



HARWELL CHILTON CAMPUS LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS MEETING

Minutes of the 107th meeting held at The Satellite Applications Catapult Centre, Harwell on Thursday 23rd April 2026

It is with sadness that we announce since this meeting the SSG have been made aware of the passing of Dr John Sharp, the Vice Chair Harwell SSG. John was a valued long-standing participant of Harwell SSG and was committed to strengthening relationships between Harwell and its neighbours. His presence will be missed.

Chair	Chris Broad, Chilton Parish Council
Secretary	Bethany Sear, NRS, Communications lead
Minutes	Julie Drewett, NRS

Attendees:

Chris Broad – Chilton Parish Council	Bethany Sear – NRS
Andy Clayton – ARC	Gary Reid – NRS
Bethia Thomas – Vale of White Horse	Laura Street – NRS
Graham Simpson – ONR	Matthew Peacock – NRS
Katie Burke – Diamond Light Source Ltd	Gemma Wood Ruff – NRS
Sally Thompson – Environment Agency	Duncan Anderson – NRS
John Wilkins	Julie Drewett – NRS
Bill Hanks	Steven Dockerty – CNC

1. Chairmans Remarks

- Chris Broad chaired and opened the 107th SSG.
- Apologies received from Clive Hooker – West Berkshire Council.
Dik Third – Nuclear Material Accountancy & Safeguards, NRS Harwell.
Paul McSweeney – ARC.
- 2026 is Harwell Campus 80th anniversary. It is also the anniversary of the recreational society. New padel courts are being considered to mark this.
- ONR has a new approach to NRS decommissioning. Harwell NRS site now has more industrial hazards rather than radiological.
- EA has changed their permit. The result is to lead to a reduced inventory on Campus.
- Nuclear Regulatory Task Force have been looking at speeding up building and reducing costs. This is an interesting piece of work that can be found on Gov.UK.
- 01 April was a landmark moment for NDA as Hunterston B officially transferred from EDF to NDA. It is the first of UK's AGR stations.
(Advanced Gas-cooled Reactor) to move to decommissioning.
- MAVE (Mutually Agreed Voluntary Exit scheme) was launched across NDA/NRS.
- NDA chair Peter Hill stepped down 17 April. Catriona Schmolke has been appointed as Interim Chair.
- SSG Chairs are concerned about changes of NDA staff. There is a forum being held in Manchester in July for SSG Chairs.
- The SSG constitution has been updated. NDA provided guidelines.



- Campus has slowed down development of new buildings. The ongoing building is being finished, but nothing new at the moment. This will affect need for land release.
- This is our last meeting in Catapult; next one will be in Helios which is a new NDA building with good parking. This will hopefully attract more attendees to future SSGs.

2. Minutes of the 106th Meeting

- Minutes from November 2025 were accepted as a true and accurate account of meeting.

3. Matters arising

None

4. NRS Harwell Licenced Site Matters

(a) Site Director's Report – Gary Reid

Gary Reid presented slides detailing the items below.

- Celebrations for Harwell's 80th Anniversary are underway. Internally NRS Harwell have a decade-by-decade blog series spotlighting people, heritage and lesser-known stories. Externally, ITV to attend campus and reactor site to film interviews and footage for 3-part documentary to be released later this year.
 - This site which opened Jan 1946 is internationally recognised as the birthplace of nuclear research. Groundbreaking discoveries that have aided the advancement in medical research, partial physics, space technology, and quantum physics. It is a global hub for life sciences.
- Harwell site achieved all targets for the 2025/26 period, excelling in multiple areas including legacy waste.
- Total Recordable Incident Rate remains at zero.
- Engagement with ONR continues via regular keep in touch conversations during the period and formal quarterly meetings (with all regulators).
- Discharges of radioactivity remain well below permitted levels with no observable trends.
- EA Inspections covering operation and management of the Groundwater Treatment Plant and Western Storage area were undertaken in January 2026, no non-compliances noted.
- No significant security compliance issues to report.
- Cybersecurity desktop exercise held in March 2026 – NDA, ONR and UKRA (UK Resilience Academy).
- Successful security exercise held in November 2025.
- Successful Carriage of Dangerous Goods exercise carried out in February.
- In the late 1990s the site canteen shut. The long-awaited new Dido café has now opened. Staff are delighted they can enjoy a varied menu on site again.
- Sustainability is now fully embedded within our practices. A sustainability plan has been developed locally. They include supporting wellbeing and inclusivity. Integrating Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) into our processes. Developing a local sustainability governance system. Elements to be included in site business planning.
- Litter picks have been organised by site on a rolling monthly basis.
- NRS Harwell 25/26 funded projects: £104,722.00 - A total of 5 projects have been supported, as shown below.



- SOFEA enables at risk young people by giving them skills, training and hands on experience supporting redistribution and community health programmes.
- Abingdon Scouts boating equipment.
- Charlton Primary School. Pre -school mud kitchen.
- Cuckhamsley Scouts replacement shipping container.
- Chilton scouts camping equipment.

Plans for 2026/27

- Intermediate Level Waste (ILW) retrievals continue. All standard Storage tubes will be completed this financial year.
- Continue with Nuclear Material Moves. CLD and CHIL waste moves will be complete this FY leaving just Dragon Shipments Ongoing.
- Progress LETP and West Meashill delicensing cases in preparation for land handover to Campus. LETP is an excellent visual example of decommissioning. It was the largest land release project in the UK.
- Begin receipt of 200+ empty ILW boxes into Harwell ILW Box store (HIBS).
- CNC to be released from site 31 March 2027. There will continue to be robust security arrangements led by our Civil G4S team supported by Thames Valley Police. The next SSG meeting will cover this in more detail and will be attended by CNC staff to answer any questions members of the public have.
- R&RF Project Team at Harwell are using the increasingly valuable tool - LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) - to map complex structures, identify hazards early, visualise future work, reduce time on site, support decommissioning planning. An example of a LiDAR 3D mapped building on site was shown, the group were able to virtually move through the building.

Questions

Q1. Where is the canteen?

A1. Located in building 404 on site, inside the wire.

Q2. What are current plans for building 220?

A2. The Westinghouse contract has ended. There was a supply chain struggle with historical complex fingerprints. We are now using a small team working from room to room headed by a long-standing member of staff who is looking at historical data from the top scientists of the time. This data will be used for characterisation with new limited samples. Characterisation should be completed within next two years. Making a significant cost and time saving. This is the opposite of what Westinghouse wanted to do.

5. Reports

a) Office for Nuclear Regulation – Graham Simpson

Graham Simpson introduced himself as ONR nominated site inspector for NRS Harwell site. His report covers all of 2025 as he was not at last SSG in November 2025. The report shows nothing alarming. A really good working relationship is held with Harwell. The site shows a really robust self-monitoring approach. This was demonstrated at the most recent site exercise (22 April 2026).

- ONR have a new philosophy – risk involved targeted engagement. This will encompass training, management systems, maintenance, and decommissioning plans.



- To demonstrate efficiency there will be less inspections which will be grouped together in themes.
- All these changes are being monitored and can be adapted for improvement going forward.
- There will be two inspections this year:
 - LC28 maintenance combined with Asset management. B220 Will be checked. If it deteriorates the hazard will increase.
 - LC26 Control of work and control of contractors. LC26 is not included in licenced conditions.

Questions

Q1. A few years ago, there was mention of changing the legal framework to make decommissioning easier. Has this happened?

A1. No, legislation has not changed at present.

b) Environment Agency – Sally Thompson

The EA submitted their Environmental Report covering period November 2025 to April 2026 ahead of meeting.

- Received an application to vary permit Nov 2025. This was finalised this week.
- Site compliance very good, well within levels. Only minor fluctuations.
- Inspection took place Oct/Nov 2025 in readiness for land release. Documents are in place.
 - Showed four minor document non-compliances. Documents to be tweaked to conform. No threat.
- There are normally four inspections per year. This will be reduced as land released to Campus.
- Lots of work done on guideline requirements last year.
- This year's themes will be 1) concentrating on waste management to service water to air. West Meashill will be ready very soon. LETP expected Dec 26.

Offsite solids transported off site. 3) Infrastructure of waste deposits.

EA expect the above to take a year.

- EA will also keep an eye on the sewage treatment plant.
- 09 April there was a Senior Stakeholders visit to site. Disappointing that HM Treasury did not attend. However, very proactive day for EA.
- EA want to champion NRS case to HM Treasury so will encourage them to visit site as soon as able.

6. NRS Site Update – Matthew Peacock

Matthew Peacock B462 Complex Manager showed slides demonstrating the progression of the remote handling transport project.

Nuclear Material Transfer Project

- The first waste transfer from site was in 2013. Originally by rail now by road.
- The project interacts with NDA, ONR, EA, Sellafield, Capenhurst, NWS Type B programme, ORANO/SDMS which are French companies and transport companies DRS (rail) SL (road).
- Gemini is a specialised, high-capacity transport package internationally approved container designed for legacy intermediate-level waste. (ILW). This big white unit originated in France. It is currently at Winfrith and will return to Harwell in July 2026.



- An overview of work streams was shown to the membership, detailing expected shipments of ILW Drums, package movements, CLDs and Dragon Fuel.

Questions

Q1. A very clear presentation, useful for the layman. Please explain the burndown curve displayed in the graph.

A. It is the way our inventory goes down explained visually.

Q2. This and Project Rutherford are closely linked. Is there a legal level before CNC are released?

A2. Yes, there are regulatory levels.

7. Campus Matters

a) Harwell Campus Joint Venture Partnership. Arc – Paul Sweeney

Paul Sweeney not in attendance. He forwarded information to group in advance.

- Parish Council do have regular meetings with Campus.
- Chilton Parish Council recently had an interesting tour of Moderna Complex.
- There will be a Campus open day.
- Group had no further questions regarding Campus Matters.

b) Diamond Light Source – Katie Burke

- Diamond II opened in March 2026; this is an extension to Diamond building providing critical space for assembly of components of the new machine.
- “The Beam” was sent 8km into the sky New Year’s Day 2026 to mark 80 years of Harwell world leading innovation.
- Public and school open days took place in March 2026. Encouraging the next generation. Great positive feedback from visitors.
- Foot-and-mouth disease vaccine impact report released in January 2026 recommends a next generation vaccine. Research for this taking part at Diamond provides a critical role in advancing science behind VLP vaccines.
- Little foot fossil digitally reconstructed using Diamond’s beamline. The specimen is the most complete early hominin skeleton ever found.
- No further questions for Diamond Light Source.

8. Any Other Business

Chair hopes that next meeting will attract more attendance as better parking.

Q1. What can this group do to encourage attendance?

A1. Promote through social media. Parking should also help.

Q2. Who do you want to come?

A2. General public, councillors. The purpose of this SSG is to offer the opportunity to listen, learn, challenge, and feel assured.

Q3. Where is the deep trench in the sea where drums used to be dumped?

A3. Birkenhead. It would travel out by boat. The shipments came back to Harwell when the law changed.

9. Next Meeting

Tuesday 03 November 2026 10:00-13:30

Helios Building; Thomson Avenue; Harwell Campus, Didcot; OX11 0GD