



# Newsletter July 2012

## Hinkley C – Still Time To Stop It!

Numerous newspaper articles and adverts by EDF in the local press have given many people the impression that construction work on the proposed Hinkley Point C nuclear power station has already started. **It hasn't and there is still time to stop it!**

EDF still has to obtain:

- Approval for the new French reactor design proposed for Hinkley C. Only one of 31 safety issues raised by the UK regulatory authorities has so far been resolved.
- Permission to build the reactors from the National Infrastructure Directorate. A decision will not be taken until next year.
- Finance to build the power station, now estimated to cost £14 billion. EDF says it will make an investment decision by the end of 2012.
- Agreement on a new subsidy for nuclear power (under the Energy Bill currently going through parliament). EDF has indicated that it won't build Hinkley C unless this subsidy is large enough.

A letter from Stop Hinkley explaining the current situation at the site in more detail was published recently in the West Somerset Free Press and the Western Daily Press (see below).

Stop Hinkley is campaigning on all these issues. We are:

- Lobbying the government to refuse any further subsidy to nuclear power.
- Encouraging the UK safety authorities (with other anti-nuclear groups and Greenpeace) not to rubber stamp the new reactor design.
- Putting pressure on West Somerset Council to make sure that EDF sticks to its commitments during the preparatory work it already has permission for.

- Raising the issue of contaminated land at the Hinkley C site (see article below).
- Submitting evidence and attending meetings held to consider EDF's application to build Hinkley C.
- Spreading the word about why Hinkley C isn't wanted or needed through regular street stalls.

This newsletter contains information on all these issues and Stop Hinkley's activities to stop Hinkley C.

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### Don't subsidise nuclear

The government plans to force everybody to pay for new nuclear power stations through their electricity bills, despite promising there would be no public subsidies.

Proposed changes to the electricity market, currently going through parliament, will provide a series of direct and indirect subsidies to the nuclear industry. These include a **guaranteed long term price** for the electricity produced by new nuclear plants.

- This subsidy alone could result in **£155 billion** being paid over 30 years to EDF for operating the new nuclear power stations planned at Hinkley Point and Sizewell in Suffolk.
- Every person in the UK could pay an extra **£83 per year** on their fuel bills to support this.
- The proposed changes could also mean nearly **£3.5 billion** in windfall payments for *existing* nuclear power stations (like Hinkley Point B).

The government is dressing this policy up as support for all "low carbon energy generation" but its clear purpose is to back more nuclear power.

It's already proposed to subsidise new nuclear power stations by:

- Offering operators a fixed unit price for the cost of managing and disposing of their radioactive waste (a subsidy of £400 million+ per new reactor).
- Limiting the operators' insurance liability in the event of a nuclear accident like Fukushima, which has already effectively bankrupted the Japanese company running the power station. Paying for commercial insurance could add 40p per unit of nuclear electricity.

Don't let the government throw good money after bad. Rather than increasing our bills to pay for the runaway costs of nuclear power, they should be supporting a clean, sustainable future based on renewable sources and energy saving.

Please send the letter below to the government minister responsible for this policy - Ed Davey, Secretary of State for Climate Change – urging him to abandon all subsidies for nuclear and stick to his original commitment to a nuclear-free future. You can also find a copy at <http://www.stophinkley.org/Temporary/DaveyLetter.htm>

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Letter to **Edward Davey, Secretary of State, Dept for Energy and Climate Change, 3 Whitehall Place, London SW1A 2AW**  
or email [correspondence@decc.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:correspondence@decc.gsi.gov.uk)

Dear Ed Davey,

### **No U-Turn on Subsidising Nuclear Power**

You are proposing to introduce a series of measures in the new Energy Bill which will offer payments to an industry whose costs are already spiralling out of control.

Nuclear power will benefit from an estimated £3.5 billion in windfall payments for existing power stations and £155 billion over 30 years for new plants at Hinkley Point and Sizewell. Every person in the country could be paying an extra £83 per year on their fuel bill to support this.

Counting nuclear power as 'low carbon generation' is inaccurate, as it does not take account of the whole fuel cycle, including keeping radioactive waste safe for thousands of years.

I am opposed to the new nuclear power station planned by Electricite de France at Hinkley Point in Somerset because of the many safety issues involved. If a serious accident occurs, as at Fukushima, it could not only bankrupt the operators but seriously damage the country's economy.

Nuclear power is already massively subsidised by supporting the cost of radioactive waste disposal and limiting the operator's liability in the event of a serious accident. The government has promised not to subsidise new nuclear power. **Don't bring in subsidies through the back door.**

Please abandon all financial support for nuclear power in the Energy Bill and stick to your original Liberal Democrat policy of no new nuclear and a steady transformation towards a renewable future.

Yours,

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## **Stop Hinkley lobby at Centrica AGM**

Stop Hinkley members joined other anti-nuclear groups to lobby shareholders at the AGM of energy company Centrica in London on 11 May asking them not to invest in Hinkley C. Carrying a banner reading "Don't Invest in Risky Nuclear Power" they handed out leaflets warning of the financial dangers involved.



The *Financial Times* had already reported that Centrica was threatening to pull out of the deal in which it would take up to a 20% stake in Hinkley C, mainly due to uncertainty over government financial support.

Stop Hinkley member (and Centrica shareholder) Sue Aubrey was able to put a

question during the meeting asking for an assurance from the board of directors that they “are not going to get involved in this dangerous and risky proposal.”

She pointed out that nuclear power has always proved more expensive than expected, that the cost of building the Hinkley C reactors had reportedly escalated by 40% to £14 billion and that the accident at Fukushima in Japan could cost \$250 billion for clean-up and compensation, leaving the company operating those reactors on the verge of bankruptcy.

The chairman of the meeting responded that the company was still considering whether to invest but it depended largely on how much financial support they would receive from the government. This exchange was reported in the following day's *Daily Telegraph*.

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## **Hinkley C construction has not started**

*(Text of Stop Hinkley letter published in local press)*

“Many people living in Somerset are under the impression that construction work has already started on the proposed Hinkley “C” nuclear reactors. This is encouraged by signs along the main road from Bridgwater to Cannington which read: “Hinkley Point C Construction Site”. However, these signs, erected for developer EDF, are deliberately misleading. No construction work has started on the reactors, and EDF does not yet have permission to do so.

The French company currently has two main planning permissions in relation to the Hinkley C site. One is from West Somerset Council for “preparatory works”, originally granted by the Council last July but not brought into effect until this January. EDF has already completed most of the first phase of this work. This has involved the removal of trees and hedges, the erection of a barbed wire security fence, the creation of tracks and the closure of all rights of way, including part of the South West Coast Path. It has not yet started the major part of this preparatory work, involving the excavation of foundations for the reactors and the removal of very large quantities of soil and rocks. Originally due to

begin in August, this work has now been reportedly delayed until next year.

The second permission is from Somerset County Council for “remediation work” on a large mound of spoil left over mainly from the construction of Hinkley A power station in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Although this mound had remained happily undisturbed for 40 years, as soon as EDF discovered that there were amounts of (relatively non-hazardous) asbestos in the mound, the company applied to the Council to level it and remove the asbestos. This has resulted in the extensive earthworks pictured in various newspapers (see below) and which may also give the impression that construction of Hinkley C has started.



In fact, when EDF applied to the Council for permission to carry out this work it was at pains to claim that the work had nothing to do with Hinkley C. It is, however, blindingly obvious that the work of removing and levelling this mound is essential as preparation for the land to be used for the proposed reactors and other ancillary facilities.

Meanwhile, EDF is still going through the process of applying for consent to build the reactors themselves through the National Infrastructure Directorate (known until recently as the Infrastructure Planning Commission). This process is due to end in September, but it will take at least until the beginning of 2013 for a report to be produced by the examiners and for a decision to be ratified by the government.

EDF has also yet to receive approval from the Office for Nuclear Regulation to operate the new type of French reactor proposed for Hinkley C. At the latest count only one out of 31 outstanding safety issues had been resolved to the satisfaction of the ONR.

So, to summarise, there is no permission for EDF to build a nuclear power station at Hinkley Point, the type of reactor has not yet been approved and all the indications are that the enormous financing required to pay for it – with the capital cost now estimated at £14 billion - is becoming increasingly difficult to find. Stop Hinkley continues to campaign for this dangerous and expensive project to be permanently shelved.”

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## **Enriched uranium findings prompt call for immediate halt to Hinkley C clearance**

Analyses of soil samples have confirmed the presence of enriched uranium on EDF's site for their proposed nuclear power station at Hinkley Point. Enriched uranium is a man-made radioactive contaminant and does not exist in nature.

The samples were collected by members of the Stop Hinkley campaign and sent to Green Audit, an independent environmental consultancy, who commissioned separate laboratories in Oxfordshire and Germany to undertake the tests.

Katy Attwater, Stop Hinkley spokesperson, explained: “From the start we had no confidence in the work that EDF's contractors, AMEC, had done. For example, they wrongly stated in a report ‘that a full radiological survey of the entire site would not be possible’ and their reasons for not doing one were ludicrous. They said ‘This was due to the fact that the oil seed rape had not been harvested making pedestrian access to large areas of the site impossible. In addition the wheat crop had not been harvested’.”

Now landscape contractors have started to clear the vegetation, rip out trees and slash down hedgerows across the site. “They will disturb the soil and their workers' radiological exposure has not been safely assessed. Enriched uranium is an alpha-emitter and carries increased health risks if inhaled or ingested.”

Green Audit's full report is entitled ‘Measurements of radiation dose rates, radionuclides and other contaminants on EdF Energy's site for the proposed Hinkley Point C Nuclear Power Station’ and can be found

on the Stop Hinkley and Low Level Radiation Campaign websites.

Katy Attwater concluded: “West Somerset Council and the Environment Agency need to act upon these findings. EDF need to demonstrate that safety is indeed their highest priority, as they so often claim, by undertaking more extensive soil testing to ensure they are not endangering the health of workers and local people. Until then, all work must cease immediately.”

*(Stop Hinkley press release, 10 May 2012)*

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## **Planning Inspectors stick to rules and refuse to consider nuclear issues**

The panel of planning officials given the task of considering the application by EDF to construct Hinkley C have stuck determinedly to their six month deadline and refused all requests to consider nuclear-related issues.

Since the preliminary hearing in March there have been four “open floor” meetings in Bridgwater, Combrich, Stogursey and Cannington and an “issue specific” hearing to consider details of the application to do with traffic, the location of ancillary facilities such as accommodation blocks and the logistics of the proposed construction process.

The five inspectors, now working under the banner of the National Infrastructure Directorate, part of the Planning Inspectorate, have refused requests from the local councils to extend the timescale of the process so they can properly respond to the mountains of paperwork. They have also refused all requests from Stop Hinkley and others to consider nuclear-related safety issues such as flooding and emergency planning, which they say have already been decided by the government under a previous policy-making process.

Despite these restrictions, many Stop Hinkley supporters and others have raised their concerns about nuclear power at all the open floor hearings, leaving the panel of officials in no doubt that many people are fundamentally opposed to Hinkley C for health and safety reasons and because there are sustainable, viable alternatives. Among those who spoke was Rose Stuckey (see transcript of her speech below).

Stop Hinkley has also presented a detailed submission to the NID, as well as a joint submission with the Nuclear Free Local Authorities organisation. These covered issues such as the Fukushima accident, the threat of flooding from the sea, the inadequacy of emergency arrangements and the lack of a long-term disposal site for the highly radioactive waste which Hinkley C would generate. Both documents are available at the Stop Hinkley website.

The majority of submissions, responses and comments in relation to EDF's application (by EDF itself, local councils, official bodies and other participants) have been by email, most of which should be available to read at the NID's website – <http://infrastructure.independent.gov.uk/projects/south-west/hinkley-point-c-new-nuclear-power-station/>

The ongoing timetable for the inspectors' consideration of the application is that two further issue specific hearings will be held in June and July, followed by possible further open floor hearings in September. The panel is due to close its examination on 22 Sept. After that they will prepare a report for the government Minister who will take the final decision. [See right >>]

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## Join the street stall team

Stop Hinkley street stalls have been held recently in Glastonbury, Taunton and Bristol as well as at a number of summer fairs and events in Somerset.

If you would like to help, or start up a stall in your own area, please contact Jo Smolden on 01278 459009.

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## Treasurer & Supporters Secretary's Report for 2011

The total income for the year was £6,683 (£5,122). Expenses were £4,996 (£6,899). Consequently, the net surplus was £1,686 (deficit £1,776). (2010 figures)

The overall income was up by 30%, and both subs and donations were up over 50%. Overall, expenses were down by 28%. The assets at year end were £11,666 (£5,089) in bank accounts and £5,000 in shares in a cooperative wind farm.

At the end of 2011 we had nearly 390 members, with 81 joining during the year, nearly half via the street stall. The best year by far since the original Hinkley C public inquiry in the 1980s.

### Speech by 88-year-old Rose Stuckey, a long-standing Stop Hinkley member, at the Bridgwater open floor hearing

"Nuclear power stations are costly to build and costly to dismantle. They scar our shoreline, prohibiting public access to huge areas. Radioactive waste remains and always will be a serious problem. No safe place has yet been found for its storage and disposal. Keeping it on site has its risks.

Invisible radioactive particles rise from chimneys and pipes and are spread by the wind, coming down in the rain, polluting the air, contaminating vast acreages of food and fruit-growing land and pasture, as well as being discharged in waste water into Bridgwater Bay, absorbed by marine life and crustaceans. Our food is not protected!

It's a fallacy to claim nuclear energy is clean. No smoke perhaps, but its pollution is unseen and its waste too hot to handle. I was told once by an engineer who had worked at Windscale (now Sellafield) that he left the industry for the sake of his children. How many others have done the same?

Don't forget Chernobyl, Windscale and Three Mile Island, all devastating events. There have been hundreds of incidents at Hinkley Point – fires, leakages and iodine tablets issues – all on record. It is only a matter of time before a big blow-up occurs here and our whole country becomes a no-go area for many years.

It is not as if there are no alternatives. There is gas, wind, advanced coal management - reducing emissions by at least 80% - the Severn barrage and solar power. All without radioactive waste.

Then comes decommissioning – hazardous, expensive and where is all the material going to go?

Nuclear power is unsafe, uneconomic, unwarranted, unwelcome and a fearsome blot on our coastline.

EDF's application should be refused on the foregoing grounds and more. Hinkley C should not be built. Full stop!"

## Fly the flag against nuclear power

A choice of two flag designs – “Nuclear Power? No Thanks” or “Remember Fukushima” - is available from the Stop Hinkley website – [www.stophinkley.org](http://www.stophinkley.org) – for less than £10 including p+p. Great for festivals or demos.



The flags also feature in a new film about Glastonbury Festival, “Glastopia”, directed by Julien Temple and screened on BBC TV recently.

Other merchandise available at the website includes books and reports on many aspects of nuclear power and its health risks.  
[www.stophinkley.org/Merchandise.htm](http://www.stophinkley.org/Merchandise.htm)

**N.B. The final reminder for 2012 membership renewal is included with this newsletter.**

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

## Witch Watch at Hinkley

A number of women held a vigil at the gates of Hinkley Point over the period of the full moon at the beginning of June and intend to return at every subsequent one “for as long as it takes” (see flyer below).



### Events

**Stop Hinkley business meetings**  
Mondays 9<sup>th</sup> July and 13<sup>th</sup> August, 7.30pm  
West Bow House, Milton Place  
off West Street, Bridgwater

**Reclaim Hinkley – Direct Action**  
Monday 8<sup>th</sup> October, Hinkley Point  
More info: <http://stopnewnuclear.org.uk>

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