



Sellafield Ltd

Sellafield News

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Sparky the barn owl goes down a storm at Yottenfews



A real live barn owl helped bring a classroom science topic about animal adaptation to life for children from Gosforth School visiting the Yottenfews Environmental Project.

'Sparky' the barn owl, visited Sellafield with his handler and conservation officer from World Owl Trust conservation, Hilary Lange.

Hilary, pictured with the children and members of Sellafield Ltd's education team, brought Sparky to see the pupils so they could learn all about barn owls including their special feathers and offset ears for maximum effectiveness when hunting at night. The pupils got a close up view of Sparky before asking questions.

After a close up view, one of the pupils, Emily commented: "It was really good and interesting."

The group then embarked on a tour around Yottenfews where Millie Clarke, manager of the Yottenfews Project, helped the pupils to look for clues to determine whether barn owls had been hunting in the area and to consider what they need for roosting and nesting. *Continued on page two*

NDA makes announcement on SMP

The NDA has made the following public statement regarding the future of the Sellafeld MOX Plant (SMP).

“The NDA has a duty to monitor the performance of all plants within its ownership and the performance of the Sellafeld MOX Plant (SMP) has been of concern to the NDA since its formation in 2005. The plant first went into production in 2002 and to date has failed to meet its throughput targets.

“In considering options for the plant the NDA’s primary consideration is to achieve the best value for money for the taxpayer in the future. In this regard, we have had to consider recent performance, future potential capability and the views of customers.

“Given recent improvements in plant performance and positive discussions with customers, NDA has concluded that, at this stage, the best course of action is the continued operation of SMP in pursuance of completing the current campaign of fuel manufacture.

“The NDA has today written to Sellafeld Ltd to advise them of our position and asking them to continue to deliver the current manufacturing campaign whilst seeking to improve operational performance. In parallel, International Nuclear Services, the commercial subsidiary of the NDA, is continuing to explore new commercial arrangements that would make the continuing operation of the plant economically acceptable to the NDA in the longer term.”

Sellafeld Ltd welcomes this statement from our customer. We have worked hard to raise the performance of the plant, meet existing contractual commitments and earn the opportunity of securing a viable long term commercial future for SMP.

The plant team has performed well over recent months, having recently completed eight fuel assemblies for a European customer. We recognise that there are many challenges ahead, and to secure the future of the plant, we will need to continue to improve our performance.

We are confident that we have the skilled workforce and technical and managerial capability to rise to this challenge. In addition the expertise of Nuclear Management Partners will be important in helping to raise plant performance as we go forward.

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Sarah Layzel, deputy head teacher from Gosforth School said: “This visit has provided a wonderful opportunity for the children to see a barn owl close up. It brought the topic on adaptation to life.”

Talking about the visit, Hilary Lange added: “By educating the local children about barn owls, their habitat needs and nesting behaviour, we are helping to ensure their survival in the future. The Trust gives advice and will happily visit any landowner who thinks they could manage an area of suitable habitat and a nest box for the barn owl.”

For more information on the World Owl Trust, which is based at Muncaster Castle, please contact Hillary on: 01229 717393.

VIP Visits to Sellafeld

23.10.09: Cumbria County Councillors

28.10.09: EHS&Q - Mrs K McNeel

28.10.09: Joe Masters, URS Washington Division

Thorp Group ready for New Year dip

The Thorp Fundraising Group is gearing up for another New Year dip in the sea.

Organiser John O'Brien is hoping for another great turnout, having had record numbers in attendance last year.

He said: “It is great fun. I know some people must think we are mad but every year the numbers swell so there must be a lot of mad people out there.

“Because the number of people taking part is growing each year we have had to be more safety conscious, and for the first time participants will be asked to sign a disclaimer before going in the water – that is because lots of people turn up who aren't part of our group to raise money for their own charities.

The Thorp Fundraising Group handed over cheques to many local causes as a result of this year's dip, including the Handicapped Children's Pilgrimage Trust and the Michael Kennet Fund.

The official start time for the dip is 12.30 (lunch time) on New Year's Eve. The group meet at the Golden Sands just past the Beacon at Whitehaven harbour.

John added “If you aren't able to go in the sea yourself we are still glad of the support, so feel free to come on down and cheer us on.”

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