

Connect



Players taking part in this year's exercise

Major exercise tests agencies

As mentioned in our last edition of *Connect*, AWE has dedicated emergency experts and emergency response planners to prepare and train for any eventuality. Part of their response training and work involves site exercises, which use test scenarios to put people through their paces.

Earlier this year, not just AWE, but a number of agencies from across the region, came together to undertake a major exercise, one of the largest of its kind in recent years.

The exercise involved more than 180 staff from 32 different

agencies at local, regional and national levels and included emergency services, local authorities, health trusts and specialist organisations.

The scenario for the exercise saw agencies responding to a simulated incident which involved the release of radioactive materials from our Burghfield site, affecting areas in West Berkshire, Reading and Wokingham.

The aim of the exercise was to test West Berkshire Council's AWE Off-Site Emergency Response Plan and demonstrate to the nuclear regulator that agencies are

prepared to respond in the unlikely event of a radiation emergency at the AWE sites in Aldermaston and Burghfield.

Speaking about the exercise, Nigel Lynn, Chief Executive at West Berkshire Council, said: "We regularly test different aspects of our plans, but it is not often we have the chance to do so with so many agencies taking part.

"This was particularly useful for demonstrating how we all work together across borders to respond to an incident."

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WELCOME TO THE LATEST EDITION OF *CONNECT*, WHICH I HOPE FINDS YOU IN GOOD HEALTH.

If you're thinking about taking up a new activity or sport, then why not check out our feature on the Aldermaston Recreation Society on page 12, as it offers something for everyone.

Our sites are rapidly changing – with major developments planned over the coming years. However, we're committed to making sure this is in keeping with our approach as a responsible business.

Our commitment to preserving the environment can be found in some recently published documents – more on pages 2-3.

Beyond our sites, we continue to work closely with local schools and students. Offering support and sharing our expertise with the next generation is incredibly important to us as an organisation and you can read more about how we foster this relationship on pages 4-6.

I hope you find this issue of interest. As always, your comments and suggestions on *Connect* are welcome – please email them to communityandschools@awe.co.uk

The Editor

About AWE

AWE's mission is to support the defence and security of the UK. The UK Government has a policy to maintain a Continuous at Sea Deterrent (CASD) to deter the most severe threats to our nation.

We're immensely proud to support CASD and our national security, through developing, manufacturing and maintaining the warheads for the nuclear deterrent, as well as providing our unique skills and expertise to support nuclear threat reduction.

Under instruction of The Ministry of Defence (MOD), AWE is responsible for operating its sites safely and securely as well as delivering a safe, effective, and efficient nuclear warhead programme. In 2021, AWE became a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB), owned by the MOD.

At AWE, we're committed to delivering our core mission in a responsible and sustainable way. Some of our recent publications highlight our intent in meeting these commitments...



ESG REPORT

Our *ESG Report* outlines the hard work and performance of our employees, senior leadership and executive teams on our Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) commitments. While playing our critical role in the nation's defence, we are also fully aware of the vital role we play as a responsible business. Our latest ESG report details how AWE is working to reduce its impact as well as establish positive outcomes for society and the environment.

Both these documents can be found online at www.awe.co.uk/document

CARBON ZERO REPORT

This document outlines our strategic response to reducing carbon emissions and responding to the impact of climate change. It highlights AWE's current carbon emissions, where we want to be, and the framework and activities we're using to meet our targets. This ambitious report addresses how we intend to manage the climate-related risks and opportunities so we can continue to operate in a changing climate.



One of the juvenile peregrines on site

Home, sweet home for flying residents

We recognise the importance of protecting and enhancing the biodiversity of our sites, so are very proud of a recent feat of nature. After installing some nest boxes, we're pleased to report that our resident peregrine falcons are making full use of them.

Previously, the peregrines were known to nest on a redundant building scheduled for demolition. To compensate for the loss of a potential nest site, artificial nest boxes were installed on other suitable buildings.

Following reports that the nest boxes were being used, a survey confirmed that nesting was under way. Our Environment team is carefully monitoring and managing the situation, due to peregrines being listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, so protected from disturbance while nesting and with dependent young.

We're incredibly proud to report the arrival of two peregrine chicks, and have observed them being fed in the nest box. For the next few months, the juveniles will continue to be fed by the parents as they eventually become competent at flying and hunting.

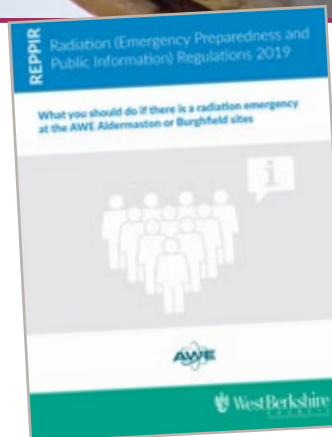
Updated REPPIR leaflet delivered

Updated copies of the public information booklet, which provides advice and guidance for people on what to do in the unlikely event of a radiation emergency at an AWE site, have been delivered to local households and businesses.

The REPPIR – Radiation (Emergency Preparedness and Public Information) Regulations 2019 – require AWE to

have a plan in place to respond to any radiation emergency on our sites.

An online version of the booklet is available on our website under the REPPIR section, as well as at www.westberks.gov.uk/awe where you can also find details on how you will be alerted, actions to take, and an online map of the emergency planning zones.



We've been having a great deal of fun celebrating all things STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) with local school students this summer. In partnership with our Education Business Partners (EBPs), we are inspiring the next generation of STEM stars...



The AWE Glovebox Challenge proved popular at the STEM Fair

Hands-on fair big hit with pupils

Held in partnership with AWE, more than 170 primary school students travelled to Queen Mary's College in Basingstoke to take part in EBP South's new Basingstoke Primary Schools' STEM Fair. The July event featured 11 local organisations that provided engaging activities for students to take part in.

The hands-on activities for the Year 5 and 6 students allowed them to fully engage and learn more about STEM careers. Activities included the exciting new AWE Glovebox Challenge, Escape Room, Programming Robots, Coding and Write Your Name in DNA.

"The students clearly enjoyed engaging with local employers in STEM activities and the event was a really successful first step to engage with the future pipeline in STEM."

Chris Daniels
AWE Senior Manager,
Responsible Business



Pupils from Birch Copse Primary School with their bingo cards

Science Week celebrated as Ambassadors engage with young students

Each year, AWE celebrates British Science Week (BSW). The event is a nationwide celebration of STEM for people of all ages, with thousands of events and activities taking place across the length and breadth of the country.

AWE uses BSW as a great platform to celebrate all things STEM by showcasing talent and holding a programme of events during the week allowing young learners to discover more about science.



AWE's STEM Ambassador Josie (back row, black top) presented students from Brimpton Church of England Primary School with their prize

Science challenge is more popular than ever

Eight local primary schools from West Berkshire took part in the AWE-sponsored Primary Science Challenge.

This year's challenge proved more popular than ever and saw more than 400 students have great fun and learning during the event, which tied in with the World Environment Day theme of 'Solutions to plastic pollution'.

Students also had a chance to show off their environmental credentials by working towards

becoming an eco-school. The Hampshire winners of this takeaway challenge were South View Junior School, Basingstoke, while Brimpton Church of England Primary School were West Berkshire's winning school.

Both schools won an amazing interactive science package from the Royal Institution.

The Primary Science Challenge was delivered in partnership with EBP West Berkshire and EBP South and ably assisted by AWE's STEM Ambassadors.

STEM makes a splash...

The aquatic surroundings of the National Oceanographic Centre in Southampton provided the setting for the new Inspiring STEM event.

Organised by EBP South, AWE funded three teams of local students from The Hurst School in Basingstoke, and Dove House and Vyne schools in Basingstoke, to participate in this interactive event and discover more about STEM careers.

Assisting on the day were 18 STEM Ambassadors and apprentices from AWE, who helped organise events for the 250 young attendees and inspire them about all things STEM. Prizes were given to schools who won our Glovebox and Escape Room Challenges.



AWE volunteers at the Inspiring STEM event

Job opportunities highlighted at workshops

Reaching more than 630 local secondary students, 30 AWE Business Volunteers from across the company attended workshops in six local secondary schools to discuss STEM employment opportunities and career paths.

The events spanned a wide number of year groups with sessions entitled 'People Like Me' and 'Guess My Job' proving very popular with the students. The in-school events were delivered in partnership with EBP West Berkshire.



St Swithun's School students visiting the Orion laser facility

Winners enjoy world-leading Orion

As winners of the AWE Challenge at TeenTech, students from St Swithun's School in Winchester had the chance to visit our world-leading Orion laser facility at Aldermaston. TeenTech is an industry-led initiative that helps young people see the wide range of career possibilities in STEM.

The students were welcomed

by Professor Andrew Randewich, AWE's Executive Director Science, who provided some insight into the Orion facility and an understanding of how high-energy density physics supports the UK's nuclear deterrent.

The students' visit also provided an opportunity to find out more

about the diverse range of careers available within AWE and the nuclear industry.

Hilary Mitchener, Head of Design & Technology at St Swithun's School, said: "The girls had a fantastic time. It was clear that everyone there really enjoyed their jobs and wanted to share what they did with the girls."



AWE graduates helping out at Crofton Beam Engines

Technology supports historic engine

AWE graduates were among a group of volunteers to help support the oldest working beam engine in the world. The engine is housed at Crofton Pumping Station on the Kennet & Avon Canal in Wiltshire and still in working order.

Our graduates were part of the team that helped install a sophisticated 'mechatronics' system, as used in F1 racing cars, to measure and record key parameters such as pressures and valve timings. This installation will help with the performance of the engines, prevent

any damage, and help with monitoring changes.

The historic Boulton and Watt and Harvey beam engines help keep the Kennet & Avon Canal full of water just as they have done since 1809. They work at full load pumping over 10 cubic metres a minute, making them the oldest working examples in the world.

More about the history of Crofton Beam Engines and visiting this industrial marvel can be viewed at www.croftonbeamengines.org

Diversity and inclusion part of our culture

As a responsible employer and business, we're committed to mainstreaming diversity and inclusion in all aspects of our work and remain focused on creating a culture where everyone can thrive.

Along with other organisations, we support various awareness campaigns throughout the year to celebrate the achievements of others and create an inclusive environment for today and tomorrow.

GOLD AWARD RECOGNITION

We were incredibly proud to have been awarded the prestigious Employers Network for Equality & Inclusion (enei) Gold Award. Out of 171 UK entries this year, there were only 15 Gold Awards, meaning AWE is in the top 10% in the country for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I,) so this is an incredible achievement.



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Earlier this year, we marked International Women's Day with a great speaker from Magnox Ltd discussing ED&I's contribution to Nuclear Safety Culture, while our Gender Balance Working Group

organised a lively session to debate and discuss this year's theme of 'embracing equity'.



PRIDE MONTH

To mark Pride Month, during June a series of events took place – including book clubs, quizzes and awareness sessions – in support of the LGBT+ community.



In September, we took part in Reading Pride and hosted a stand.

Meet some of our amazing engineering stars

To further raise the profile of women in STEM, we celebrated International Women in Engineering Day (INWED) to inspire others to embark on a career in engineering.

We had a great time marking INWED and, as part of our celebrations, held an Expo – focusing on this year's theme of Make Safety Seen – with demos, interactive activities and technology showcasing our amazing female engineers and scientists from across the business.

- If you're interested in an engineering career at AWE, check out www.awe.co.uk/careers – our graduate and apprenticeship recruitment starts in the autumn

INDIA

GRADUATE ENGINEER

"As an Evolve graduate, I get to move around the business doing placements in different areas of the company. Since starting, I have done placements with Nuclear Threat Reduction and Supply Chain and now in Design Engineering. My day-to-day activity involves leading a project where I am developing new tooling, processes and solutions as I take my project through the manufacturing system."



FLEUR

SAFETY ASSESSMENT SPECIALIST

"I have worked in a range of operational and capital project areas. Each placement has been around six months long and has offered me a broader knowledge of the business. I have also done a part-time placement within Process Safety – an area of interest for me when I studied at university."



EMILY

GRADUATE ENGINEER

"I have been working closely with the Material Analytical Science group on some R&D projects and really getting to make them my own. Day-to-day is a lot of project management, but I am also getting to be involved with testing. I get to interact with many different areas of the company, as well as outside partners including universities and suppliers."



We're taking time to lend a helping hand

In the last edition of *Connect* we highlighted our new approach to 'give something back' to the local community. As charities and community projects are always seeking support, we've introduced a Time to Give scheme that allows staff an agreed number of

paid hours off for volunteering during work time. Since the launch of Time to Give, AWE staff have provided a wide range of hands-on help – from revamping facilities at an animal charity to school redecorating and clearing gorse on Tadley Common.



Brenda taking a training session

Brenda passes on her skills

Experienced netball coach Brenda, from our Business Administration team, is using Time to Give to help 19 Burnham Copse Primary School pupils build their skills and have fun.

Brenda's short weekly sessions are a hit with the keen seven-to-11-year-olds, comprising a warm-up, some stretches, ball skills, shooting and then playing a game.

Brenda started the sessions last year and is now running fun practices. "It's rewarding to see them enjoying themselves and their confidence grow," says Brenda.

Burnham Copse teacher Pam Clark says the netball club is "thriving" with Brenda's support. "We're so grateful for her positive attitude, expertise and encouraging manner and look forward to her continuing," says Pam.



The scientists on Tadley Common

Gorse gang are a cut above

Swapping the lab for the heathland, 11 AWE scientists helped with the cutting back and digging up of gorse bushes on Tadley Common. Using council forks and cutters, they cleared around 50 square metres of the common, which is well-used by the community as well as being a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

Local councillor Tony Flahive says removing gorse is "no easy task" and important for biodiversity and fire safety. "Their help is very much appreciated and a great benefit to the community," says Tony.

Back to school

Volunteers from our Operations team went back to school for their Time to Give with a redecoration session at the Downs School in Compton.

Over two days, the team rubbed down, undercoated and painted a large area encompassing two long corridors, two flights of stairs and hallways – no mean feat!

Volunteer Heidi said: "Their feedback was very positive, and they thanked us for all our hard work. We were very productive working together and got a great sense of achievement from doing it."

Some of the volunteer decorators



AWE apprentices with the bespoke trike destined for Ghana

Terrific trike will help children reach support centres

We're very proud of our apprentices, who have recently designed and manufactured a bespoke trike enabling children to reach disability support centres in north west Ghana.

Our apprentices volunteered

their own time to build this product and liaised with local education staff at Newbury College to access workshops and welding tools to manufacture.

The team also raised funds in their own time to buy supplies for

the build and for shipping of the prototype to Ghana to support the Action Through Enterprise charity, which provides medical advice and life changing assistance.



Rec Soc is a community asset

Offering an array of activities from croquet to crafting, the Aldermaston Recreational Society – known more fondly by many as the Rec Soc – has been providing sports and leisure opportunities for many over the decades. Situated alongside AWE's Aldermaston site, the Rec Soc offers a wide range of clubs and facilities to cater for not only AWE staff, but also the local community.

There's something for everyone! On site there are football, rugby and cricket facilities, along with tennis courts, five squash courts, croquet lawns and bowling green.

All of these facilities can be booked – or club membership applications made – by calling the Rec Soc on **0118 982 7614** or emailing **enquiries@recsoc.co.uk**. Within the clubhouse, there is a skittle alley, snooker and pool tables and a large function room.

For those preferring something a little less physical, the Rec Soc hosts a number of clubs including photography, crafting and games. The full list of clubs and activities can be found at **recsoc.co.uk**

Also within the Rec Soc complex is the William Penney Theatre – named after the Director of the former Atomic Weapons Research Establishment (AWRE) – which has an audience capacity of 280.

The resident amateur company, The Boundary Players, aim to put on at least three productions a season, including comedies, farce, thrillers and serious plays. An infrared hearing loop is installed in the theatre and disabled access provided.

To discover more about what's on offer at the Rec Soc:

- Visit **recsoc.co.uk**
- Call **0118 982 7614**
- Email **enquiries@recsoc.co.uk**



The Rec Soc Bowls Club in action

INTRODUCING THE BOWLS CLUB

The Bowls Club was one of the first sporting sections formed at AWRE in 1956. Currently, the club has more than 60 members with four teams involved in three separate leagues in and around the Basingstoke area.

All levels are catered for, with casual bowlers able to enjoy a roll-up session and a drink in the Rec Soc. There are also opportunities for bowlers to compete in many competitions leading up to playing in national competitions – one of the club's bowlers has even competed for England.

If you think bowling may be for you, call Dave Bowman on **07834 416927** or email **dbowman@btinternet.com**



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