

Local hospitality group's key role in Whitehaven's new coastal activities centre

West Cumbria-based hospitality group Osprey has been announced as the main operator of The Edge, a community facility and coastal activities centre being built on Whitehaven harbour.

The Edge will consist of community spaces, meeting rooms, changing facilities, public toilets, a café and 16 en-suite rooms with harbour views.

The project is being overseen by Whitehaven Harbour Commissioners (WHC), and Osprey will manage the hospitality, accommodation and associated operations.

Craig Lowery, managing director of Osprey Management Group, said: "The Edge is an exciting and unique project in a wonderful location, literally on the edge of the harbour.

"We are looking forward continuing our commitment to provide job opportunities to local people and engaging local suppliers to provide outstanding produce.

"Osprey and Whitehaven Harbour Commissioners have exciting plans for the project and we're delighted to develop these together."

Osprey are known for their portfolio of quality establishments, including The Peddler at the award-winning Bus Station in Whitehaven, The Galloping Horse in High Harrington and the newly acquired Hunday Manor Country House Hotel, near Workington.

In addition, WHC – a not-for-profit organisation that manages and maintains the harbour for the benefit of all – will work with independent specialists and organisations to offer a range of watersports and cultural and community activities, helping to attract visitors, boost the economy and provide a valuable resource for residents.

Deanne Shallcross, chief executive of WHC, said: "Osprey are a local company with a reputation for delivering good-quality hospitality alongside training and development.

"With Osprey as the main operator, and working with various activity specialists, our aim is to build a financially sustainable centre with long-term social, economic and health benefits for the local area and beyond."

The three-storey Edge, designed by Manchester-based architectural practice Northmill Associates to look like a piece of sandstone that washed up on the harbour in high seas, is being built by Flimby-based Thomas Armstrong Construction Ltd.

The project has experienced several significant delays following the Covid pandemic, including knock-on effects to the global supply chain of both materials and specialist resources. Construction work is expected to complete in the summer, with the building open to the public in the autumn.

Ryan Robertson, contracts manager for Thomas Armstrong, said: “This project has had more than its share of challenges initially, but we’re pleased to be making good progress now and it’s a real privilege for us as a local company to work on a project we hope will make a difference to the town and people’s lives.”

The Edge is supported through Sellafield Ltd’s Social Impact Multiplied – SiX – programme and the Government’s Coastal Communities Fund. It will sit alongside other projects in Whitehaven, such as the redevelopment of Old New Quay, the launch of the Barclays Eagle Lab business incubator at the Bus Station and the development of the former Whittles building into a Digital and Gaming Hub.

Ends

IMAGE SUPPLIED: Team members from Whitehaven Harbour Commissioners, Osprey Management Group, Thomas Armstrong Construction Ltd and Sellafield Limited in front of The Edge, which is being built on the harbourside in Whitehaven.

Credit: Carlos Reina Photography

Notes to editors

1. For further media enquiries please contact Whitehaven Harbour Commissioners direct on info@whitehavenhc.org.uk or call 01946 590515.
2. About Whitehaven Harbour Commissioners: Established in 1708, Whitehaven Harbour Commissioners are the custodians of Whitehaven harbour and its environs. Their purpose is to safely manage, maintain and improve the harbour for the benefit of its users and the wider community. All revenue generated by Whitehaven Harbour Commissioners is put back into achieving this goal.
3. About Sellafield Ltd’s Social Impact Multiplied programme: The Sellafield Ltd SiX programme (social impact multiplied) invests around £10m per year in the communities closest to the organisation’s operations on projects co-created with local communities

and based on key Sustainable Development Goals identified by the United Nations. This investment often leverages in funding from other sources and addresses long-standing areas in need of improvement in those identified communities.

The SiX strategy contains six social impact objectives supported by one enabling objective:

- resilient economies
- thriving communities
- social value chains
- sustainable incomes
- collective impact
- improve performance

4. About Coastal Communities Fund: The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities said coastal communities "play a key role in levelling up and we continue to support them to improve their economies". Since 2012 over £229m has been invested through the Coastal Communities Fund to run 359 projects throughout the UK's rural and coastal communities helping to create jobs and boost businesses.

A wide range of levelling up funds and initiatives support coastal communities in a variety of ways. These policies include, but are not limited to, the Levelling Up Fund, Town Deals, Future High Street Fund, Freeports, Levelling Up Partnerships and the Community Ownership Fund. The activity funded by the Coastal Community Fund can now be funded by the UKSPF if there is a desire locally.