

Spring 2023

# Community Newsletter

Eryri Visual Impact Provision (VIP) project



## Welcome & project introduction



**Steve Ellison**  
Senior Project Manager,  
National Grid

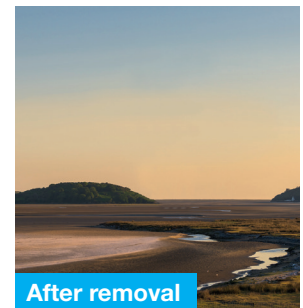
**Hello and welcome to our latest community newsletter. 2023 is set to be a significant year for the Visual Impact Provision (VIP) project in Eryri National Park.**

Last year we started early works on the project which, once complete, will see ten pylons and around 3km of overhead line permanently removed from across the Dwyrdd Estuary. This year we'll be kicking off work on our sites at Garth and Llandecwyn, with the start of construction of the shafts which will lead to the new tunnel deep underground.

Over the coming weeks and months you'll start to see an increasing number of our team out and about in the local area. Our teams will be carrying out a range of activities, including some further ground investigation works and building the various elements that will form our main construction sites in Garth and Llandecwyn.

Please be assured that together with our contractors and subcontractors, we aim to carry out the work with the least disruption to local residents and visitors to the area as possible. Throughout construction we want to make sure local residents are kept up to date with what's going on.

We're also keen to help the local community where we can. Please have a look at the information in this newsletter on our Community Grant Programme which offers funding support to local groups for community projects.



## Why I'm excited about this project

"I am thrilled that the main construction work on the project is getting underway. The exciting plans have been developed with national stakeholders, local partners and the community over several years. Now they are becoming a reality.

"The effect will be transformational, and once completed towards the end of the 2020s, locals and visitors alike will be able to enjoy the unspoiled splendour of

the Dwyrdd Estuary for the first time in generations.

"I have seen the work that National Grid has done on completed VIP schemes in Dorset and the Peak. It is widely regarded as exemplary and I am confident that those same high standards of care for the environment and innovative thinking will be delivered in North Wales."



**Chris Baines,**  
Environmental and broadcaster  
Chair of National Grid's independent VIP Stakeholder Advisory Group

## All systems go

After a busy 2022, we've increased our activity at Garth and Llandecwyn since the start of 2023 and this will continue throughout the year.

In February, we began setting up the main site compound at Garth. This will be the location for our project offices (we're currently using temporary offices at Trawsfynydd) and our project information centre.

It will also be the launch site for the tunnel boring machine (TBM) and the location for the equipment that will process the material we take out of the ground when building the shafts and the tunnel.

## Snakes and lizards in Llandecwyn

The site set up at Llandecwyn will be much smaller than at Garth and will essentially involve a road up to the area where we will construct the tunnel head house.



Working on advice from Eryri National Park Authority, ecologists and Natural Resources Wales, our environmental contractor, Atmos, undertook reptile surveys and relocated any reptiles we found outside our site boundary into specially built shelters nearby.

Special fencing prevents them from re-entering the site, while we are working to keep them out of harm's way. We were really pleased with the variety of species we found including adder, grass snake and slow worm, as well as common lizards and two types of newt (smooth and palmate).

## What's on site at Garth?

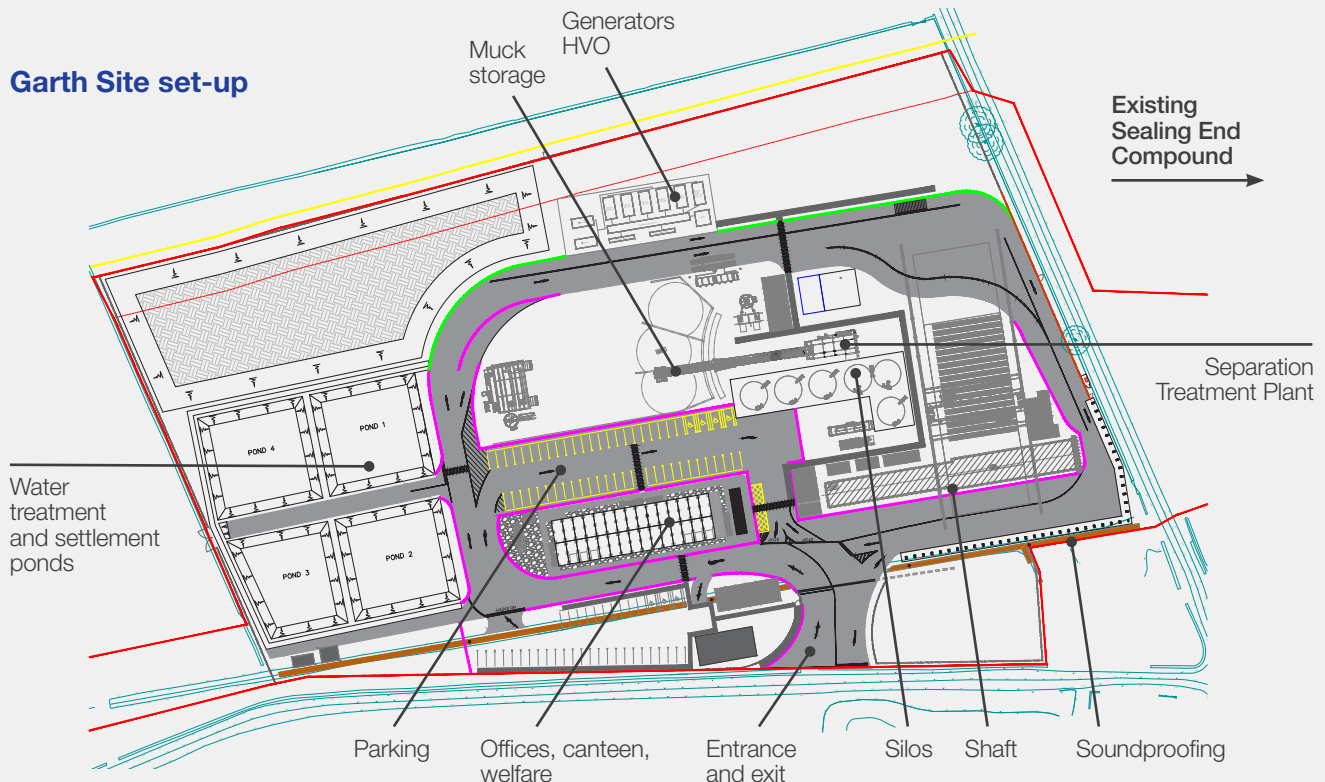
The diagram shows the various elements that make up the site compound at Garth. The TBM will need a lot of fresh water to operate and to transport the material we excavate at the drill face back to the surface in the form of a slurry.

We re-use the water, which is why we need the four water treatment and settlement ponds you can see on the left-hand edge of the site.

The silos in the middle of the site are for processing the slurry, separating the water from the excavated material, cleaning it and preparing it for its eventual destination. We'll know more about where we plan to re-use the material later in the year and will include this information in our next newsletter, as we know it's an important issue for the community.

We are committed to re-using as much of the material as we can and have an excellent track record in doing this on other tunnelling projects.

### Garth Site set-up





## In the Community...

### Thank you for dropping in

Engaging with stakeholders and local communities has been an important part of our work since the very start back in 2015. In December 2022 we held two more public information drop-in events, one at Talsarnau and one in Penrhyndeudraeth.

It was fantastic to see so many local people coming along. We enjoyed learning more about what aspects of our work are of most interest to the community. We received many questions about the geology of the local area, how we will be boring the tunnel that will house the new cables, as well as how we will re-use the material we bring up from the tunnel and shafts.

There was also considerable interest in potential job opportunities for the local people



Public drop-in at Neuadd Goffa (Memorial Hall), Penrhyndeudraeth

and in the supply chain, in our Community Grant Programme and in the innovative, sympathetic design we propose for the tunnel headhouses.

It was particularly valuable for us to speak to some of our nearest site neighbours, to listen to their concerns and to be able to provide reassurances about our high standards when it comes to minimising any disruption resulting from our construction activity.

### Commitment to re-use

National Grid is committed to managing the waste materials arising from shaft and tunnel works responsibly and safely. On our VIP project in the Peak District, we managed to re-use or recycle over 99% of waste material. We're aiming for something similar on the Eryri project.

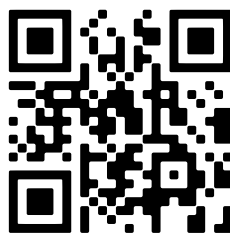


### Safety first

Many of you will have noticed that we have closed part of the back lane to Minffordd between the A497 and Quarry Lane.

You can find out more by scanning the QR code:

We would like to apologise for any inconvenience caused and thank you for your patience during our works.



### Calling local workers and contractors

National Grid and Hochtief UK are committed to working within local communities and using local labour and suppliers as much as possible.

Some of the work on the project will require highly specialised contractors which may not be available locally.

However, there will be opportunities for local businesses to tender for work with us and there will also be other, indirect openings within the supply chain.

We will be hosting a Meet the Buyer Day this summer in Penrhyndeudraeth where the local business community can come along to find out more about some of the products and services we will need during the project. Look out for more details on our website or in the local press.

### Cymdeithas Eryri (Snowdonia Society) – re-engaging with the landscape

The Snowdonia Society received £20,000 grant from the Community Grant Programme to develop events and experiences that engage the public with the Eryri landscape.

Funding will go towards providing more inclusive volunteering, walks, talks, art and music events as well as changing behaviours that threaten habitat and biodiversity in the area, through improved understanding.



## In the Community...

### VIPs visit Eryri VIP

On Friday 14 October 2022, 12 representatives from National Parks Societies in England and Wales visited the Dwyryd Estuary to see for themselves the pylons destined for removal.

Organised by the Snowdonia Society, the trip was part of the National Parks Societies Annual Conference which was held this year at the Plas y Brenin Outdoor Centre in Capel Curig.

Delegates were treated to a guided walk around the estuary by Senior Project Manager for the Eryri Visual Impact Provision (VIP) project, Steve Ellison, stopping at numerous locations to view the pylons and discuss key aspects of the project. Steve also gave a keynote speech at the conference on the wider VIP project and the Eryri scheme in particular.



### Community Grant Programme

The Community Grant Programme is aimed at community organisations and charities in areas where National Grid's work is impacting on local people through our site activities – supporting projects which will benefit communities in the local area.

**Could your group benefit?  
If you know of a project that meets our  
criteria we'd love to hear from you.**

Check out our website for more information on who can apply and how to do it –  
[www.nationalgrid.com/responsibility/  
community/community-grant-programme](http://www.nationalgrid.com/responsibility/community/community-grant-programme)

### Supporting a meeting of budding minds

In November we were privileged to have the opportunity to sponsor the ninth edition of the Wales Ecology and Evolution Network (WEEN) annual conference. The student-run event aims to promote post-graduate research and serves as a networking platform for early-career scientists at Welsh universities.

The conference, which relies on third-party sponsors and grants, has been hosted at the Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT) in Machynlleth since 2017 and is known for its work on green energy and sustainability. This year's event featured a keynote speech in partnership with the Low Carbon Energy & Environment Research Network Wales (LCEE), talks

hosted by the Learned Society of Wales and the North Wales Rivers Trust, as well as ground tours, and social events. Congratulations to all involved in making the event a huge success.



## Get in touch

We're committed to providing updates throughout construction and will be sending regular newsletters to keep local people updated about our progress. However, we're always keen to hear from you.

Please get in touch by calling **0330 134 0051**

by writing to **Freepost VISUAL IMPACT PROVISION**

or by sending an email to [visualimpact@nationalgrid.com](mailto:visualimpact@nationalgrid.com)

You can find out more about the project on our dedicated website:  
[www.nationalgrid.com/eryrivip](http://www.nationalgrid.com/eryrivip)

