



# Newsletter

## March 2019

# UK Energy Policy and Hinkley Point C at a Tipping Point

Stop Hinkley Press Release, 29 January

UK Energy Policy is at a tipping point. Following the withdrawal of two Japanese giants - Toshiba and Hitachi - from nuclear projects at Moorside in Cumbria and Wylfa on Anglesey - it is now clearer than ever that it would be cheaper to build new renewable capacity rather than continue building Hinkley Point C. It's now time to cut our losses and abandon the Hinkley Point C project altogether.

Even Business Secretary, Greg Clark has recognised that "The cost of renewable technologies such as offshore wind has fallen dramatically, to the point where they now require very little public subsidy and will soon require none." And the cost reductions for offshore wind are far from over.

According to The Observer "the Hitachi fiasco confirms that our energy policy now lies in ruins". Hinkley Point C is Britain's only new reactor, currently under construction and this "is eight years behind schedule and faces huge cost overruns". Its construction has proceeded only because the government agreed to pay vastly inflated prices for its electricity for a guaranteed 35 years.

Financial markets commentator, Neil Collins, writing in the FT, says the "grim truth is that these huge projects are a financial dead end." He describes the Hinkley Point C project as promising "to be an epic financial disaster". The contract for Hinkley Point C means that consumers will pay £92.50 per megawatt hour of electricity at 2012 prices for 35 years. At today's prices this will now be more than £108.00/MWh. It is impossible to forecast future wholesale electricity market prices but if we assume that today's prices (about £45/MWh) persist for the period of the contract Hinkley would add about £50bn to consumers' bills.

According to EDF Energy, construction proper at Hinkley will not officially start until June 2019. So, whilst cancelling Hinkley Point C now might incur a cancellation cost of a few billion pounds, consumers could save almost £1.5bn per year for 35 years from 2027 if the deal is scrapped.

We have also learnt from the Sunday Telegraph that cash-strapped EDF is weighing a range of options to distance itself from the British energy market. It is not clear what this could mean, but, according to the newspaper, this could include the sale of a minority stake in its existing reactors such as Hinkley Point B.

The basic problem is that the UK's 2011 National Policy Statement on Energy has aged badly. Then, it was wrongly believed energy costs and demand would rise inexorably, creating a security of supply issues. As a result, the government gave the go-ahead to the super-expensive Hinkley project. In fact, demand is falling thanks to efficiency gains and new technology, and the cost of all forms of energy supply – with the glaring exception of nuclear – has fallen sharply.

Stop Hinkley spokesperson Roy Pumfrey said: "It is time to scrap the welfare scheme for the dying nuclear industry called Hinkley Point C. Business Secretary Greg Clark has virtually admitted that nuclear power is past its sell-by-date. If Hitachi can't make a profit with 'significant and generous' financial support from the Government, - its share price went up by 10% when Wylfa was suspended - and even EDF is getting cold feet despite the prospect of a £50bn bung from consumers - it must be time to get out of nuclear, cancel Hinkley and stop coming up with new ways of fleecing taxpayers and consumers to fund new reactors."

<http://stophinkley.org/PressReleases/pr190129.pdf>

# Near site of Fukushima nuclear disaster, a shattered town and scattered lives

Washington Post, Feb 3

NAMIE, Japan — Noboru Honda lost 12 members of his extended family when a tsunami struck the Fukushima prefecture in northern Japan nearly eight years ago. Last year, he was diagnosed with cancer and initially given a few months to live.

Today, he is facing a third sorrow: Watching what may be the last gasps of his hometown.

For six years, Namie was deemed unsafe after a multiple-reactor meltdown at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant following a 2011 earthquake and tsunami. In March 2017, the government lifted its evacuation order for the center of Namie. But, so far, hardly anyone has ventured back. Its people are scattered and divided. Families are split. The sense of community is coming apart.

For the people of Namie and other towns near the Fukushima plant, the pain is sharpened by the way the Japanese government is trying to move beyond the tragedy, to use the 2020 Tokyo Olympics as a symbol of hope and recovery, a sign that life can return to normal after a disaster of this magnitude.

Its charm offensive is also tied up with efforts to restart the country's nuclear-power industry, one of the world's most extensive networks of atomic power generation. Six Olympic softball games and a baseball game will be staged in Fukushima, the prefecture's bustling and radiation-free capital city, and the Olympic torch relay will start from here.

But in Namie, much closer to the ill-fated nuclear plant, that celebration rings hollow, residents say. This was a close-knit community of farmers, fishermen and potters — of orchards, rice paddies and cattle sandwiched between the mountains and the sea. That's all gone. On the main street, a small new shopping arcade has opened. But a short walk away, a barber shop stands abandoned, its empty chairs gathering years of dust. A sign telling customers to make themselves at home is still displayed in a bar, but inside debris litters the floor. A karaoke parlor is boarded up.

Under 5%, of the original population have returned. Many are scared — with some obvious justification — that their homes and surroundings are still unsafe. Most of the returnees are elderly. Only six children are enrolled at the gleaming new elementary school. This is not a place for young families.

Four-fifths of Namie's geographical area is mountain and forest, impossible to

decontaminate, still deemed unsafe to return. When it rains, the radioactive cesium in the mountains flows into rivers and underground water sources close to the town.

Greenpeace has been taking thousands of radiation readings for years in the towns around the Fukushima nuclear plant. It says radiation levels in parts of Namie where evacuation orders have been lifted will remain well above international maximum safety recommendations for many decades, raising the risks of leukemia and other cancers to "unjustifiable levels," especially for children.

In the rural areas around the town, radiation levels are much higher and could remain unsafe for people to live beyond the end of this century, Greenpeace concluded in a 2018 report.

"The scale of the problem is clearly not something the government wants to communicate to the Japanese people, and that's driving the whole issue of the return of evacuees," said Shaun Burnie, senior nuclear specialist with Greenpeace. "The idea that an industrial accident closes off an area of Japan, with its limited habitable land, for generations and longer — that would just remind the public why they are right to be opposed to nuclear power."

Today, Namie's former residents are scattered across all but one of Japan's 47 prefectures. Many live in the nearby town of Nihonmatsu, in comfortable but isolating apartment blocks where communal space and interaction are limited. With young people moving away, the elderly, who already feel the loss of Namie most acutely, find themselves even more alone.

"People are losing the purposes of living. The more time that passes, they feel their dignity as human beings is lost," said Shigeru Sasaki, a former farmer from Namie.

Many residents say the central government is being heavy handed in its attempts to convince people to return, failing to support residents' efforts to build new communities in places like Nihonmatsu, and then ending compensation payments within a year of evacuation orders being lifted.

In other towns around the nuclear plant, people have complained that arbitrarily decided compensation payouts — more for people deemed to have been in radiation-affected zones, far less for tsunami victims, nothing for people just a mile outside the zone most affected — have divided communities and caused resentment and friction.

The government is building and fortifying sea walls along hundreds of miles of the Pacific coast to prevent another tsunami from wreaking havoc, but some residents say they weren't consulted and aren't happy about being shut off from the sea.

Today, Honda's home, ruined by the tsunami, has been bulldozed to make way for new houses. But so far none have been built.

"We were driven out of our community, and had it destroyed," he said. "We asked the town and the prefecture to re-create a community for us, away from home, but we were not listened to."

## Remember Fukushima 2019

**Stop Hinkley will be at the march on Parliament on Sat 16th March. Assemble at noon outside Japanese Embassy, 101 Piccadilly, London W1. Followed by Rally 14.00hrs Old Palace Yard opposite Parliament.**  
<https://rememberfukushima.org/>

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## Companies fined for health and safety breaches

ONR, 1 February, 2019

EDF Energy Nuclear Generation Ltd and Doosan Babcock Ltd have been fined £200,000 and £150,000 respectively following an incident where a worker fell from height at Hinkley Point B power station in 2017.

The companies were also ordered to each pay half of the prosecution costs of £36,353.84 by His Honour Judge Ticehurst at a hearing at Taunton Crown Court on Friday, 1 February.

The sentencing marks the conclusion of a prosecution brought by the Office for Nuclear Regulation for offences under the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, section 3(1), (in relation to EDF Energy), and the Work at Height Regulations 2005, Regulation 4(1), (for Doosan Babcock).

Both companies had previously pleaded guilty to the charges which followed an incident on 12 April, 2017, where a Doosan Babcock Ltd employee sustained serious injuries after falling through a skylight.

The accident was a conventional health and safety matter and there was no nuclear safety or radiological risk to workers or the public.

Donald Urquhart, ONR's Deputy Chief Inspector and Director of Operating Facilities regulation, said: "The level of financial penalty in this case is not a matter on which ONR has a view. As an independent regulator, what matters to me is the safety of workers and the public on and around nuclear licensed sites, and this prosecution shows we will take robust regulatory action where

necessary to ensure that those that we regulate secure and maintain compliance with the law.

"In addition to these legal proceedings, we issued enforceable improvement notices to both EDF and Doosan Babcock, requiring them to put in place appropriate safety measures to ensure that such risks are properly controlled in the future. It is extremely important that lessons are learnt from incidents such as this, and I am pleased to note that both companies have since complied with these notices and have delivered necessary improvements to ensure that such risks are properly controlled."

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## Tram Shed, Cardiff Event

Charlotte Church, Cian Ciaran from Super Fury Animals, Stop Hinkley and Beyond Nuclear came together for an event with music to promote independent Wales.

We were invited to do a 'table top' to promote our message of concern about Hinkley C and the proximity across the channel for the Welsh people.

We had a power point display in the bar of Renewable Wales not Radioactive Wales on a timed loop, which initiated some meaningful discussion.



Our window banners could be seen by the sell-out queues and passers-by of the Cardiff rush hour.

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## 'Have I Got Hinkley News For You'

Hopefully, SH Members who are fans of the popular comedy programme will have enjoyed the item in the Chair's introduction to a recent edition. Alexander Armstrong said, "In Somerset, there's a possible explanation for why construction of Hinkley C is two years behind schedule!" We then saw a jolly construction worker playing 'Whack a Mole' with a mallet on the helmeted heads of two equally jolly colleagues as they popped up and down from two holes in a concrete section.

It was a visual gag, but Members should agree that it was good to see that a national audience was being reminded about the HPC delays.

## Where's All The Radioactive Waste Going To Go?

Radioactive Waste Management (RWM) are currently consulting about the proposed Geological Disposal Facility (GDF) for intermediate and high level nuclear waste.

The preferred option is a deep dug site. It could be anywhere in England or Wales where the geology is deemed suitable and the local population can be bribed into accepting it.

There are a series of informative meetings being held across the countries (a SH rep went to one in Exeter "interesting"), so you could apply to attend. See the RWM website for info on all of this.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-launches-new-policy-to-deal-with-radioactive-waste>

You'll need to be quick as the Consultation closes on 31 March 2019. The Nuclear Free Local Authorities have produced a useful briefing on why a GDF is NOT the answer to the waste problem. <http://www.nuclearpolicy.info/briefings/radioactive-waste-briefing-76-nfla-fact-sheet-overview-of-the-deep-waste-repository-debate-and-nflas-views/>

### Events

**Stop Hinkley meetings  
Mondays 18 March & 15 April  
and AGM on 20 May at 7pm  
West Bow House, Milton Place  
Off West Street, Bridgwater TA6 7RT**

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**27 April 2019**

#### Surround Springfield

Stop Hinkley will take part in the surround action at the nuclear fuel production installation near Preston in Lancashire.

More info from

[springaction2019@stopnewnuclear.org.uk](mailto:springaction2019@stopnewnuclear.org.uk)

A group from Stop Hinkley will be staying at the Preston Central Premier Inn on Friday 26 and Sat 27 April.

## Contacts

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**Membership/Treasurer/Website:** Val Davey:  
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## Petition to UK Government

### Moorside, new nuclear plant should not be funded by Government.

Sign the petition here:

<https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/238113>



Cumbria already has the intolerable burden of Sellafield. A major accident involving the liquid high level waste would have catastrophic consequences. Any dangerous development near to Sellafield would make a major accident more likely. Private developers cannot afford to underwrite this risk.

"Replacing the output of the shelved new nuclear plants at Wylfa, Moorside and Oldbury with renewables would be 13-33% cheaper, including the costs of balancing variable output, according to analysis from the Energy and Climate Intelligence Unit.

Note that reductions in per-capita electricity generation have saved the UK the equivalent of four Hinkley Cs of demand since 2005 <https://www.carbonbrief.org/ga-can-the-uk-meet-its-climate-goals-without-the-wylfa-nuclear-plant>

### REMINDER: Petition deadline end of March



The campaign group Together Against Sizewell C [TASC] have a petition they plan to present to Suffolk councils against building Sizewell C on the Suffolk Coast. They would like to get at least a thousand signatures and are already over halfway there. Can you help them exceed their target?

Please download the petition forms here <http://stophinkley.org/Temporary/TASC%20Petition%201.pdf> and collect as many signatures as you can, then return the forms to TASC. The address is on the form. There is a comments section for signatories to express why they feel Sizewell C should not be built or their concerns about nuclear power in general.

Many thanks for your help. If you have any questions about the campaign you can contact Nicola Pilkington of TASC at [nicolapilkington@hotmail.com](mailto:nicolapilkington@hotmail.com)

[www.stophinkley.org](http://www.stophinkley.org)