



Newsround March 2025

10 February - Burnham-on-sea.com: Three thousand new jobs are to be created at Hinkley Point C (HPC) as it hits peak construction. Over the next 18 months, HPC will create thousands of new jobs, with around 15,000 people expected to be building the new power station. EDF says it will create new opportunities for local people to get better skills and jobs with the project

[3,000 new jobs to be created at Hinkley Point C as it hits peak construction](#)

11 February – BBC: In east Suffolk, signs of development are hard to miss. Thousands of trees have been felled, and a huge swathe of land stretching from the outskirts of Leiston to the coast have been cleared for a new construction compound and access road to the Sizewell C (SZC) site. Elsewhere, land is being dug up for a new link road off the A12, a new bypass around the villages of Stratford St Andrew and Farnham, and two park-and-ride sites at Wickham Market and Darsham

[Suffolk's Sizewell C groundwork under way but funding not agreed - BBC News](#)

12 February – Ipswich Star: Developers of Sizewell C say they are confident that the project is progressing on time and to budget as they offered a rare peek into the work going on. Being able to use the template from HPC - where construction of the same nuclear plant design began in March 2017 - has been a huge benefit, they say. "What we have seen is things that took eight years at HPC we are doing in three," said SZC joint managing director Nigel Cann on a tour of the site. "Whatever Hinkley do, we'll do better."

[Sizewell C likely to avoid over-spend, says report | Ipswich Star](#)

13 February - New Civil Engineer: Great British Nuclear (GBN) has confirmed that the winners of its small modular reactor (SMR) competition will still be announced around the time of the Spending Review on 11 June 2025, despite reports that it would take place on 26 March at the Spring Statement

[Great British Nuclear competition winners announcement still 'around Spending Review' | New Civil Engineer](#)

14 February = World Nuclear News (WNN): International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) staff at the Chernobyl site say "radiation levels inside and outside remain normal and stable" after a drone was reported to have struck the roof of the shelter built over the remains of the reactor destroyed in the 1986 accident

[Chernobyl's protective shelter damaged 'by drone strike' - World Nuclear News](#)

14 February – Rayo: Thousands of new jobs could be created in Gloucestershire as the county is set to become a new nuclear hub. GBN are looking at two former nuclear sites to be regenerated into the home of new SMRs. The potential development of the disused Berkeley Green and Oldbury sites would bring in millions of pounds to the local economy

[Gloucestershire on the brink of becoming nuclear hub](#)

17 February – Times: Developer backed by Amazon demands clarity on financial and regulatory support before building advanced modular reactor (AMR) in Hartlepool. X-Energy, based in Maryland in the USA, is in discussions with EdeF, the French state-backed energy group, over a project to build one or more units on the site of the Hartlepool nuclear power plant in Co Durham, a large-scale reactor that is due to be decommissioned in 2027

[X-Energy threatens to pull out of building nuclear plants in Britain](#)

17 February - Ekonomicky Denik: Negotiations on the capital investment of the CEZ Group in the British company Rolls-Royce SMR and subsequent cooperation on the development and construction of SMRs are not going smoothly. On the contrary, according to two well-informed sources of the Economic Daily, the negotiations are starting to falter. The Czechs and the British have different expectations, for example, regarding where the production of the main parts of the reactor will be located - whether in the Pilsen-based Škoda JS or in Korea

[Nejisté jaderné partnerství. Jednání ČEZ a Rolls-Royce o spolupráci začíná drhnout - Ekonomický deník](#)

20 February – East Anglian Daily Times (EADT): Energy supplier Centrica has announced plans to invest in SZC - but campaigners say the move demonstrates the government's "poor negotiating position". Stop Sizewell C, which is opposed to the power station, said any investors in the project could demand higher rates of return, piling further costs on consumer bills. The government has announced that the power station will be part-funded by adding costs to people's energy bills

[Size of Sizewell stake could be "between 1% and 50%" | East Anglian Daily Times](#)

21 February – FT: French energy group EdeF has not yet found alternative investors for the flagship HPC nuclear project as a freeze in funding from its Chinese partner places an “extra weight” on the debt-laden company. Luc Rémont, chief executive of France’s state-owned electricity company, said it had held talks during 2024 with “lots” of potential funders for HPC, but was not yet able to proceed with any of them. EdeF was continuing to meet the financing costs but was working to find alternative investors for the project with the support of the British government, Rémont said, as the company reported its annual results on Friday. “In the current circumstances, the fact that our partner CGN is not injecting any more capital into HPC is . . . an extra weight for EdeF,” he said, but added that the project remained a potentially profitable investment. His comments raise further questions for the future of HPC, the first new nuclear power station being built in the UK in a generation and a vital part of the government’s plan to decarbonise power supplies. HPC was initially set to cost £18bn and to be completed in 2025, but the estimated cost has since swelled to roughly £46bn in 2024 terms while the start date has been pushed back to 2029 at the earliest, because of construction delays. EdeF is developing the project with Chinese state-owned CGN as a junior investment partner, which agreed to finance 33.5 per cent of the original costs. However, CGN has balked at making further contributions to help meet cost overruns after the UK government in November 2022 bought it out of a sister project, SZC, amid concerns about China’s involvement in critical national infrastructure. Asked on Thursday whether he was also interested in investing in HPC, Centrica’s chief executive Chris O’Shea said: “We clearly like nuclear power. And I am open to any kind of conversation. “My focus at the moment is on hopefully getting to a good place with SZC.”

22 February – BBC: Residents fear being priced out of a Suffolk town due to the construction of a nuclear power plant, with the rent on some family homes doubling to more than £3,000 a month. The development of SZC – which is under way and predicted to conclude by 2031 (sic) – will require a workforce of 7,900 people, with about two thirds moving from outside the area. Some people in Leiston, which is about three miles from SZC, have spoken out about the rise in rents, with one saying "landlords are cashing in". Linda Druce, director and founder of Druce Estate & Letting Agents, said: "I have been in the area for 21 years now and this is the first time we have seen such a significant jump, particularly in rental prices."

[£3,000 rents cause fears for people living near Sizewell - BBC News](#)

23 February – Midsommer Journal: Fears over a construction worker shortage in North Somerset amid new targets for housing. Even if the council finds the land, there may not be enough construction workers in the area to build the 1,593 homes a year needed to hit the target. North Somerset Council’s executive member for spatial planning, councillor Mark Canniford (Weston-super-Mare Hillside, Liberal Democrat), said that the most houses built in the area in a single year had been about 900 in 2018, which he said had been a “booming year.” The major work to build the Gravity “gigafactory” and HPC nearby had put “further pressure” on construction jobs in the South West

[North Somerset faces housing target challenge amid construction worker shortage | mnjournal.co.uk](#)

24 February – Guardian: Sellafield has said nearly £3bn in new funding is “not enough” and bosses are now examining swingeing cuts, prompting fears over jobs and safety at the vast nuclear waste dump. The Cumbrian nuclear site, which is home to the world’s largest store of plutonium, was last week awarded £2.8bn for the next financial year, the bulk of the total of just over £4bn funds allotted to the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority, a taxpayer-owned and funded quango. Sellafield’s chief executive, Euan Hutton, has told staff that the funding was “not enough” to carry out planned works, leaving bosses to make “difficult decisions” over spending

[Sellafield nuclear site plans cuts as chief says £2.8bn funding ‘not enough’ | Nuclear power | The Guardian](#)

25 February – Bridgwater Mercury: Letter by SH’s Jo Smoldon: Hinkley will become the Sellafield of the south

[Letter: Hinkley Point C will be a Sellafield waste dump | Bridgwater Mercury](#)

26 February – FT: EdeF has been urged by campaigners to stick with plans to install underwater loudspeakers to deter fish in the Bristol Channel, as the energy company grapples with delays to construction of its Hinkley Point C

nuclear reactor. The row over the “fish disco” deterrent, as it is known in Whitehall circles, marks the latest salvo in the UK's long-running battle to balance growth with environmental protections. Mark Lloyd, chief executive of The Rivers Trust charity, said France's state-owned energy company should keep its commitment to the acoustic fish deterrent (AFD), as part of HPC

4 March – Bridgwater Mercury: Letter by SH's Roy Pumfrey: Stop government handouts to EdeF for HPC
[Letter: Stop government handouts to EDF for Hinkley Point C | Bridgwater Mercury](#)

4 March – EdeF: An AFD was proposed in HPC's planning consent in 2013. At that time, large scale AFD devices were an emerging technology but since then the project found that the installation and operation of more than 280 underwater speakers in fast-flowing tides and poor visibility posed significant risks for divers. This was not considered acceptable for mitigating the size of the remaining impact on the local fish population and as a result, the project has recently been exploring the creation of new areas of saltmarsh habitat around the Severn as a compensation measure. We recently became aware of a new type of AFD system that could be installed and operated in a way likely to be safe and effective in the waters of the Severn. This innovative solution was not known to us when we launched meetings with communities last year. The different type of technology, pioneered in the South-West, is proven and deployed internationally. This new type of AFD is now the project's preferred solution and we are working with experts to provide the scientific data to underpin the case for using it at HPC

[Fish protection measures | Hinkley Point C | EDF](#)

5 March – Somerset Live: A Somerset community is celebrating after EdeF announced it would withdraw plans to flood over 1,000 acres of land for HPC. The energy company had proposed creating a saltmarsh habitat at one of four sites along the River Severn in Somerset - between Kingston Seymour, Littleton, Arlingham, and Rodley - as compensation for the death of 44 tonnes of fish ingested by the nuclear power plant. However, on 4 March, EdeF revealed it would halt any development of saltmarsh mitigation, opting instead to install an AFD. Claire Stuckey, who led the campaign against the salt marsh, expressed her relief: "This is good news for all four sites and the wider community!" She added: "It's a huge relief and hopefully the new AFD is a workable solution."

[Somerset communities relieved as major project scrapped - Somerset Live](#)

8 March – West Somerset Free Press: An alternative AFD system is being proposed for HPC to end a bitter row over some of the site's environmental measures. The move sees EdeF, which owns the nuclear power site, drop an equally controversial idea to create new salt marshes in the Severn Estuary rather than fit AFDs to the station's water intake turbines. The company had been applying to the Environment Agency (EA) for permission to not fit AFDs due to the high cost and the danger for divers involved in fitting them in the fast-flowing tides and poor visibility of the Bristol Channel. Instead, it proposed the creation of 840 acres of salt marsh as new wildlife habitat to compensate for the estimated 44 million tonnes of fish likely to be killed by the intake turbines. EdeF's Andrew Cockcroft said all salt marsh design and development would be paused while work continued in 2025 to prove the effectiveness of the new AFD system.

The new AFDs are already used in fishing fleets around the world, with the technology using electronic transducers to target specific fish species with high-frequency sound. Mr Cockcroft said HPC would be the first nuclear power station on the Severn to have fish protection built into its design with specially designed low velocity cooling water intake heads and a fish return system. The AFDs would be a third measure and at the time (of the DCO Application) were an emerging technology and would have required more than 280 underwater speakers to be installed. Mr Cockcroft said it was not considered acceptable to risk divers' lives to mitigate the remaining impact on the local fish population. He said planned consultation on salt marsh creation was now being cancelled and would hopefully not be required.

However, he also said: "Until the scientific work on the acoustic fish deterrent is complete, we are not yet able to rule out the need for salt marsh creation in the future." Mr Cockcroft said finding an 'enduring solution' to meet complex environmental regulations had not been a quick or straightforward process and he accepted the continuing uncertainty had caused 'worry and frustration' for some people. He said community concerns were well understood by EdeF and had informed the company's thinking since meetings had been held with groups last year.