



PRESS RELEASE

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DAWN BLOCKADE LEAVES NUCLEAR WORKERS LOCKED OUT

At 6am this morning 10 protestors blockaded access to EDF energy's nuclear sites at Hinkley Point, preventing the morning shift from starting work. Four people in arm locks formed a barrier across the main access road at Wick Moor Drove in a bid to prevent further ground clearance work at the planned Hinkley C site and to protest at EDF's plan to extend the life of aging reactors at the Hinkley B station. There were four arrests and the gates were blocked for four and a half hours with no workers getting in or out.

Sitting beneath a banner saying "Nuclear Power - not worth the risk" Bristol tree-surgeon Zoe Smith said, "We want the destruction of land at the proposed Hinkley C site to stop. EDF still don't have planning permission for the new nuclear plant, the governments energy policy is in tatters. With Centrica pulling out and the long awaited Electricity Reform Act delayed, there is not even enough investment to finish the project. If the Tories fix the electricity price for nuclear so that the project can go ahead it will leave high level radioactive waste stored here in ponds for hundreds of years. The serious flooding in this area just shows how dangerous this would be."

The early morning blockade caused long tailbacks for scores of workers contracted in to perform maintenance work on the existing reactors at Hinkley B, EDF have signaled their intention to re-lisence the reactor again in 2016.

Bridgwater mum Nikki Clark from South West Against Nuclear said, "Not only do we not need new nuclear, we certainly don't need to extend the life of the existing reactors even further. Just this year alone reactor no 4 in the B station has scrambled at least three times. EDF like to call these emergency shutdowns 'unplanned outages' but this deliberately conceals the fact that these ageing reactors are now in a dangerous condition. In 2008 the regulators threatened British Energy with closure of the site. The reactors do not have any fewer cracks in the graphite core now than they did then. Do we have to have our own Fukushima here in Somerset before we abandon this insanity and embrace a renewables revolution in the UK?"

Stop Hinkley spokesperson Theo Simon said, "We support this protest. New nuclear is dead in the water. We need public investment in a renewables revolution which could create a million climate jobs and cut energy bills through a programme of home insulation and energy-efficiency. With it's massive marine energy resource, West Somerset is perfectly placed to lead the way in renewables, but EDF's plans would turn it into a toxic waste dump for our grandchildren."

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