Authorities are also concerned that a decision on a repository allows significant new nuclear build in Lancashire and Cumbria. Dealing with current waste is a huge problem – we really don't want lots more radioactive waste coming to the north west. We have a lot of councillors from around the region attending on Friday and I hope we can have a useful and robust discussion on the future management of this dangerous waste burden."

Ends

The flyer for the NFLA English Forum seminar is attached below.

For interview with NFLA representatives contact the NFLA Secretary, Sean Morris on **0161 234 3244 or 07771 930196**.

**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT VOICE ON NUCLEAR ISSUES**



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## **Seminar, AGM and Business Meeting**

**10.00am – 1.30pm, Friday April 24th<sup>rd</sup> 2009**

**Location: Committee Room 3, County Hall, Preston, Lancashire**

### **PROGRAMME**

- 10.00am           **Registration:** Tea/Coffee
- 10.20am           **Welcome:** Cllr Don Yates, Lancashire County Council and NFLA Steering Committee Member
- 10.30am           Andy Blowers, former member of the Committee on Radioactive Waste Management and a former Director of NIREX – an independent view of the radioactive waste legacy dilemma
- 11.00am           Brian Clark, Committee on Radioactive Waste Management – the role of CoRWM's in 'Managing Radioactive Waste Safely' and the 'volunteerism' approach
- 11.30am           Jean McSorley, Nuclear Issues Officer, Greenpeace UK – is Cumbria the right place for a radioactive waste repository and how does nuclear new build affect this?
- 12.00am           Panel Discussion
- 12.20pm           **Conclusion, buffet lunch**
- 12.45pm           Short NFLA English Forum business meeting (NFLA members only - to 1.30pm)

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