



Newsround August 2023

18 July - 100%RenewableUK: What is really most significant about the Government's new announcement for £137 million funding for research into so-called small modular reactors (SMRs) in 'Great British Nuclear', is the failure to move forward with plans to finance Sizewell C.

<https://100percentrenewableuk.org/government-announces-fantasy-small-modular-reactor-programme-as-a-cover-for-sizewell-c-failure>

18 July- Grant Shapps: You know Just Stop Oil, now meet Just Stop Nuclear (no, not SH, the Labour Party!!). Today the @Conservatives launched a massive revival of nuclear power and these are the eco-fanatics and anti-nuclear radicals who want to stop us growing the economy and protecting you from energy warfare.

<https://twitter.com/grantshapps/status/1681323692800737282>

20 July - Construction Management: Six giant steel casings, each weighing 350 tonnes, 40m long and 6m wide, have been installed, marking an important step in the construction of Hinkley Point C's cooling water system. They will form part of the vertical shafts which will connect the five miles of tunnels with the intake and outtake heads. These 5,000-tonne structures were lowered onto the seabed last year and will circulate water to the nuclear reactors. The offshore work in the Bristol Channel is approaching completion.

<https://constructionmanagement.co.uk/hinkley-point-offshore-works-at-bristol-channel/>

25 July – Times: The government is to plough another £170million of taxpayers' cash into the proposed Sizewell C nuclear plant. The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) said the cash was in addition to the £679 million the government invested in the Suffolk power station late last year, when it took joint control of the project with EDF.

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/cash-boost-for-construction-of-sizewell-c-nuclear-plant-rg6rr5slv>

27 July – Financial Post: EDF Sees Higher Risk of Delays to UK's New Hinkley Nuclear Plant. Electricite de France SA said the risk of further delay to two nuclear reactors in southwest England has risen because of construction setbacks. The increased risk of a 15-month delay is due to "performances on civil works and challenges on mechanical, electrical, heating, ventilation and air conditioning," EDF said Thursday in an earnings presentation. "Progress is below the planned trajectory and action plans have been set." The debt-laden French utility has a 66.5% stake in HPC, while China General Nuclear Power Corp. owns the rest. As funding requirements now exceed contractual commitments, shareholders will be asked to provide additional equity voluntarily starting in the fourth quarter. "The probability that CGN will not fund the project beyond its committed equity cap is high," EDF said. "Financing solutions are being investigated, in the event that CGN does not allocate its voluntary equity."

<https://financialpost.com/pm/biz/pm/edf-sees-increased-risk-of-delay-to-new-uk-atomic-reactors>

29 July – Daily Mail: Sir John Rose, the former chief executive of Rolls-Royce, is calling on the Government to back British SMR nuclear technology developed by the engineering giant.

<https://www.thisismoney.co.uk/money/markets/article-12351625/Back-Rolls-Royce-nuclear-says-ex-boss-Sir-John-Rose.html>

31 July – Telegraph: Plan to boost nuclear power production to hit net zero merely a 'wish list', MPs warn. Ministers have yet to outline a strategy for how they'll quadruple atomic energy output. The plan for a nuclear power "renaissance" in Britain lacks detail and reads more like a "wish list," MPs have warned. Under the energy security strategy, the Government has vowed to increase the country's nuclear capacity to 24 gigawatts by 2050 – up from about six gigawatts today. But MPs on the science, innovation and technology committee said ministers had so far failed to set out details of how they will achieve that goal.

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/business/2023/07/31/net-zero-plan-nuclear-power-boost-wish-list-mps-warn/>

1 August – ENDS: The Environment Agency (EA) has allowed an amendment to a permit linked to the Hinkley Point C nuclear power plant in Somerset, allowing the firm to remove previous plans for an acoustic fish deterrent (AFD) system from the development, despite warnings that the move could result in the death of millions of fish each year. <https://www.endsreport.com/article/1831970/ea-allows-hinkley-point-c-permit-variation-remove-fish-deterrent-system>

2 August – iNews: Ministers diverted £136m from an electric car fund to the Sizewell C nuclear project despite infrastructure concerns. The Automotive Transformation Fund, a Government initiative designed to make it easier for car manufacturers to build and develop electric vehicles in the UK, spent just 5 per cent of its initially allocated funding in the year to March 2023, according to Government documents seen by i. Given an initial budget of £191m, just £7m was spent and 76 per cent of the funding arrangement was transferred to the Sizewell C project, the construction of the UK's first new nuclear power station in more than 30 years' <https://inews.co.uk/news/ministers-electric-car-fund-sizewell-c-nuclear-project-infrastructure-concerns-2520848>

4 August - Private Eye: Old Sparky: The go-ahead for even the very first UK SMR couldn't be decided on until 2029 at the earliest; nothing here could meaningfully contribute to the 2035 target for decarbonising electricity. No wonder so little is being spent – it's just a costly way to keep options open. <https://www.private-eye.co.uk/columnists>

5 August - John O'Groat Journal: The Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) has issued an enforcement letter to Magnox Ltd after recording a breach of its nuclear site licence at Dounreay. <https://www.johnogroat-journal.co.uk/news/dounreay-inspectors-raise-further-red-flag-about-sodium-stor-322156/>

6 August – This Is Money (end of piece): Sizewell C was dealt another blow this weekend when The People's Pension, which has six million members, said it has no plans to back the plant. <https://www.thisismoney.co.uk/money/markets/article-12376007/Rolls-Royce-win-nuclear-power-race.html>

7 August – World Nuclear News (WNN): All 116 of the novel T-pylons on National Grid's Hinkley Connection have now been completed. The 57-kilometre connection route will connect EDF Energy's Hinkley Point C nuclear power plant to six million homes whilst also allowing for more capacity on the network for renewable energy from the Southwest peninsular' <https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/T-Pylons-in-place-in-HPC-connection>

8 August – WNN: The UK government has imposed measures to mitigate national security concerns arising from the purchase by EDF of GE Steam Power Limited and GE Oil & Gas Marine and Industrial UK Limited. EDF's wholly-owned subsidiary GEAST UK Ltd is to gain control of the two GE businesses - which include the supply of turbines and related servicing for British nuclear submarines - in an acquisition that was first announced in February last year. <https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/UK-raises-concerns-over-EDF-purchase-of-GE-unit>

9 August – PBC Today: An unofficial one-day stoppage of work took place yesterday, as Hinkley Point C continues to be embroiled in labour disputes and unrest. <https://www.pbctoday.co.uk/news/hr-skills-news/hinkley-point-c-unrest-continues-steel-erectors-down-tools/131093/>

10 August – BBC: A public vote on plans to build a nuclear waste disposal site in Lincolnshire should be held by 2027, council leaders have said. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-lincolnshire-66452181>

10 August – CoRWM: Delivery of an operational geological disposal facility (GDF): progress report 2023. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/delivery-of-an-operational-geological-disposal-facility-gdf-progress-report-2023>

11 August – Telegraph: The ban on installing new oil boilers from 2026 has been thrown into doubt after government insiders insisted it was just a "proposal". <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2023/08/11/ban-installing-new-oil-boilers-2026-tory-mps-backlash/>

Roy Pumfrey for Stop Hinkley August 2023