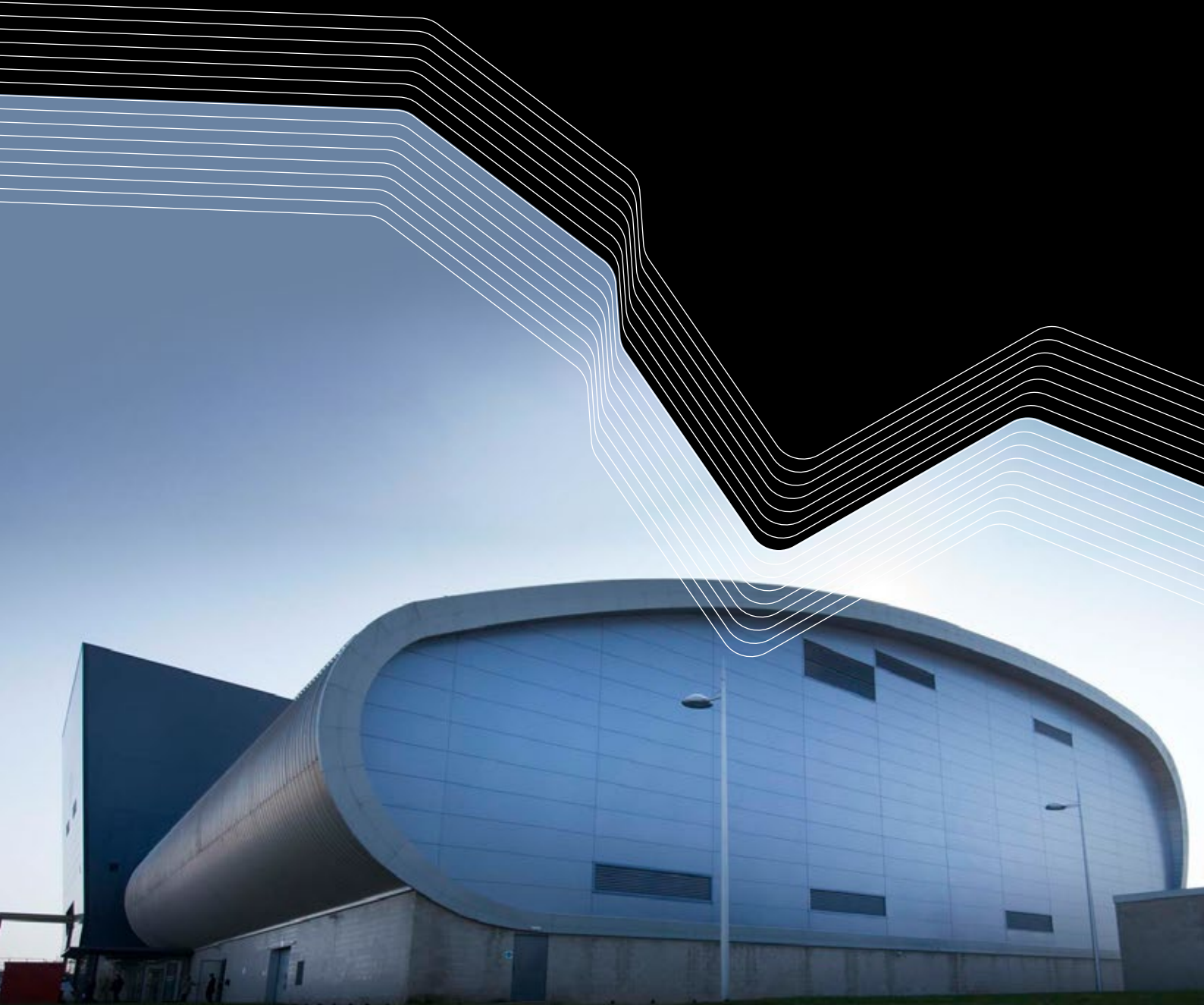


Future Materials Campus

Community Feedback Report

February 2025



INTRODUCTION

During the autumn of 2024, we came out to speak to our neighbours who both live and work around our Aldermaston and Burghfield sites. Our intention was to introduce ourselves to the community, talk about what we do and let people know about the significant infrastructure investment that is being made in our facilities.

This is the first time in our recent history that we have done this and is part of a new, more transparent approach to help people understand our business, the remarkable work we do and the incredible people who do it. Over seven weeks, we held six in-person and two online events and were pleased to be able to speak to so many of you in person. It also gave us the opportunity to try out Facebook as a way of reaching the people living around our site.

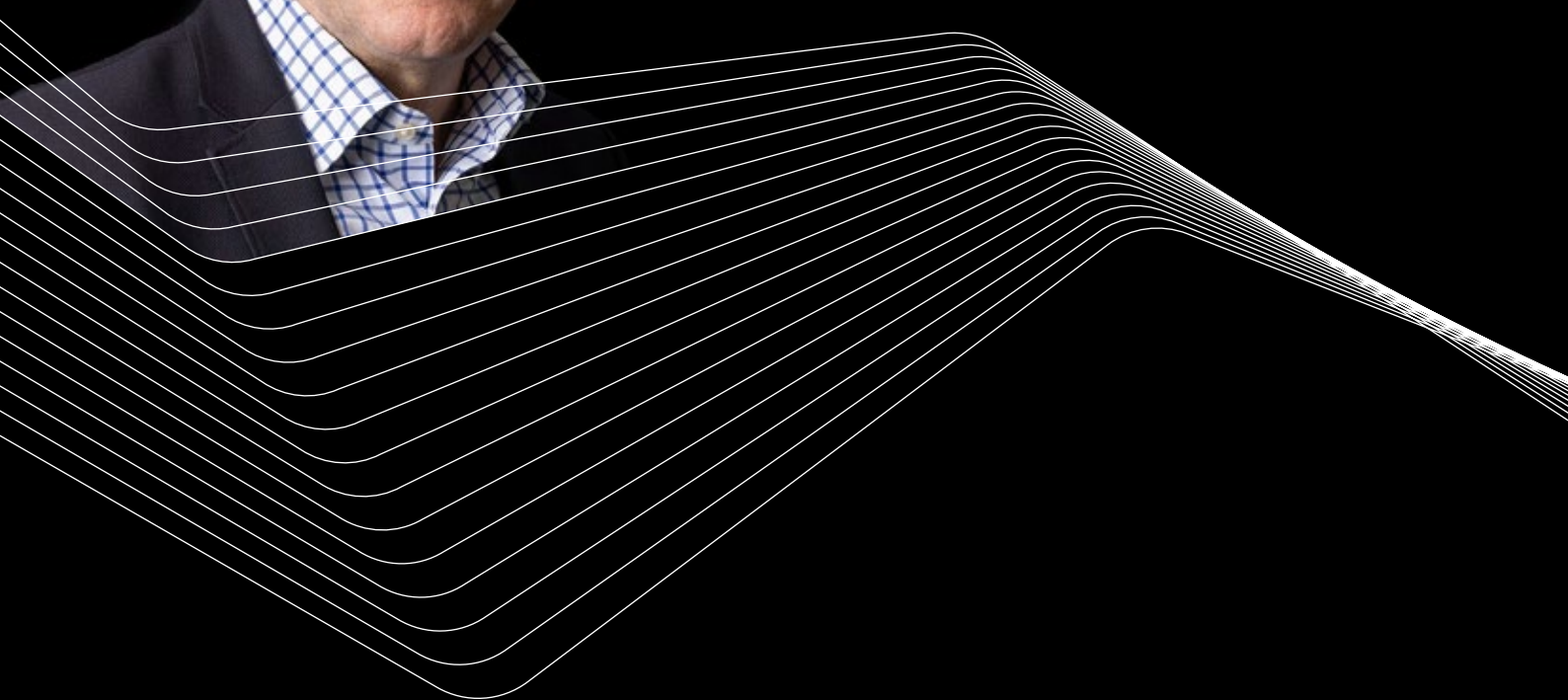
Our events were also an opportunity for us to tell you about our upcoming infrastructure programme. We know that infrastructure programmes like ours often bring challenges that people living nearby will quite rightly expect us to understand and take action on. We were greatly encouraged during the recent sessions by the conversations we had with you about the long-term local benefits through direct employment and local business growth that the major investment in AWE will bring. Even at this early stage of our programme, we are keen to know from local people how we can maximise those benefits and appropriately address the challenges as our plans develop.

Thank you to those who filled in our survey. You'll see the results within this report and, in the conclusion, we explain how your feedback will help us as our infrastructure plans move forward.

Thanks too to the many respondents who provided positive feedback about our people working at the events – we have passed your kind words on to the team. One of our displays at the events noted 'AWE's roots are firmly within the local community.' This shines through our survey results and is a sentiment my team and I felt most keenly in our conversations with you at our drop-in sessions.

We hope you find this report interesting and we look forward to meeting you again at future events.

Andrew McNaughton
Executive Director, Infrastructure Projects Delivery (IPD)



ABOUT US

AWE's mission is to design and manufacture warheads and provide nuclear services to meet the needs of defence.

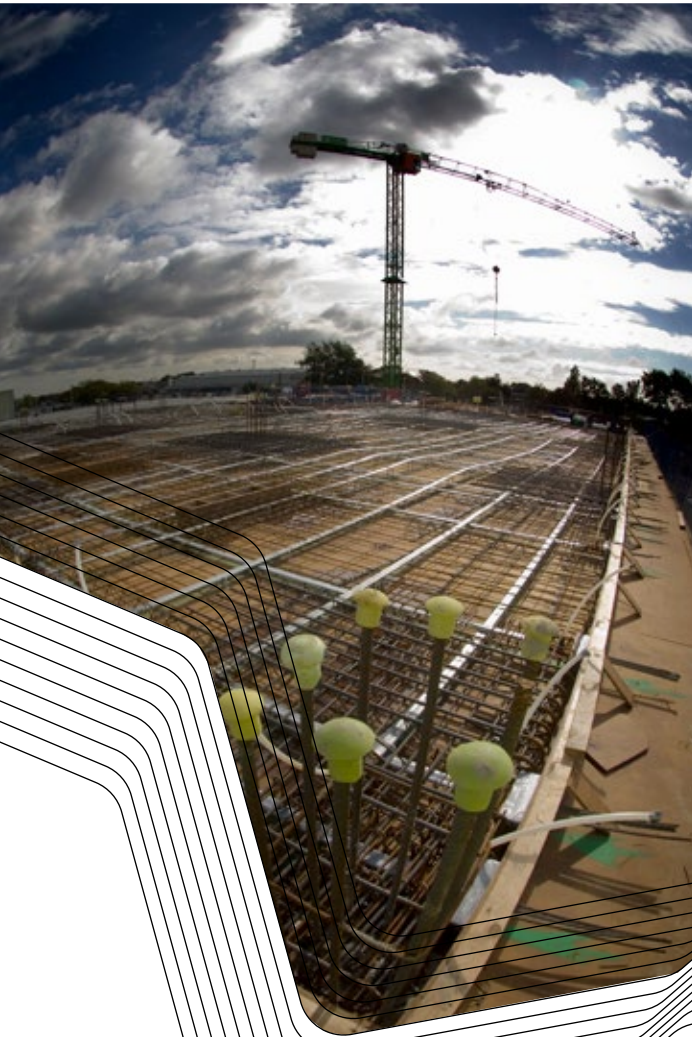
As an arms-length body of the Ministry of Defence (MoD), we design, develop, manufacture and maintain the warheads for the UK's Continuous At Sea Deterrent, at our sites at Aldermaston and Burghfield.

Our Nuclear Threat Reduction specialists also work with government to protect our country from radiological and nuclear threats.

WHAT IS THE UK'S CONTINUOUS AT SEA DETERRENT?

You may have heard of 'Trident', which is a nuclear-weapons system that is part of the Continuous At Sea Deterrent. The Trident system consists of missiles and warheads, fitted on a submarine. At least one nuclear-armed ballistic missile submarine patrols the seas undetected at all times, ready to respond to the most extreme threats to the UK.

The UK's independent nuclear deterrent has existed for over 60 years to deter the most extreme threats to our national security and way of life, helping to guarantee our safety, and that of our NATO allies.



FUTURE INVESTMENT (FUTURE MATERIALS CAMPUS)

As part of a Ministry of Defence (MoD) renewal programme, the UK will replace its existing nuclear warhead and it is our highly skilled teams here at AWE that will do this. As well as people, we need to make sure we have the right facilities too.

These facilities will be located on our existing site at Aldermaston and, as part of this, we will be building the 'Future Materials Campus' (FMC).

This significant investment means AWE will continue to be a major employer and neighbour in the local area for many years to come.

METHODOLOGY

We held six in-person drop-in events and two online public sessions in October and November 2024. We held the events over a seven-week period, spanning afternoons and evenings plus one weekend session. Three events were held in venues local to our Aldermaston/Burghfield sites, the other three in urban centres (Reading, Newbury and Basingstoke).

PROMOTION

Our approach was to ensure we reached as wide and broad a part of the community as possible. We advertised these events with a mix of traditional printed materials and digital promotion, ensuring we reached those offline as well as those on social media.

40,000 printed flyers advertising the dates were sent out between 5 – 11 October 2024. An issue with the distribution was discovered so, between 30 and 31 October, a second distribution of 10,000 flyers was sent out, with flyers left in public spaces such as libraries and local shops (where permission was granted).

Thank you to our [Local Liaison Committee](#), (members represent around half a million residents who live in the Boroughs and Parishes around our sites) who shared our Facebook posts and distributed our digital flyer in their networks. Thanks also to West Berkshire Council, Reading Borough Council and Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council who helped us by promoting our events via their own channels and networks.

Each event was advertised on Facebook, with the ten posts receiving a total of over 7,000 views. Two LinkedIn posts generated 13,000 impressions and 886 click-throughs to our website.

Date	Time	Location
14 October	2pm – 8pm	Aldermaston Parish Hall
23 October	2pm – 8pm	Reading Town Hall
4 November	2pm – 8pm	Burghfield Village Hall
9 November	12 midday – 5pm	The Link, Tadley
13 November	10am – 11am	Online webinar
14 November	2pm – 8pm	Ark Centre, Basingstoke
18 November	2pm – 8pm	Waterside Centre, Newbury
28 November	7pm – 8pm	Online webinar

WEBSITE

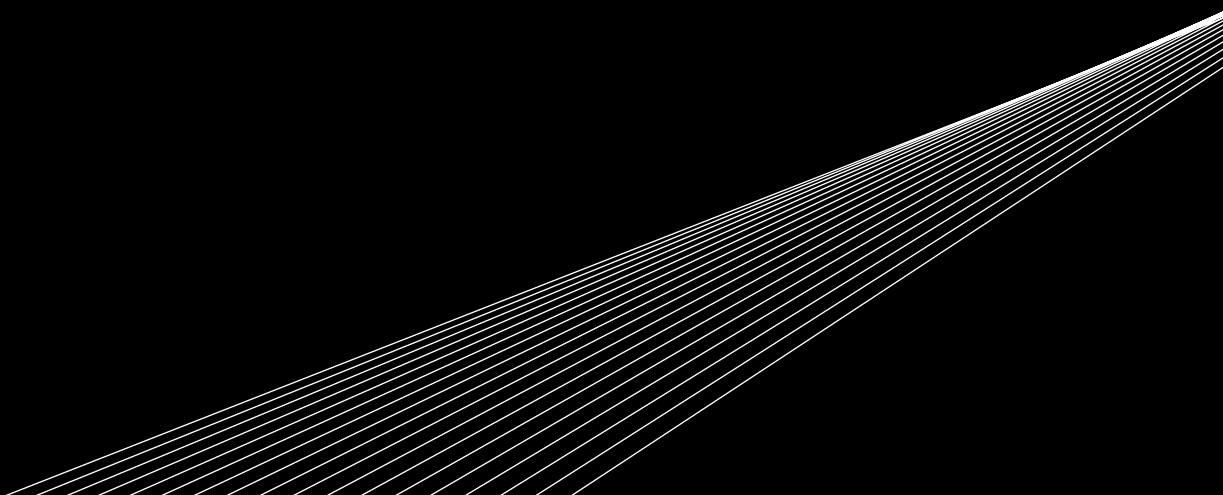
To provide us with a platform for hosting event content and surveys, we developed a brand new website that went live at the beginning of October.

We replicated the in-person and online event content on this website, uploading a PDF of our exhibition boards.

The [website](#) had 1,847 page views between 14 October and 5 December, with 738 active users. Most people arrived on the website via a direct link to the page, with social media and then Google as the main drivers of traffic.

CLARIFICATIONS

For this report we have rounded percentages to whole numbers and have defined local communities as those living approximately within a 20-mile radius around our sites.



OUR FINDINGS

We were really pleased to have reached over 300 people with our sessions.

We met 278 people in-person at our events, 53 people online and had 71 responses to our feedback forms.

Date	Location	Visitors
14 October	Aldermaston Parish Hall	32
23 October	Reading Town Hall	18
4 November	Burghfield Village Hall	46
9 November	The Link, Tadley	78
13 November	Online webinar	13
14 November	Ark Centre, Basingstoke	24
18 November	Waterside Centre, Newbury	61
28 November	Online webinar	40
TOTAL		312

CONVERSATIONS AT OUR EVENTS

We were warmly received by those who visited our events. Attendees spent considerable time talking to our team and we enjoyed many positive and informative conversations. We noted these themes:

- There was lots of curiosity about what we do. For some people who lived next to our site, this was the first opportunity they had to speak to us directly and they were keen to know more about AWE.
- Many who attended had family or friends who work or who have worked for AWE.
- We met many people who used to work for AWE and were still interested in its progress. One was in the helicopter that took the site construction photos we had on display and another was a site construction manager for the buildings in our display photos!
- There is a strong interest in working for AWE, from all ages and backgrounds. People wanted to find out more about careers, ranging from school children, to serving police officers and military personnel.
- Many attendees misunderstood the risk around our sites with every session hearing from a number of people who believed the site ‘would go bang’ and ‘it would be curtains for us’. Our teams provided reassurance to the small number of people who came to ask us about safety and living near a nuclear site.
- We spoke to several people representing nuclear disarmament organisations, with interesting conversations held about how AWE minimises environmental impacts.

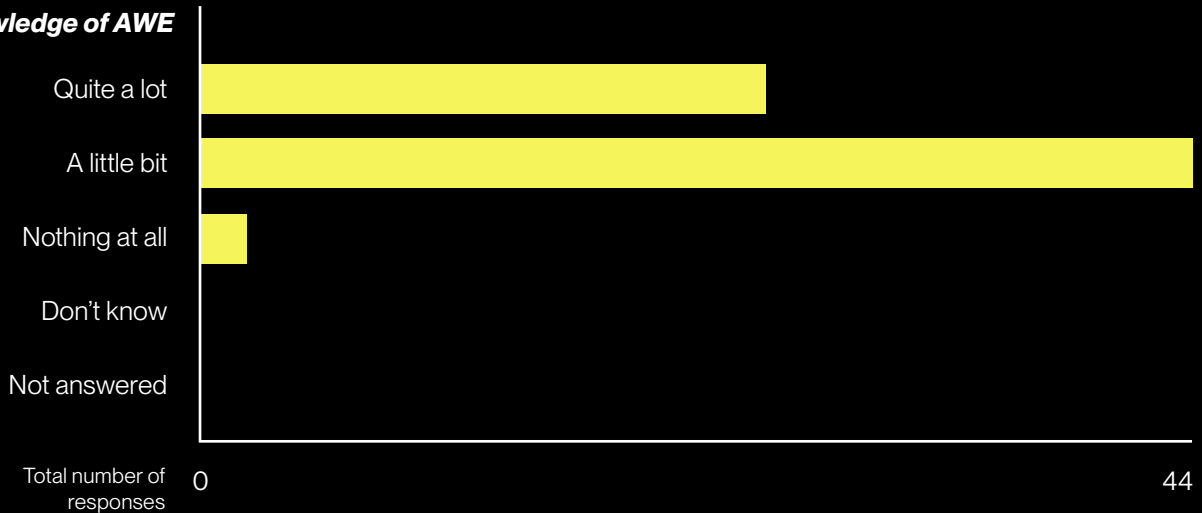
FEEDBACK FORM DATA

This section outlines the quantitative and qualitative data we received from the feedback form that was available at our in-person events as well as on our community website.

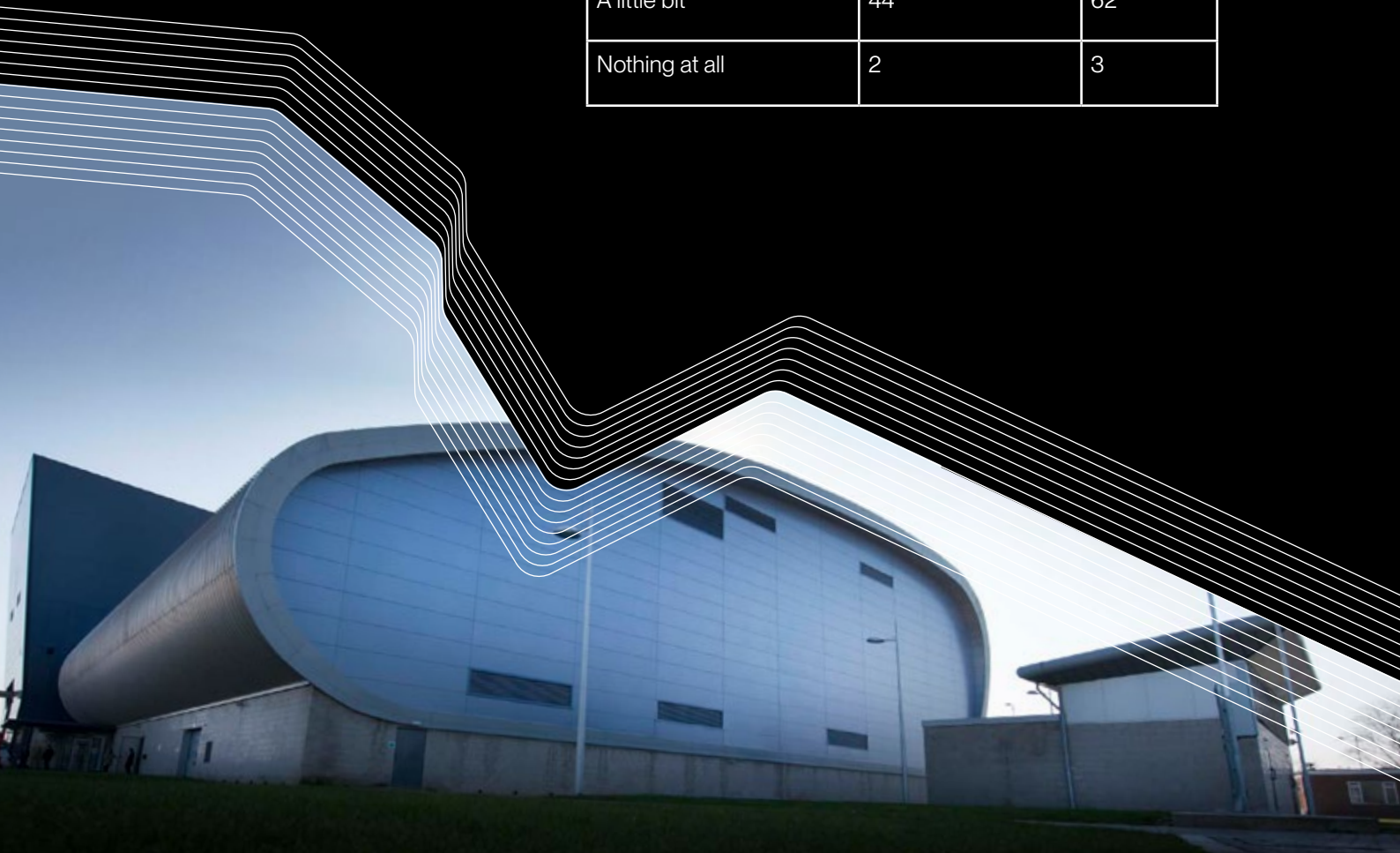
Q1: How much do you feel you know about AWE and the work we do?

There were 71 responses to this question.

Knowledge of AWE



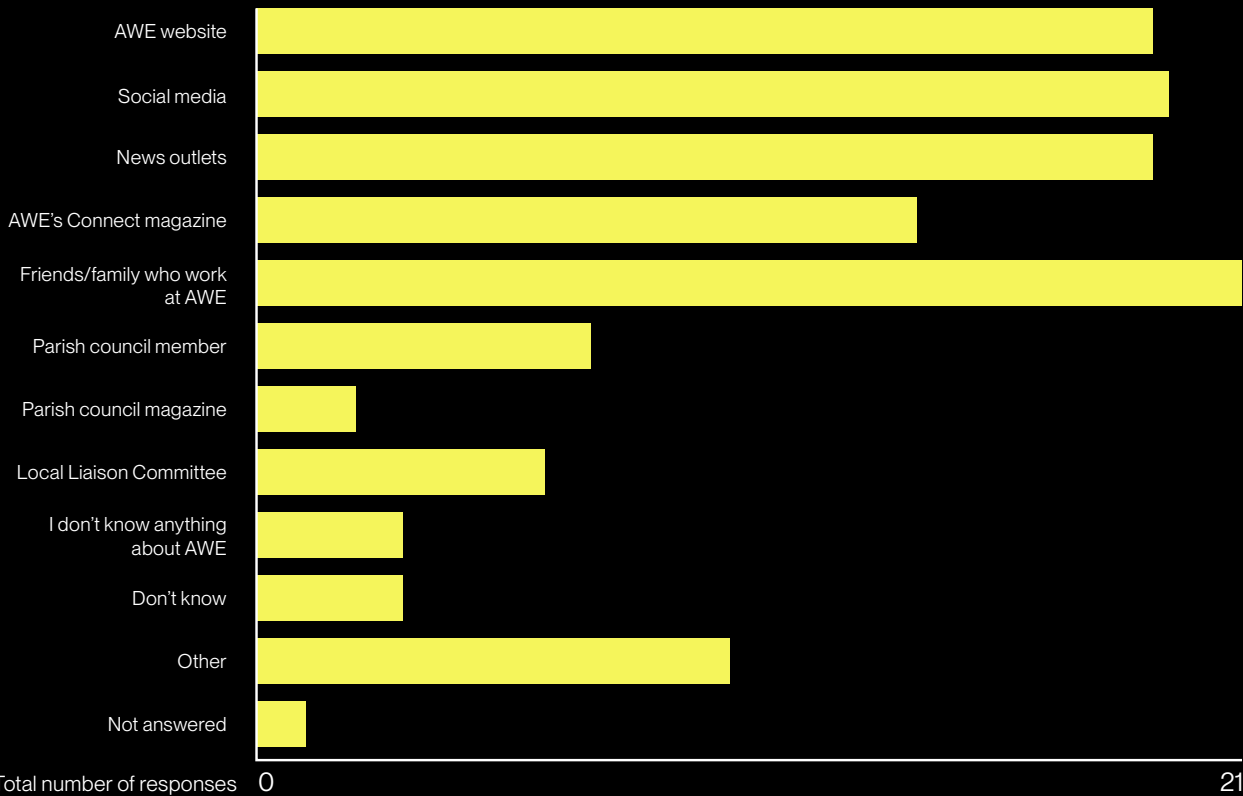
Option	Total	Percent
Quite a lot	25	35
A little bit	44	62
Nothing at all	2	3



Q2: How do you currently find out about AWE?

We had 70 respondents answer this question. This question had the option of selecting more than one response, resulting in 119 answers in total.

Current channel



Multiple choice answer	No of selections	As a % of responses
Friends/family who work at AWE	21	18
AWE website	19	16
News outlets	19	16
Social media	14	12
Connect magazine	14	12
Other	10	8
Parish Council member	7	6
Local Liaison Committee	6	5
I don't know anything about AWE	3	3
Don't know	3	3
Parish Council magazine	2	1
	118	100

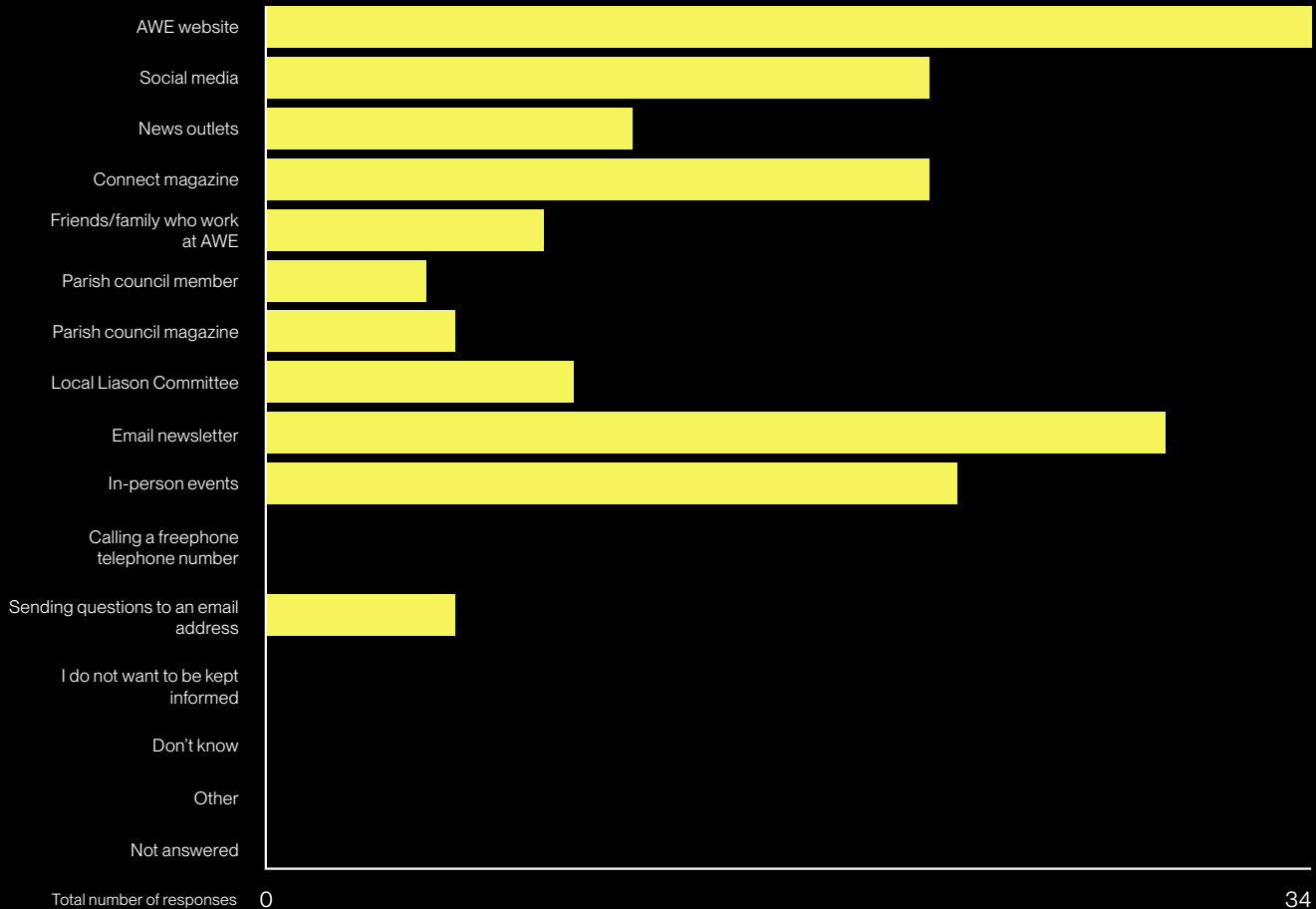
14 respondents answered 'other' and used the free text box to provide additional information on how they find out about AWE.

The majority of the 14 responses highlighted local links (such as being a resident and information via word of mouth) and existing connections with AWE, for example having family members who work for us, or being a current or former AWE/ military employee. Others mentioned finding out about AWE through their research and general interest pursuits such as documentaries and previous visits to other military sites. Two mentioned the leaflet sent out to residents ahead of the drop-in sessions.

Q3: How would you like to be kept informed about AWE?

There were 71 respondents to this question, which had the option of selecting more than one response, resulting in 169 answers in total.

Future channels

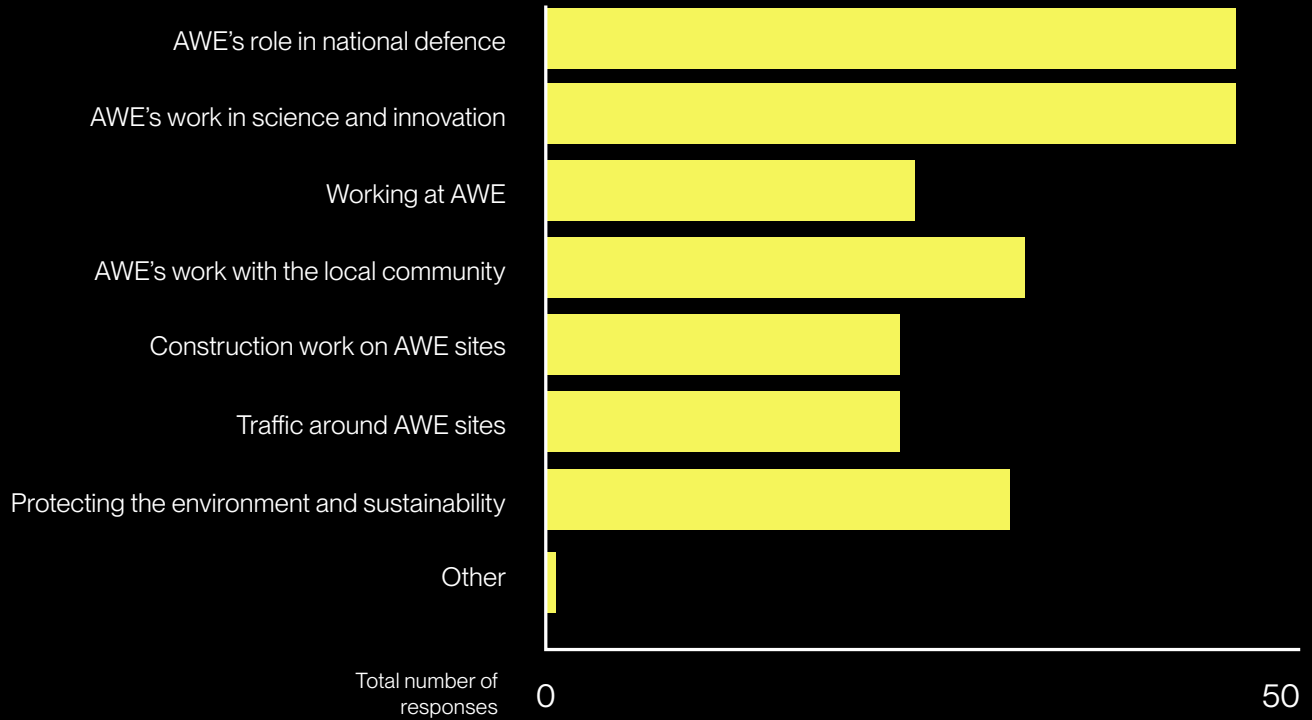


Multiple choice answer	Number of selections	As a % of responses
AWE website	34	20
Email newsletter	29	17
In-person events	22	13
Social media	21	12
Connect magazine	21	12
News outlets	11	7
Local Liaison Committee	9	5
Friends/family who work at AWE	8	5
Parish Council magazine	5	3
Sending questions to an email	5	3
Parish Council member	4	3
Calling a freephone number	0	0
	169	100

One respondent used the free text box to request more webinar sessions as appropriate, another noted planning applications as a method of keeping informed about AWE.

Q4: Which topics are you most interested in hearing about?

69 people responded to this question, which allowed multiple selections. This generated a total of 228 answers.



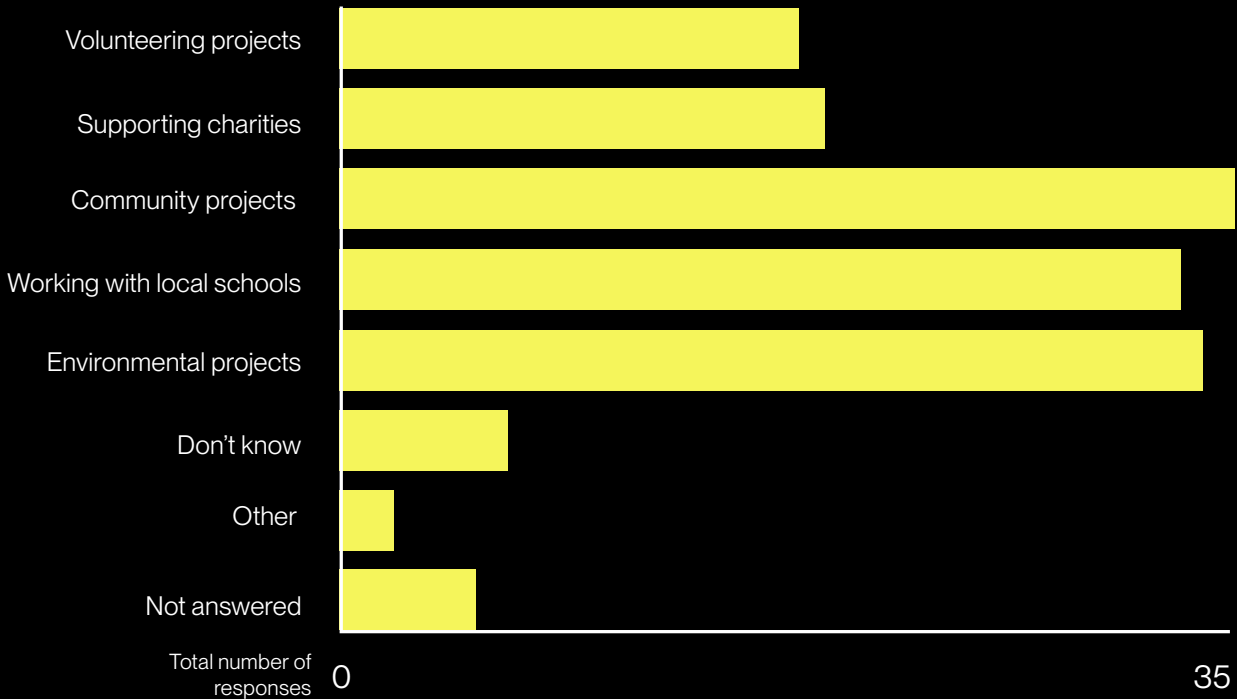
69 people responded to this question, which allowed multiple selections. This generated a total of 228 answers.

Multiple choice answer	Number of selections	As a % of responses
AWE's role in national defence	46	20
AWE's work in science and innovation	46	20
AWE's work with the local community	32	14
Protecting the environment and sustainability	31	13
Working at AWE	25	11
Construction work on AWE sites	24	11
Traffic around AWE sites	24	11
Other	1	0
	229	100

Three people provided additional information in the free text boxes. They said they wanted to know more about non-weapon projects that are not classified and how AWE could use its assets, such as Orion, to work further with universities. One respondent wanted to know more about accessibility to and from sites.

Q5: In which areas would you value more support and involvement from major local employers, like AWE?

66 people responded to this question generating 139 responses.



Multiple choice answer	Number of selections	As a % of responses
Community projects	33	24
Environmental projects	32	23
Working with local schools	31	22
Supporting charities	18	13
Volunteering projects	17	12
Don't know	6	4
Other	2	2
	139	100

Respondents who selected 'other' noted they wanted to see AWE support local improvement projects. One person requested support with a bypass and another noted their organisation was often looking for support for volunteers.

Q6: Thinking about the proposed future investment at AWE, what topics are you most interested in hearing more about?

There were 70 answers to this question. Respondents could pick more than one option, producing a total of 179 response selections.

Multiple choice answer	Number of selections	As a % of responses
Benefits for the local community	46	26
Benefits for the environment	37	20
Job opportunities	30	17
Construction traffic and routes	22	12
Opportunities for local businesses	19	10
Construction team working hours	14	8
Construction noise	8	5
Don't know	2	1
Other	1	1
I'm not interested in hearing more from AWE	0	0
	179	100

One respondent wanted to know more about air pollution and any health impacts on the local population.

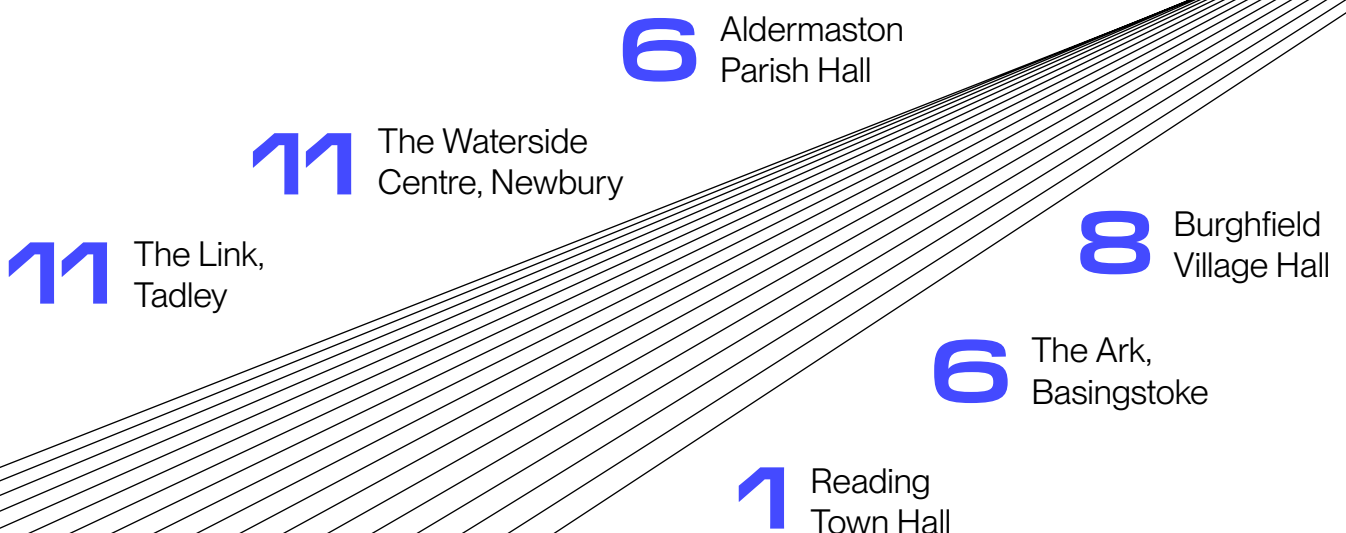
Q7: Have you attended one of our drop-in sessions?

There were 71 responses to this question. 62% had been to a drop-in session or webinar and 38% had not.

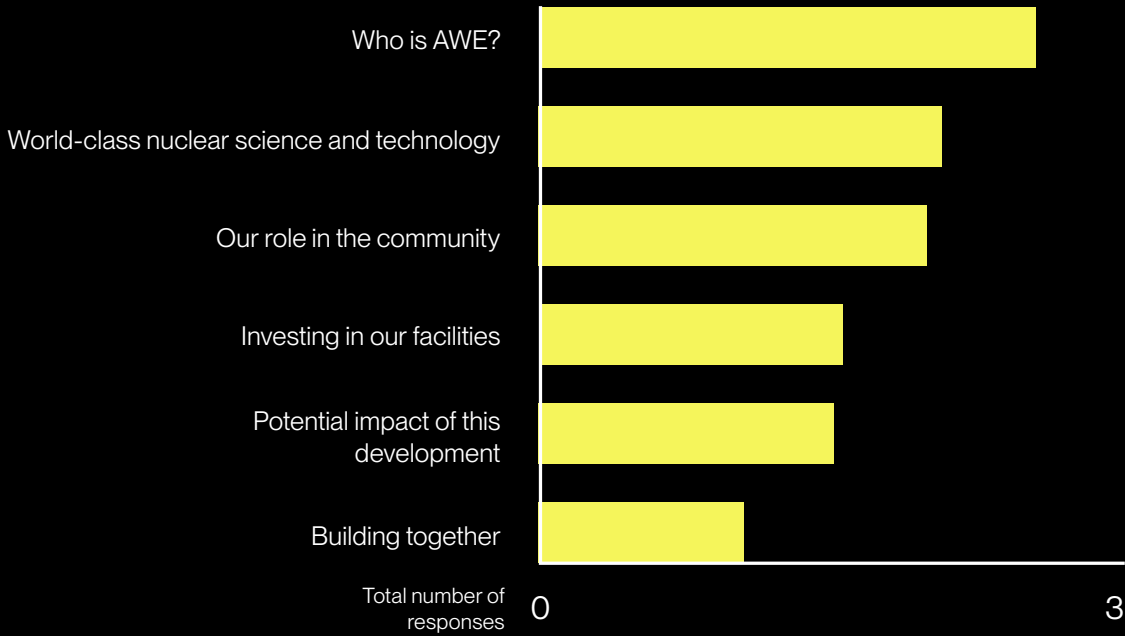


Q8: Which drop-in sessions did you attend?

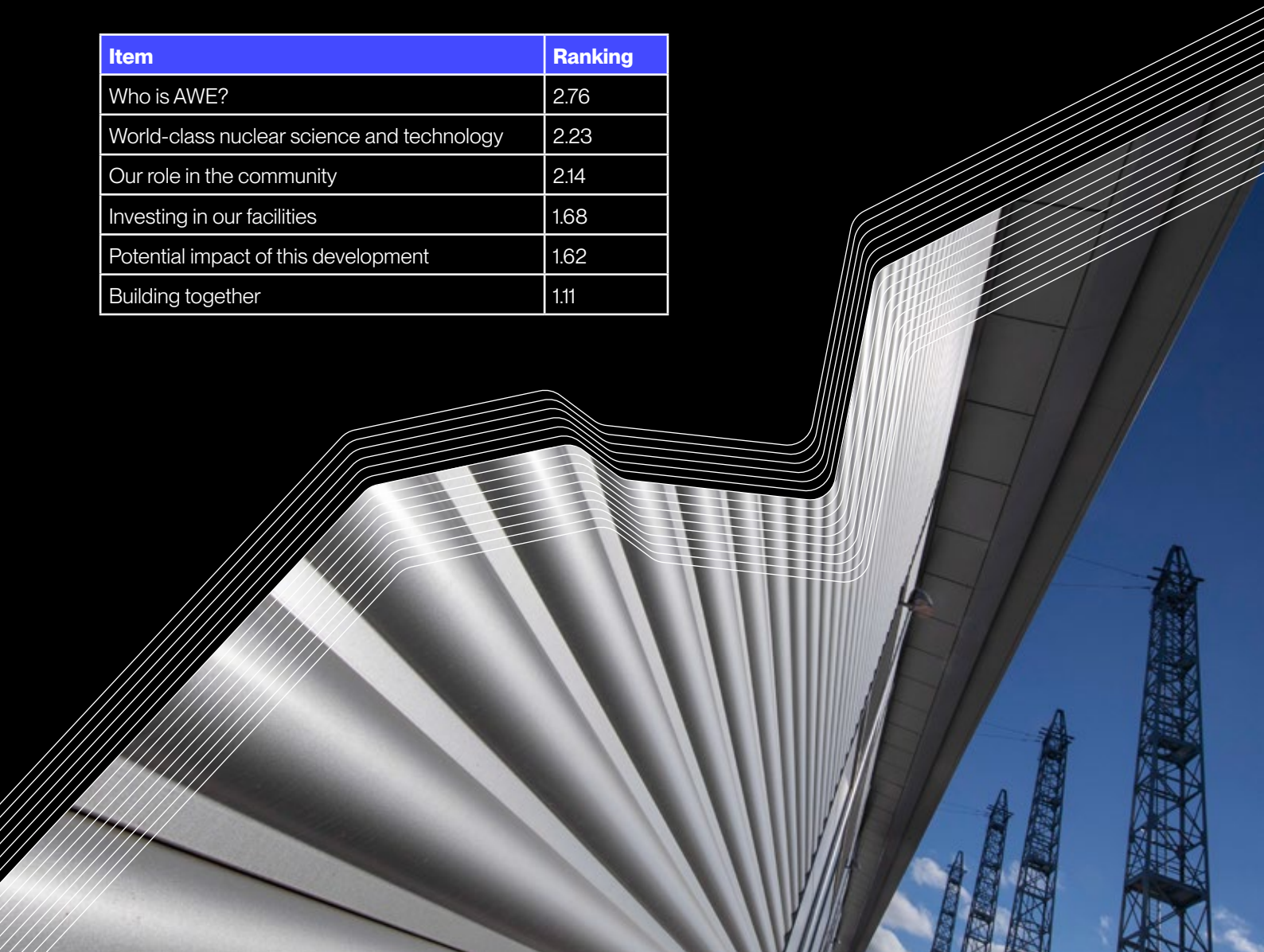
There were 43 responses to this question:



Q9: Which sections of information available at the drop-in sessions were most helpful? Please put them in order: 1 = Most helpful, 6 = Least helpful



Item	Ranking
Who is AWE?	2.76
World-class nuclear science and technology	2.23
Our role in the community	2.14
Investing in our facilities	1.68
Potential impact of this development	1.62
Building together	1.11



Q10: Please tell us what else you would like to know about our proposed future investment

We had ten responses to this question, with two responses discounted in this analysis as one was a response to Q9, and the other stated 'N/A'.

The themes were:

Impacts

- One respondent requested to know more about impacts in general, two highlighted traffic/travel (congestion and noise) and another specified wildlife.

Engagement

- Three respondents requested more detail about the proposed investment. One asked for regular community feedback sessions and another asked for AWE to hold open days.
- Another respondent was interested in working with us as part of our supply chain to develop sustainable water and heat solutions.

Future Materials Campus

- Respondents noted they would like more detail on our proposed investment and planning application and were interested in knowing more about new technology and functions.

Benefits

- One respondent wanted to know about benefits to the local community in general and another about job opportunities.

Q11: Please give us any other feedback about AWE, the proposed future investment or our drop-in sessions

We had 21 responses to this question and all but two focused on our events.

12 of the 21 responses provided positive feedback on our public sessions, highlighting our 'helpful and welcoming' staff and the useful information available at the events (in both printed and digital formats and our online webinars).

Other responses acknowledged AWE becoming more visible locally, with one respondent 'pleased' the organisation was 'being more open'. Two other respondents advocated that AWE 'promote itself more', showcasing our wider contributions to science and technology and sharing information about 'past, present and future non classified projects.'

There was a keenness for more visibility with a suggestion put forward for an open day and a query around the possibility of a permanent exhibition/display, and way of asking questions to AWE.

One respondent asked for lighting levels to be considered both during construction and once buildings are installed, and asked if the FMC could support wider projects by universities.

Q12: What is your name?

Protected information.



Q13: What is your age?

There were 61 responses to this section.

Option	Responses	Percent %
Below 18	2	3
18 to 24	3	5
25 to 34	3	5
35 to 44	9	15
45 to 54	11	18
55 to 64	9	15
65 to 74	13	21
75 or over	11	18
Totals	61	100

Q14: What is your postcode?

Protected information.

Q15: Do you currently work, or have you previously worked, at AWE?

There were 65 responses to this section.



Option	Total responses	Percent
I currently work at AWE	4	6
I previously worked at AWE	8	12
I do not work at AWE	53	82
	65	100

Q16: Would you like us to keep you updated with information about AWE, the proposed future investment and community events?

There were 64 responses to this question, with 48 people saying yes (75%) and 16 no (25%).

Those who wanted to be kept updated then had an option to provide an email address in Q17.

ANALYSIS

AWE has ongoing interactions with communities via its charity, volunteering and schools work, plus a well-established Local Liaison Committee and a regular magazine publication. Our recent drop-in sessions and webinars were the first time in recent years where we have proactively gone out to speak to our wider community on such a scale. Our 71 survey responses, as well as conversations had at our drop-in sessions, provide the feedback for this report.

Feedback consisted of analysing:

- the qualitative feedback in the two open text questions (Q10 and Q11)
- the quantitative feedback in five questions where respondents had selected 'other' and entered their own answers (Q2, 3, 4, 5 & 6)
- team debrief notes from our in-person sessions

Themes were identified across the data and combined with the statistical analysis from Q1 – 9 and Q15 - 16, combined to produce these findings and conclusions.

Our overall findings demonstrate that people were interested in what we do, are supportive of it and keen to learn more about us. One of our exhibition boards described how 'AWE's roots are firmly within the local community, with the town of Tadley being built for the explicit purpose of housing AWRE workers in the 1950s'. The feeling that AWE is an embedded part of its local community emerges in our survey results and in many of our in-person conversations at the events.

WHO IS AWE AND HOW DO PEOPLE KNOW ABOUT US?

We were pleased to discover that many people already knew who we were and a little bit about what we do (97% of respondents to Q1). Q2 asked how people find out about us and the highest-ranking response was via friends and family who work at AWE. Respondents who selected 'other' to this question and used a free text box to provide their own individual answer mirrored this, highlighting they were aware of AWE by living locally and/or having existing connections with AWE, such as family members working there or being a current or former AWE employee. This matched the conversations our team had with visitors at the drop-in sessions.

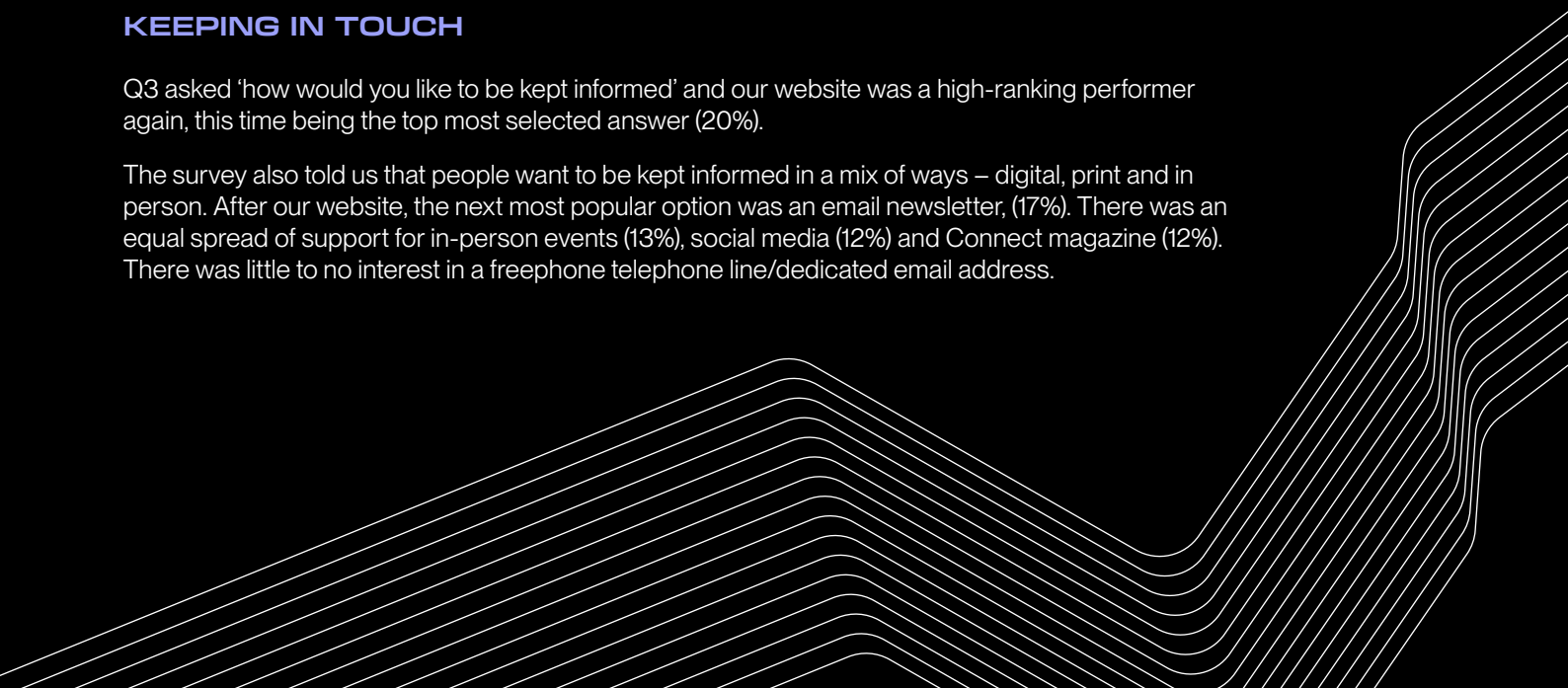
Our website and news outlets were the second highest ranked channels for finding information (16% of answers selected), with our Connect magazine and social media in joint third place (12%). Connect is a printed magazine that goes to 38,000 people living around our sites.

It was positive to discover information about us was made available to communities through Parish Councils and our Local Liaison Committee, with 12% of our total responses selecting these options as sources of information about AWE.

KEEPING IN TOUCH

Q3 asked 'how would you like to be kept informed' and our website was a high-ranking performer again, this time being the top most selected answer (20%).

The survey also told us that people want to be kept informed in a mix of ways – digital, print and in person. After our website, the next most popular option was an email newsletter, (17%). There was an equal spread of support for in-person events (13%), social media (12%) and Connect magazine (12%). There was little to no interest in a freephone telephone line/dedicated email address.



FIND OUT MORE ABOUT AWE

An indicator that people want to know more about us is demonstrated in Q4 where 67% of answers to the question 'what topics are you most interested in hearing about' relate to AWE's wider remit.

The 67% is made up from respondents who selected the below answers:

- AWE's role in national defence (20%)
- AWE's work in science and innovation (20%)
- AWE's work with the local community (14%)
- Protecting the environment and sustainability (13%)

People also wanted to know more about construction work and traffic around AWE sites (22%) and a further 11% wanted to hear more about working at AWE.

When asked to rank our drop-in session content in order of helpfulness, the top two sections selected were 'Who is AWE' and 'world-class nuclear science and technology'. Two respondents also asked for AWE to hold open days.

Our in-person conversations highlighted there were many misconceptions about the work we do and the potential impacts of an incident at our sites. One respondent noted they wanted to know more about health impacts on the local population.

Our survey also had responses asking we share more information with our communities and universities on assets such as our Orion laser. People wanted to know more about AWE projects that are not subject to security restrictions and a keenness to know more about the research, science and technology work at AWE.

As highlighted in analysis to question 13, many were pleased to see AWE being more engaged with the local community, and keen to know more.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Respondents are keen to see AWE supporting the community, with community projects being the most selected response to Q5 'in which areas would you value more support and involvement' and community benefits being the top selected response to the Q6 'thinking about the proposed future investment at AWE, what topics are you most interested in hearing more about'. This was also reflected in free text responses to Q10, where one respondent asked to know more about benefits to the community from the proposed infrastructure plans.

In Q6, (thinking about the proposed future investment at AWE, what topics are you most interested in hearing more about), 63% of answers focused on benefits, selecting these options the most: 1) benefits for the local community, 2) benefits for the local environment and 3) job opportunities. 10% of responses demonstrated interest in opportunities for local businesses, and 25% demonstrated interest in impacts; construction traffic and routes, construction team working hours and construction noise. Around 2% answered 'don't know' or 'other'.

Potential impacts from the proposed future investment were also mentioned by four respondents to Q10, who noted traffic congestion/noise and wildlife as topics they wanted to know more about.

ENVIRONMENT

Environment featured in responses across several questions. As above, a respondent to Q10 'what else you would like to know about our proposed future investment' requested information on impacts to wildlife.

Environmental projects was the second most selected answer to Q5 'in which areas would you value more support and involvement' and third most selected for Q6 'thinking about the proposed future investment at AWE, what topics are you most interested in hearing more about.'

DEMOGRAPHICS

Most responders to our survey were aged 35 and above (87%). The highest number of responses were received from the 65 – 74 age group (21%), followed by 45 – 54 and 75 and over categories. 18% of respondents worked for AWE, or had worked for AWE in the past.

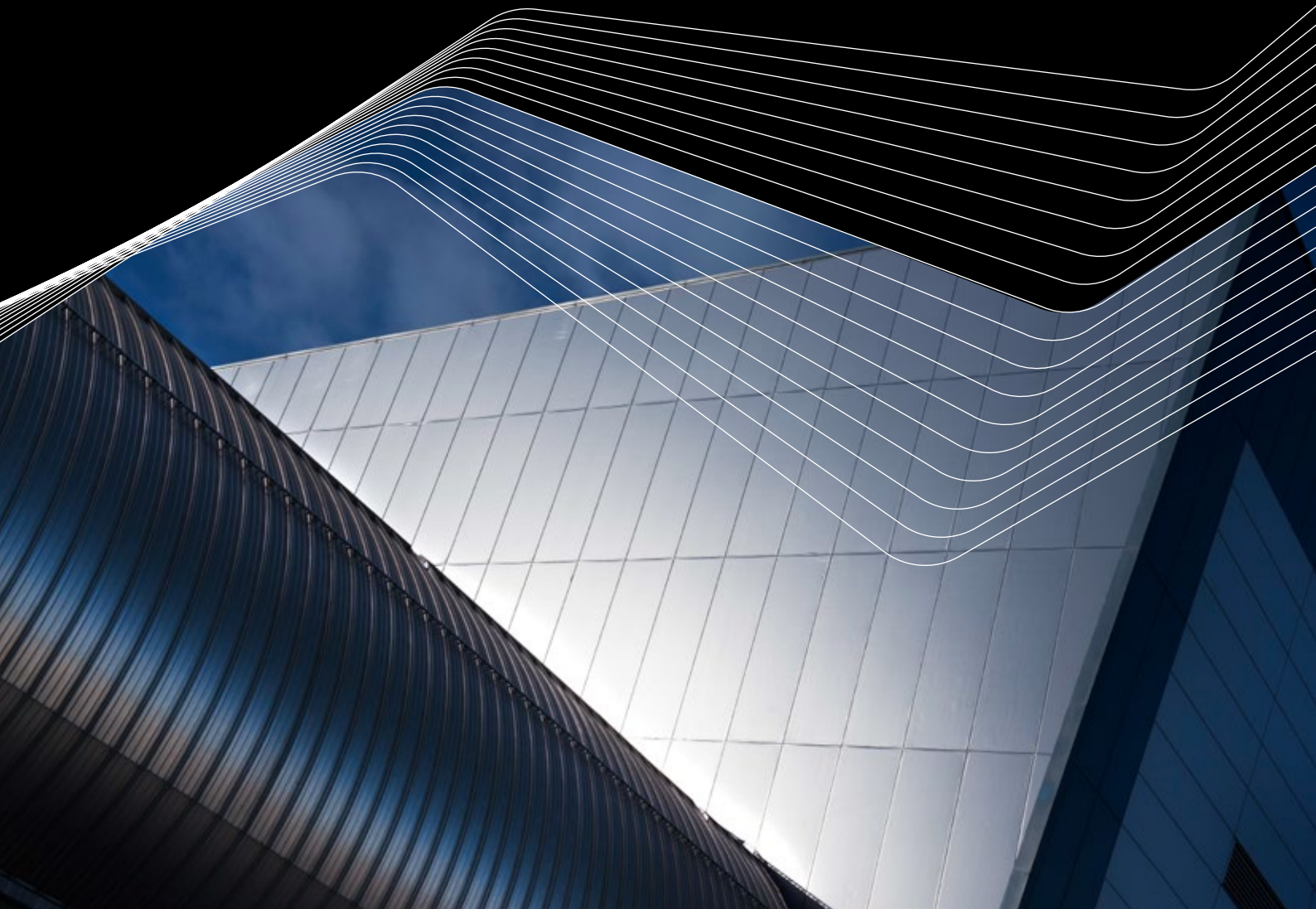
When analysing the survey responses against postcode and age it was found:

Age

- Younger people (under 54) were most interested in working at AWE
- Older respondents (55+) were most interested in AWE's role in national defence, science and innovation, and protecting the environment and sustainability
- In terms of AWE's future infrastructure investment, older respondents are most interested in hearing more about benefits for the environment, local community and construction traffic and routes. Younger respondents want to know more about opportunities for jobs and local businesses

Location

- Respondents closer to our sites (within five kilometres) are more interested in the traffic around them
- In response to a question on what they are most interested in hearing more about, respondents living further away selected corresponding answers to those living nearby but in addition expressed more interest in job opportunities
- Common across all locations was a preference for using the AWE website and an email newsletter to keep updated, but those living further away from our sites also selected social media; while those nearby selected the options more available to them as local residents - Connect magazine and in-person events.



CONCLUSION

While 71 respondents is a very small sample size and we cannot assume this is necessarily reflective of our wider community, it has given us good insight which will help us as we develop our infrastructure plans and future engagement opportunities.

Both the survey and in-person conversations show AWE has a strong local presence because so many employees live nearby. This was demonstrated by most people finding out about us through their friends and family who work at AWE, and current or former employees making up 18% of survey respondents. This was also corroborated by those we spoke to at the events who ranged from research students who had recently joined, to those who worked at our sites in the 1980s.

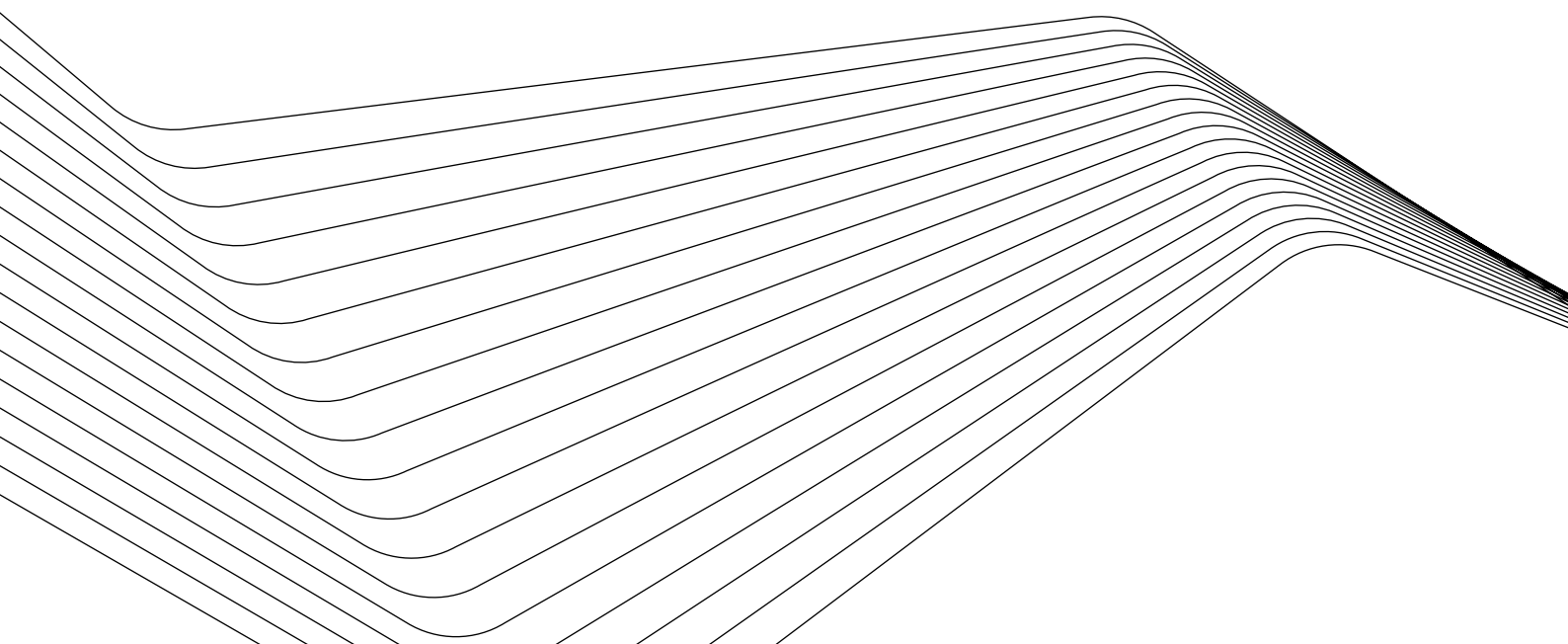
While AWE has a strong local presence through its employee network, the survey results and conversations at the sessions indicate there is a knowledge gap about us and people would like to know more. There is an opportunity for AWE to formalise this based on 75% of respondents wanting to be kept informed in the future, along with the insight from the survey showing respondents would use AWE's website for updates, along with a range of other in-person and digital methods.

It was exciting that the results show people are keen to know more about AWE and want us to share more information; this was evident from the requests for open days and responses wanting us to be more open about our role in national defence and our unique projects and technology. This was also true of our conversations at the drop-in sessions.

At these sessions there was also strong interest in what AWE can bring to the community, particularly around jobs and schools work, and this was reflected in the survey too, which highlighted community and environmental projects as areas for AWE to look at. While most conversations, and a lot of survey responses, focused on finding out more about AWE itself, there was also conversation around potential impacts for local people from future investment plans. Most concerns focused on traffic, with people also mentioning noise, light, and wildlife.

Safety living near to a nuclear site featured in only one survey response but did arise during conversations at drop-in sessions. Our teams provided reassurance to those who asked questions about nuclear safety, and dispelled myths about the workings of our sites. This indicates a need to review existing information in the public domain to see if it can be more widely distributed or enhanced. This is in line with the thoughts and suggestion of our Local Liaison Committee who requested AWE to consider a myth busting section in the next edition of its community magazine, Connect.

This survey and in-person feedback from our sessions is well-timed for AWE, in a period when it is trying to be more visible. It shows there are many people locally who are connected to our sites, whether through employment, former employment or through their networks. It shows there is greater appetite to learn more about what we do and the incredible science and technology at work in the region; as well as the opportunities for careers and for AWE to work with local people on community and environmental projects. We will take this information and build on it.



NEXT STEPS

Thank you to everyone who responded to our survey and came to our sessions. We are looking at how we can incorporate your feedback into our plans.

SHARING INFORMATION

Several respondents requested more in-person and online events and we're pleased to say we plan to do this later in 2025. It was great to see so many respondents selected our website as a source of their information as we have recently developed a new area to provide information and updates on our [Future Materials Campus](#).

As well as continuing with our current ways of sharing information through our Connect magazine, media and social media, we will review the possibility of a community-focused email newsletter and whether we can showcase more of our site activities.

We will review your feedback to assess how we best keep you updated in the future, and consider how we reach more people across the community in future sessions.

We will also think about how we could provide more information about what we do to improve local understanding of the site operations, providing greater reassurance about nuclear safety.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

As part of our proposed infrastructure investment, we will investigate the possibility of providing greater support to our local communities. This will be in addition to the ongoing work taking place by our teams in local schools, in volunteering and alongside our charity partner PACT (Parents and Children Together).

IMPACTS

We will ensure further information about potential impacts of our infrastructure investment is available later in the year, and this information will cover the issues raised in this report (such as congestion).

COMMUNITY CHARTER

At our events and on our website, we said we would create a Community Charter that we would build with you as our infrastructure investment plans progress. Our first commitment at those events was:

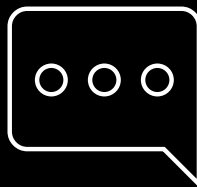
We will do our best to give you as much information as we can, but in a way that also protects our people, our work and our nation's security.

Following this survey we have proposed a second:

We will be more proactive in telling you about the unique work that takes place behind our fences.

We look forward to seeing you at future public events later in the year.

Thank you for your support.



CONTACTING US

www.awe.co.uk

Community Concerns line:

0118 985 0897

communityandschools@awe.co.uk

APPENDIX: SURVEY QUESTIONS

Question 1: How much do you feel you know about AWE and the work we do

Question 2: How do you currently find out about AWE?

Question 3: How would you like to be kept informed about AWE?

Question 4: Which topics are you most interested in hearing about?

Question 5: In which areas would you value more support and involvement from major local employers, like AWE?

Question 6: Thinking about the proposed future investment at AWE, what topics are you most interested in hearing more about?

Question 7: Have you attended one of our drop-in sessions?

Question 8: Which drop-in session did you attend?

Question 9: Which sections of information available at the drop-in sessions were most helpful? Please put them in order: 1 = Most helpful, 6 = Least helpful

Question 10: Please tell us what else you would like to know about our proposed future investment.

Question 11: Please give us any other feedback about AWE, the proposed future investment or our drop-in sessions.

Question 12: What is your name?

Question 13: Please select your age range from the list below.

Question 14: What is your postcode?

Question 15: Do you currently work, or have you previously worked, at AWE?

Question 16: Would you like us to keep you updated with information about AWE, the proposed future investment and community events?

Question 17: What is your email address?