



For Immediate Release
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Nuclear is vanishing as an answer to our energy needs as solar wins the race

Commenting on the news that solar panels produced more electricity than Britain's eight nuclear power stations for the first time on Friday 26th May Stop Hinkley Spokesperson Roy Pumfrey said:

"It is clear now that the Government's savage cuts to renewable subsidies were made to ensure that the wholesale price of electricity will rise in the future towards the already agreed price for Hinkley Point C - £92.50 per megawatt hour (MWh)."

Solar power accounted for 24.3% of electricity being generated at 12.30pm on Friday and exceeded nuclear output for three hours from 11am to 2pm. Solar power and other renewables are getting cheaper and more efficient as we install more of it around the country.

As solar power flooded the system on Friday, wholesale electricity prices fell to around £38/MWh, compared with about £50/MWh in spring 2013. Friday's peak solar output was almost three times greater than the planned 3.2GW generating capacity of Hinkley Point C.

Pumfrey continued:

"Renewables like wind and solar are among the cheapest options for generating power in the UK. Eventually plummeting costs mean solar will no longer need subsidies, but the Government has withdrawn subsidies much too soon so installations are slowing sharply."

Deployments of rooftop solar panels fell by three-quarters in the first quarter of this year compared with 2016. The Solar Trade Association, which represents the UK industry, said reduced subsidies and higher taxes were threatening to stall further growth in the sector. (2)

"In effect the Government is trying to kill off an industry which promises to cut all consumers electricity prices so that it can afford to pay the ridiculously high price it has guaranteed to EDF Energy for Hinkley Point C. As the Financial Times pointed out last week nobody outside the industry now thinks the future of electricity generation is nuclear fission. If this unproven design ever gets built and produces electricity, the UK consumer will be obliged to pay over twice the current market price for the output. Surely, for the good of electricity consumers, it must be time to scrap Hinkley Point C."

Stop Hinkley Contact:

Roy Pumfrey

roy@stophinkley.org

Tel: 07886 028 910

Notes

For more background see Professor Keith Barnham's article in the Independent

<http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/the-government-should-scrap-its-costly-hinkley-point-deal-and-accept-renewables-can-keep-the-lights-a7021196.html>

He says:

"...a Tory government has intervened in two highly successful, exponentially expanding markets, PV and onshore wind, aiming to reduce their expansion to zero by 2020 so as not to threaten their top priorities: higher carbon and more expensive nuclear and natural gas electricity."

Also see Good Energy's analysis which shows that renewables are actually cutting the wholesale price of electricity and lessening the impact of subsidies on bill payers.

<https://www.goodenergy.co.uk/blog/2015/10/30/renewables-price-of-energy/>

- (1) Solar power outshines nuclear for the first time, Times 27th May 2017
<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/news/solar-power-outshines-nuclear-for-first-time-p6psdq2qq>
- (2) Solar outshines nuclear as spring sun boosts UK output, FT 27th May 2017
<https://www.ft.com/content/c22669de-4203-11e7-9d56-25f963e998b2>
- (3) Nuclear is rightly vanishing as an answer to our energy needs FT 26th May 2017
<https://www.ft.com/content/6ba2437a-3be7-11e7-ac89-b01cc67cfeec%20>