



Newsletter January 2018

UK enjoyed 'greenest year for electricity ever' in 2017

BBC News 29 Dec 2017

The UK has achieved its greenest year ever in terms of how the nation's electricity is generated, National Grid figures reveal.

The rise of renewable energy helped break 13 clean energy records in 2017.

In June, for the first time, wind, nuclear and solar power generated more UK power than gas and coal combined.

Britain has halved carbon emissions in the electricity sector since 2012 to provide the fourth cleanest power system in Europe and seventh worldwide.

In April, the UK had its first 24-hour period without using any coal power since the Industrial Revolution.

The government is committed to phasing out unabated coal by 2025 as part of efforts to cut the UK's greenhouse gas emissions in line with legal obligations.

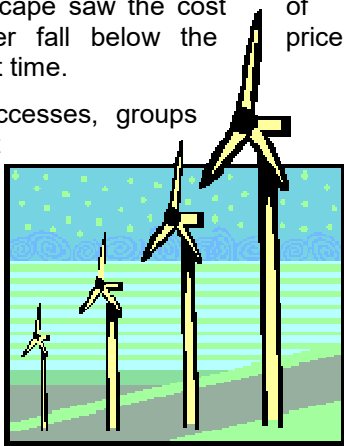
Separate findings from power research group MyGridGB show that renewable energy sources provided more power than coal for 90% of 2017, figures up to 12 December show.

British wind farms produced more electricity than coal plants on more than 75% of days this year.

This changing landscape saw the cost of offshore wind power fall below the price of nuclear for the first time.

But despite the successes, groups warned the UK must now tackle its reliance on gas if it is to meet its emission targets.

The daily output of gas was outstripped by wind on just two days of the year.



Renewables overall - including wind, solar, biomass and hydropower - beat fossil fuels for only 23 days of the year.

Dr Andrew Crossland from MyGridGB and the Durham Energy Institute said: "The government has focused on reducing coal use which now supplies less than 7% of our electricity.



"However, if we continue to use gas at the rate that we do, then Britain will miss carbon targets and be dangerously exposed to supply and price risks in the international gas markets."

He added that "refreshed government support for low carbon alternatives" is now needed to "avoid price and supply shocks for our heat and electricity supplies".

Emma Pinchbeck, executive director of industry body RenewableUK, called for "more boldness" from the government.

She urged onshore wind to be developed across the UK in an "ambitious sector deal with the offshore wind industry" that could help secure a "golden age for renewables" in 2018.

An Energy Department spokesman said the UK was reducing emissions faster than any other G7 country - which includes the US, Japan, Germany, Italy, France and Canada.

He said the government plans to reduce carbon emissions throughout the 2020s, while supporting the creation of well-paid jobs in the low carbon sector.

"The UK is a world leader in clean growth," he said.

The World Anti-Nuclear Social Forum – Paris November 2017

Report by Allan Jeffery.

The banners in the entrance hall said “To a World without Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear Power!” Nikki and I went to Paris to represent Stop Hinkley and the UK at the 3rd Anti- Nuclear World Social Forum. We met many passionate campaigners from all over the world concerned about the damage done to the environment and health of their local communities by the nuclear industry.

World Social Forums started in 2001 in South America and since have taken place in Asia, Africa and North America. Citizens groups, campaigning against government and global corporation that are damaging the health and environment of local populations meet and share their experiences and learn from each other. This year was the 3rd Social Forum with an anti-nuclear theme, France being the most heavily nuclearized country per population in the world was the natural next venue.

Over 3 days, in buildings near the Republique Central, were 3 auditorium speaker sessions, 30 workshops, several films and a public theatrical demonstration around the Bastille! The topics covered the whole range of the nuclear cycle, from uranium mining, nuclear new build, radiation health effects, nuclear waste disposal and decommissioning, nuclear clean -up operations and the connections with military weapons to comparisons with renewables on climate change. Nikki and I also took the opportunity to take a coach journey to a centre of resistance, near the village of Bure in the Champagne, rural and forested region of France. Here the national government wants to bury all of France's massive stores of high level radioactive waste, an on-going site of battle protests!

There were so many fascinating international workshops I would have liked to attend, but some were only in French. Most of the main speaker's sessions and fortunately my workshop had a translation service. I partook in a workshop called “The Disastrous EPR!” involving speakers from France, America and Finland. We explained the multitude of problems that this reactor design has created in our countries, technical, constructional, financial and political. I presented a PowerPoint history of the Stop Hinkley campaign in Somerset, showed the present state of construction and pointed out all the continuing problems, including Brexit, which could still mean Hinkley C is never finished. No EPR reactor is working yet in any country in the world and delays still keep growing with ever increasing financial costs.

Some of the topics spoken about by international local group representatives included;

- In Finland, as well as the never ending, disastrous, problems of the Olkiloto EPR reactor, the government are talking about building a Russian reactor on a protected beautiful wildlife area near Sweden. Protests will come from both countries to stop the building.

- In New Mexico, USA, abandoned Uranium mines and pollution affecting health of the indigenous people, along with the threat of new mining in Grand Canyon.

- In India there are massive anti-nuclear struggles against a Government trying to build several new reactors. Very vulnerable farmers and fishermen in peaceful protests are being brutally treated and surrounded by thousands of police.

- In Turkey the government wants to build 3 nuclear plants in a country where there are hundreds of fault lines and earthquakes are common. Russia will build and own a plant on the sea coast, but will not take the waste away, a threat to water demand and the marine environments of the many Mediterranean countries.

- In Niger, Africa, France uses its old colony to mine uranium for its reactors, having now stopped mining in France. The local Arab populations did not understand the dangers to health of the uranium dust and used the highly radioactive waste tailings from the mining activities to build roads and houses.

- In France 30,000 workers in the nuclear industry are exposed to radiation but the subcontracted companies that employ them do not recognise the occupational health hazards. Unions need to work with the workers to get medical monitoring for healthy working conditions. CRIIRAD is an independent laboratory that measures radioactivity and is helping local communities to measure radioactivity for themselves both in France, where the effects of Chernobyl still exist, and in Niger.

- In Japan levels of childhood Thyroid cancer continue to rise, though families outside Fukushima are not given medical support. The damaged reactors and their melted fuel present new engineering decommissioning problems never tackled before. More than a thousand radioactive water storage tanks may have to be emptied into the Pacific Ocean as well as the continuing leakage. Subcontracted workers cleaning up the contaminated towns and damaged reactors have poor working conditions and no health insurance; billions of black plastic sacks of radioactive soil accumulate as pyramids of waste stores that nobody wants or knows what to do with.

Hinkley Point uncooked Christmas Turkey

On 14th December Stop Hinkley members arrived at Hinkley Point C building site to deliver the uncooked Christmas dinner turkey and asked "It's 2017, EDeF! Where's the lecce for the HPC turkey?"



In 2007 EDeF declared that we would be cooking our Christmas turkeys in 2017 with electricity generated from the new HPC.

Spokesman Allan Jeffery said "We have waited 10 years and now there is another 10 year wait even if they ever manage to finish building it successfully. The EPR's design has been a construction disaster, recognised by the national press. By now the electricity demand could have been met by energy efficiency and renewable energy sources, which could be built cheaper and more quickly."

Stop Hinkley members delivered the turkey with their own Christmas carol, to the tune of 'O Little Town of Bethlehem'.

Oh little town of Bridgwater
How sad we see thee lie
Along your ever gridlocked streets
The HGVs grind by

For EdeF's decided
Their project cannot wait
You know the score, there's hundreds more
Forever you'll be late!

2017 - the Stop Hinkley Review of the Year

Another bad year for EdeF/HPC, another good one for Stop Hinkley.

- At long last, EdeF admitted that HPC would take until at least 2027 to build and would be even more over budget.
- HPC will now cost at least £20billion, a shocking waste of money.
- The Index Linked price of HPC electricity passed £100/Mw, as the price for off-shore wind dropped to £57.50.
- We've been spreading the word from Cardiff (Nuclear Free Local Authorities) to Paris (World Anti-Nuclear Social Forum)
- SH opposed EdeF's plans for a 'Non-Material Change' to waste storage at HPC, along with Councils and local residents.
- Dredging potentially radioactive mud at HPC has proved a hot potato, initiating the biggest protest petition ever presented to the Welsh Assembly.
- Pretty pointless roadworks in Bridgwater enraged, delayed and cost local jobs.
- SH has criticised the 'Gold Rush Economy' that HPC has created locally where wages there are 36% above the regional norm, housing is unaffordable and hotels pop up like mushrooms.

EdeF's plans to build concrete pipe sections at Bristol Docks and put them on HGVs to get them to HPC have enraged local Councillors.

- SH celebrated EdeF's broken promise that HPC electricity would be cooking our 2017 Christmas dinners with a well publicised turkey protest.
- At other EPRs - Whilst the horror story that is Olkiluoto (Finland) moved a tiny step nearer completion, 'flagship' Taishan (China) took a step backwards when cracks (known about but kept quiet since 2012!) caused further delays. All quiet on the Flamanville (France) front.
- The year ended well with the publication of an encyclopedic work on the whole HPC saga (Guardian, 21/12/17) with the final word going to SH's own Allan Jeffery!



Happy New Year to all Stop Hinkley Members and supporters and thank you for your ongoing support.

EDF has applied for a non-material change to its plans for storage of Spent Fuel on site, from wet storage in cooling ponds to dry storage in air cooled concrete casks. This has meant EDF applying to increase the length and height of the main, long term, spent fuel interim storage building, doubling its volume capacity. This also means changes to many of the buildings on the plans to enable machinery and packaging for the dry storage of this highly reactive hot waste. Stop Hinkley and many local councillors have put in official objections to the Planning Inspectorate, claiming this is much more than a non-material planning change.

There are advantages and disadvantages to storing the hot spent fuel in both dry and wet storage, but when EDF applied 6 years ago to the DCO they decided, for many reasons, to apply for wet cooling pond storage, which has been used in all British nuclear establishments, apart from when the cooling ponds ran out of space at the only other British Pressurised Water reactor at Sizewell.

At least this has woken up many councillors and local Somerset people to the fact that high level radioactive waste is going to be stored at Hinkley in Somerset for at least 160 years, probably permanently, as there is no national Geological Repository anywhere in sight! A lot of locals have been used to the spent fuel from the A and B stations staying 90 days in the underground cooling ponds and then taken away from Somerset by lorry and train to Sellafield in Cumbria for reprocessing. This will not happen with the much hotter and much more radioactive fuel from the Hinkley C EPR reactors.

This leaves a big question. After all the last 10 years of planning, why this sudden major change? We believe it is the increasingly recognised international security problem. In the last few months, no2nuclear has carried reports from French newspapers about Greenpeace activists who have entered the few wet storage spent fuel storage ponds in France and shown how they are very vulnerable to acts of terrorism. Exposure of the spent fuel to air could lead to devastating widespread dispersal of radioactivity.

Contacts

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Subscription Renewals

For those who do not pay by Standing Order, the renewal forms are enclosed.

Those of you who do pay by SO will know the advantage of not having to remember to arrange payment each year.

We have again welcomed new members this year and many long standing members have remained loyal, so our membership is growing. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Now, more than ever, it is vital that we increase our membership numbers to make our voice even louder. By joining us you help us to show the government its folly in backing the publicly funded environmental loser that is nuclear power.

Please encourage friends to join. They can join by going to the website 'Support Us' page or by simply sending a cheque with their name and address to Stop Hinkley, 8 The Bartons, Yeabridge, South Petherton TA13 5LW. The suggested annual subscription is £12 for an individual (£5 unwaged) or £20 for a family. We ask you to donate as much as you feel able, but whatever you give, however small, is gratefully received.

Events

**20 Millisieverts per year:
an exhibition about Fukushima**
23 Jan to 17 Feb 2018 at CICCIC,
Memorial Hall, Paul Street, Taunton,
Somerset TA1 3PF

In October 2016 Lis Fields participated in a study tour of Fukushima, organised by Green Cross Switzerland, the environmental NGO founded by Mikhail Gorbachev.

'20 millisieverts per year' is a selection of her photographs and texts with which she examines some of the consequences of the nuclear catastrophe unleashed at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant in 2011.

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Stop Hinkley meetings
Mondays 15 Jan & 19 Feb at 7pm
West Bow House, Milton Place
Off West Street, Bridgwater TA6 7RT

www.stophinkley.org