



Newsletter September 2013

Talks on Hinkley 'Strike Price' on Hold

2nd August 2013

The Government appears to be ready to offer EDF huge subsidies for its proposed Hinkley Point C nuclear plant, but negotiations are currently on hold and not expected to finish until the end of the year. Whether agreement can be reached is seen as a litmus test for the economic viability of nuclear power in Europe. The world is watching Britain "very avidly" as it struggles to secure a commercially viable deal for nuclear energy in an open market.

Secretary of State for Energy, Ed Davey, denies that the Government is offering EDF a blank cheque: "I am not going to sign any deal with EDF unless it is value for money, is affordable and meets the coalition agreement of no public subsidy". He says "I am determined that the consumer or the taxpayer will not bear the risk of construction over-runs. Nuclear will get no preference in comparison with other low-carbon technologies."

But nuclear power is being offered much more favourable terms than renewables since nuclear looks like being offered a 35 year contract with premium prices compared with only 15 for renewables, and unlike renewables, the Treasury has offered EDF £10 billion worth of loan guarantees.

If the Government will not underwrite EDF's construction costs – barring some incredibly high 'strike' price – that should be enough to stop the project. There is tremendous uncertainty about how much the plant will cost and how long it will take investors to get their money back. So the City will downgrade any investment that is dependent on hopeful estimates for construction costs. That is why 'underwriting' is so important for new nuclear power. It seems the Government has not offered (yet) to guarantee to pay for any construction costs overruns. Barring some national French Government priority being made for Hinkley C (which seems unlikely) investing in the plant looks like a very unattractive prospect unless construction costs are underwritten.

The government had hoped to make a positive announcement before the summer on the strike price. A deal, intended by ministers in London to represent a final offer, was put on the table in June. EDF in Paris, where all the energy

company's decisions are made, failed to respond. Frustrated by the unwillingness of EDF to engage, the Government, which thought an agreement was possible after the last Anglo-French summit in May, has now effectively stepped back and is talking to other possible suppliers.

Nick Butler in the FT complained that:

"We have not been told why the costs of EDF's ill-starred plant at Flamanville have risen so high, and why Hinkley, rather than benefiting from everything learnt there, is now projected to cost even more. We have not been told how the project will be financed."

Meanwhile, Labour MP Alan Whitehead says the new nuclear programme is taking so long to complete that it is in danger of becoming a "museum" piece by the time it is due to come on line in 2020. A lot of the generation issues will have been solved by the time Hinkley Point C starts generating and the UK "will have in theory a lot of wind, demand-side reduction, storage backup and interconnectors – the lights will have either gone out or we will have substantially resolved our supply problems anyway."

NO 2 NUCLEAR POWER
news and information about the UK nuclear industry

Keep up to date on daily news regarding nuclear issues, as well as renewable energy. Sign up to receive free daily email updates from
www.no2nuclearpower.org.uk

Stop Hinkley 2013 AGM

The Annual General Meeting will be on October 14th at our usual venue in the meeting room at West Bow House, Milton Place off West Street, Bridgwater [behind the Squibb Pub] starting at 7.30pm.

STRONG CHILDREN JAPAN EXHIBITION

Report by Chinks Grylls.

'We need accurate information to protect our children' says Geoff Read

Stop Hinkley brought an exhibition of 80 works of art by Geoff Read and the children of the region of Fukushima to Bridgwater in August. Geoff and his wife Mitsuko also gave a talk. They spoke about their experiences evacuating from Japan after the earthquake, tsunami and triple melt-down in March 2011 at the Fukushima Daichi nuclear plant run by Tepco; and the ongoing consequences for the people of Japan, with recommendations of how we can help them today and lessons for the UK.

The exhibition combines the drawings and thoughts of Fukushima's young people with their portraits, which Geoff has drawn himself to their instructions. The work is very personal and emotive



expressing a wide range of feelings and experiences. It has already toured to Australia and America.

Speaking measuredly and without strong emotion, Geoff and Mitsuko outlined their experience of dealing with a major nuclear accident and their subsequent flight, first to Hiroshima and then to the UK. It was a constant struggle to get accurate information from the government who were very slow in taking the lead, whilst constantly reassuring the Japanese people there was 'no immediate danger'.

150,000 of Fukushima's 2 million people have left. Families were split up as mothers and children evacuated to other regions leaving fathers behind. In the confusion some people were evacuated from the 20km exclusion zone to nearby areas in the path of the plume and higher in radiation than those they had been moved from. 44.6% of 192,886 children in Fukushima whose thyroids have been tested with clear results have abnormalities, probably because they were not issued with iodine tablets soon enough. 44 have suspected malignancy, and 18 have confirmed thyroid cancer. Children have had frequent nosebleeds and increased health problems and are not allowed to play outside by worried parents.

Those evacuated from within the 20km zone are being compensated by the government as are certain sectors of the fishing and farming communities who have been very seriously affected, but it is not enough. Those who have evacuated from outside the zone because of high levels of radiation have received little compensation and various legal actions have begun, including one by young people for the right to be educated in a safe environment. Many people feel that the government has deliberately minimised the evacuation zone to keep costs down and the disaster has radicalized people from all sections of Japanese society.

Many do not want a return to nuclear energy production. There are demonstrations against the government and Tepco, initially lead by Fukushima's mothers. The Japanese people have lost trust in their government and the media. The government has reset higher acceptable levels of radiation for children and for food and many people now carry their own Geiger counters as they do not believe the reports or trust the levels set.

There was a massive response from the country to help clear up after the tsunami but there were no warnings about dangerous levels of contamination.

Yamamoto Taro, an actor and celebrity in Japan, expressed an anti-nuclear view. He consequently lost all his TV and film work. Turning to political activity he has become a member of parliament, drawing huge crowds to meetings, demonstrations and to vote for him.

Japan has learnt to live with less energy since the disaster and although the government and the nuclear industry want to restart nuclear plants, the people have adapted to be more energy efficient and many polls have shown that a clear majority are against a nuclear restart.

There are still huge problems with the management and leakage of radiated water from hastily built storage tanks at Fukushima Daichi. Much of the site is still unstable, with Reactor 4 containing the equivalent of 4,000 Hiroshima bombs in spent fuel rods stored on the damaged first floor. Local councils are over-stretched and Tepco is struggling to cope with a situation that is still not under control, often using low-paid temporary workers with inadequate health monitoring and regulation. The costs are huge. There have finally been reports recently in the international press of the chronic state of the storage tanks.

Geoff and Mitsuko worry that the government, nuclear industry, regulators and media are too close in the UK too, as evidenced by the Guardian report that a recommendation to emphasise that Fukushima 'is not comparable with Chernobyl'

was circulated, although the accident is proving by some measures to be far worse.

Geoff and Mitsuko recommend we should demand the availability of iodine tablets if we haven't got them locally. Local weather projection map modeling that could provide information about where a radioactive plume is heading in the even of an accident has been a victim of recent cuts, but they feel it is absolutely vital. We should also keep up pressure for other forms of low carbon energy production and put pressure on the Japanese government to move more families to safer environments and to support evacuees.

They went on to speak in Wells on Hiroshima Day. Michael Eavis, after hearing about the campaign by some young people in Fukushima to be educated in a safe environment, agreed to send a video message of support from Worthy Farm.

George Putnam, a first year student, generously filmed and edited Geoff and Mitsuko's talk for Stop Hinkley which is available on DVD and on YouTube. Watch "Fukushima First Hand": <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qxz7gvWTkZU&feature=youtu.be>

If you would like a copy of the film on DVD, please contact admin@stophinkley.org The film is free but you can send a donation to The Fukushima Collective Evacuation Trial Team. Instructions for this are here: <http://www.fukushima-sokai.net/action/yuutyobankENG.html>

To see the children's artwork and portraits, go to Geoff's website: <http://strongchildrenjapan.blogspot.com/>

For more information on Fukushima's children and campaigns see: <http://www.save-children-from-radiation.org/>

"Hinkley C? Somerset Says No" Window Stickers

Circular vinyl car/window stickers, 10 cm diameter. If you would like one (or more), please send a SAE to Suki Lilienthal, Parsonage Farm, Over Stowey, Bridgwater TA5 1HA. She also has small metal badges with same image. There is no charge for these, though donations are always welcome! The most important goal is to get them out and about on cars and windows... so please get in touch.

Any queries ring Suki on 01278 733237 or email her at suki@parsonfarm.co.uk.



Peace Blanket – Wool against Weapons

Appeal from Jo Smoldon

For those members of Stop Hinkley who can't join in on marches, camps, blockades etc, how about knitting a block which will be part of a knitted (or crocheted) peace scarf/blanket?

While I was at the blockade at Burghfield [<http://actionawe.org/>] I got chatting to some dedicated ladies who have started the project. They plan to join up the blocks, enough to stretch from Burghfield to Aldermaston [about five miles], on 16th August next year. The blocks need to be 60cm by 100cm in any shade of pink. Oddments are acceptable so you could use up all the pink end of balls you have. It could be made up from smaller squares or strips, as long as the finished size is 60x100cm.

They will be joined end to end in contrasting thread for the event next year. After that they will be joined up to make blankets so none of the creative work will be wasted.

Having met the ladies, who I believe were some of the original Greenham Common group, there is an air of solidarity and determination with each stitch they knit and crochet. I think that all corners of the UK energetically knitting this winter for peace will be a very powerful way of supporting the cause.

Do pass this on to anyone you know who may want to join us. I will be happy to collect your work and make a collective Somerset donation to the organisers in the Spring. Please ring me on 01278 459099.

To see the start of the project: <http://actionawe.org/?s=knitting>

DO WE HAVE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS?

Some of our members prefer to receive a paper copy of the newsletter, but if you would like to receive the newsletter by email, as well as or instead of through the post, please let us know admin@stophinkley.org

If we have your email address we can keep you up to date with the campaign much more quickly and it saves us the costs involved with printing, postage and the time stuffing envelopes.

Appalled at wind farm fantasies

THE article in the *Mercury* about the Cannington wind turbine featured quotes from a number of opponents.

It's a shame that these were all from the 'Rent A Mob' from outside Sedgemoor who make up over 40% of the 'disgusted of Tonbridge Wells' letters to Sedgemoor District Council.

I pay my local taxes to Cannington Parish Council, Sedgemoor District Council and Somerset County Council, and I'm appalled at some of the inaccuracies in the opinions expressed.

Among the disingenuous statements is that "the turbine is within the Somerset Levels". It isn't.

Then there's "the silence of this part of the country" – only when the quarry isn't blasting, the grain store isn't drying and lorries for Hinkley Point aren't thundering past.

Or there's "collision risks on water birds" – more birds are killed flying into plate glass windows than by turbines.

Then there's "the site is in an AONB". It isn't.

Or "the turbine will be visible from the M5/Quantocks/

Mendips/Mars (sorry, I made that one up!)" No, it won't.

There's also "too great a burden on road systems" – the turbine needs just eight Abnormal Indivisible Loads, so who are you kidding?

Then there's "monstrosity" – from someone who works at the Point, the biggest blot on our landscape, this is a particularly warped perspective.

It's a pity that the assembled great and good in your picture – I count one MP, one county councillor, two chairs of parish councils and at least one parish councillor – didn't put as much effort into opposing the Hinkley C vandalism.

All this over a single solitary wind turbine? They doth protest too much, methinks.

ROY PUMFREY
Park Lane, Cannington.

Davey woos China over nuclear plants

Sunday Times, 8th Sept 2013

ED DAVEY, the energy secretary, will travel to Beijing this month to lay the groundwork for a sweeping new partnership that could lead to Chinese-designed nuclear reactors being built in Britain.

The trip is the latest sign of the government's desperation to find backers for its troubled £200bn low-carbon overhaul of the energy industry. Last week Michael Fallon, Davey's No2, signed a memorandum of understanding to co-operate on civil power with Rosatom, the Russian state nuclear monopoly.

Davey's talks with China are aimed at striking a deeper relationship, which could be formalised in a memorandum by the end of the year.

Among the priorities for Beijing would be assurances that its state-owned companies would be given access to new development sites, all of which have already been snapped up by other companies. It is also likely to seek Whitehall assistance to shepherd Chinese reactor technology through the arduous regulatory process.

EDF is in negotiations with one of Beijing's state giants, China General Nuclear Power Group, to invest at Hinkley. It is understood that the company is willing to take up to a 50% stake, but only if it is granted some operational control, as opposed to being a passive financial investor.

Events

Stop Hinkley AGM
Monday 14th October, 7.30pm
at West Bow House

Next Stop Hinkley business meeting
Monday 11th November, 7.30pm
West Bow House, Milton Place off West Street,
Bridgwater [behind the Squibb Pub]

Contacts

Press & Spokespersons:

Theo Simon: theo@seizetheday.org

01749 860767 or 07455 325961

Nikki Clark: nikki@stophinkley.org 07736 930069

Local Information: Allan Jeffery

ajjeffery@talktalk.net 01278 425451

Street Stalls: Jo Smoldon:

josephine.smoldon@virgin.net 01278 459 099

Membership/Treasurer/Website:

Val Davey: val@stophinkley.org

www.stophinkley.org