



Newsletter January 2010

Jonathon Porritt to speak in Taunton

Well known and ever-popular Jonathon Porritt CBE will give a talk at a Stop Hinkley public meeting in Taunton on Tuesday 16th March.

As former Director of the Sustainable Development Commission he came down strongly against Government plans for nuclear power. The *Independent* said the SDC report was “the most hard-hitting and detailed case against the British nuclear option”.

“In response to the Government's current [2008] Energy Review, the SDC nuclear report draws together the most comprehensive evidence base available, to find that there is no justification for bringing forward a new nuclear power programme at present.

The report, ***Nuclear power in a low carbon economy***, has been agreed by all 16 SDC commissioners. Based on eight new research papers, the SDC report gives a balanced examination of the pros and cons of nuclear power...However, the research establishes that even if the UK's existing nuclear capacity was doubled, it would only give an 8% cut on CO2 emissions by 2035 [4% if all nuclear generation is replaced]. This must be set against the risks:

1. Long term waste – no long term solutions are yet available, let alone acceptable to the general public; it is impossible to guarantee safety over the long-term disposal of waste.

2. Cost – the economics of nuclear new-build are highly uncertain. There is little, if any, justification for public subsidy, but if estimated costs escalate, there's a clear risk that the taxpayer will have to pick up the tab.

3. Inflexibility – nuclear would lock the UK into a centralised distribution system for the next 50 years at exactly the time when opportunities for microgeneration and local distribution networks are stronger than ever.

4. Undermining energy efficiency – a new nuclear programme would give out the wrong signal to consumers and businesses, implying that a major technological fix is all that's required, weakening the urgent action needed on energy efficiency.

5. International security – if the UK brings forward a new nuclear programme, we cannot deny other countries the same technology. With lower safety standards they run higher risk of accidents, radiation exposure, proliferation and terrorist attacks.”

Nuclear Not Needed To Keep Lights On: Tom Burke, Government Adviser

A new nuclear power station at Hinkley Point isn't needed either to keep the lights on or to combat climate change, a meeting of the Stop Hinkley campaign group was told on Wednesday 6th January.

Tom Burke, CBE, a government adviser on energy matters, told the meeting in Bridgwater Town Hall that Britain could carry on generating enough electricity for our needs well beyond the supposed crunch period of 2015-20, even without new nuclear stations like the proposed Hinkley C.

Any shortfall caused by old power stations closing down would be filled by over 20 gas-fired power stations either under construction or planned, he said, and by a growing wave of renewable sources and a new generation of coal stations fitted with carbon capture facilities.

If energy efficiency measures were taken as seriously as they should be, he added, there would be less demand for electricity anyway. As a prime target, British homes account for 25% of our energy use; improving their efficiency would be much cheaper than any new power generation option.

On climate change he said that nuclear was a slow and very expensive way of helping to save the planet from the expected effects of rising global temperatures. Even if nuclear power stations were built around the world at a rate of 14 Gigawatts a year this would still only replace those that were closing down. In fact, global nuclear power

capacity has been falling in recent years whilst the amount of wind power has increased from 17 Gigawatts in 2000 to over 120 Gigawatts in 2008.

As an example of the cost over-runs typical of nuclear stations he cited the reactor currently being built in Finland by the same French company scheduled to install the Hinkley plant. This is already three years behind its construction schedule and the cost has risen from £2.7 to £4.8 billion.

Despite the atrocious weather conditions Professor Burke traveled all the way from London to give his talk. Local people despite the snow also turned out from as far as Bicknoller, Combrich, Wedmore and Taunton and were inspired by Professor Burke's well informed message. Many said they felt spurred into writing in to the Government consultation (below) objecting to plans to needlessly build two monster reactors at Hinkley.

The meeting was the first public forum in a series of campaign events planned by Stop Hinkley. Over 9,000 leaflets outlining the case against Hinkley C have been distributed door to door in the area by volunteers. Special thanks go to Val Bannister in Cannington and Allan Jeffery in Bridgwater for their efforts.

Cannington Action Group A new group has sprouted up saying EdF's plans to build a large workers' hostel, a park and ride scheme and a lorry transfer site would 'traumatise' Cannington village. 800 people have signed a petition objecting to the plans and proposing EdF instead build a new by-pass from the M5, short-cutting Bridgwater and Cannington. EdF said the road cost would be a show-stopper for their nuclear plans and their traffic assessment shows no extra need.

Stop Hinkley Protest at EDF offices

Supporters of the Stop Hinkley campaign demonstrated outside the offices of EDF (Electricite de France) in Bridgwater on Friday 15th January in protest at the lack of real local involvement in their proposal to build a new nuclear power station at Hinkley Point.



Twenty five Stop Hinkley supporters wore gags to symbolise the fact that local voices have been silenced. A placard carried the message: "Hinkley C: Government Dictates, Local Voices Gagged, Somerset Suffers".

All final decisions on the proposed Hinkley C plant - the largest nuclear plant ever proposed in the UK – will be made by a new Government quango, the Infrastructure Planning Commission. The IPC is an unelected body whose members have been appointed by the government to implement its energy policy. This policy is in favour of "new nuclear build".

The IPC will decide on all aspects of Hinkley C, not just the power station. This includes the proposed new roads, workers hostels and park and ride facilities that are already causing massive local controversy.

Our elected local authorities – Sedgemoor, West Somerset and Somerset County Council – will have no control over these decisions. When the last Hinkley C proposal was made in the late 1980s there was a public inquiry which lasted for many months and allowed local people a proper voice. Somerset County, West Somerset and Sedgemoor Councils were all involved.

This time round there will be no local hearings and no guarantee that local people will have a

voice in the IPC proceedings, which will be held in London.

"We are not only demanding a local public inquiry into Hinkley C," said Stop Hinkley spokesman Crispin Aubrey. "We are also concerned that the IPC will not be allowed to consider some of the most important aspects of the plans, including the fact that used radioactive fuel will be stored on the Hinkley site for 160 years. This is an appalling legacy to leave to future generations. The nuclear industry has lobbied hard for the IPC to help implement projects such as Hinkley 'C' as fast as possible. In the process, local democracy is being ignored."

To take part in the Government consultations go to:

<https://www.energynpsconsultation.decc.gov.uk/home/> where you can also order hard copies of the consultation documents. Or call 0870 600 5533. Ask for all documents related to the nuclear policy statement and 'justification'.

Campaigning Update

The Wave climate demonstration, London

Two Stop Hinkley campaigners joined twenty other anti-nuclear power activists in distributing 5,000 leaflets to climate protestors and the public on 12th December. Stop Hinkley had funded and helped draft the leaflets aimed at involving climate, airport and other campaigners in opposition to Government plans to expand nuclear power.

Environmental Law Foundation

This group, founded by a former Greenpeace legal advisor has contacted Stop Hinkley with a view to holding a meeting in Bridgwater. Their top lawyers will run a special workshop on Saturday 13th February to help anyone who wishes to make the best of their response to the current Government consultation. Book at www.elflaw.org or 0207 404 1030.

Template consultation responses

With this newsletter you should find two letters addressed to Government departments. You can use them to respond to the consultations which end on 22nd February. Simply add your name and address and post to the address at the top of the letters. Alternately you can respond in your own words response via the website below.

Select Committee

Stop Hinkley has been invited to address the Government Select Committee on Energy and Climate Change who oversee the DECC consultation. The committee asked us to speak about the local DECC consultation which was abysmally sited and advertised at short notice. Following our feedback a second meeting has been planned which is now oversubscribed.

Hinkley 'C' pylons

Stop Hinkley has responded to the consultation on routing new high voltage cables from Hinkley to Bristol. We said we opposed the Hinkley plan and suggested that National Grid offers options for low-voltage direct-current distribution which would allow for a growth in local electricity, including renewables and microgeneration. Local campaigns led by Tory MPs are vociferous against the pylons.

Events

Jonathon Porritt CBE

“Hinkley ‘C’,

What’s the Point?”

7.30pm Tuesday 16th March

**Temple Methodist Church
Upper High St., Taunton**

**Environmental Law
Foundation event**

11-5 Saturday 13th February

**The Legion, 15 Castle Street
Bridgwater**

Register on 0207 404 1030

DECC consultation meeting

6-8pm Weds 27th January

Victory Hall, Stogursey

Register on 0845 004 8841

**Stop Hinkley meetings
Thursday 28th January and
Tuesday 23rd February**

Both at 7.30pm

**West Bow House, Milton Place
off West Street, Bridgwater**

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