



Newsround

March 2026

10 February – BBC: Testing of a £50m Acoustic fish Deterrent (AFD) designed to stop fish being sucked into the cooling pipes of Hinkley Point C (HPC) has gone "really well". Engineers said the trial by Swansea University was "highly effective". Dubbed the underwater fish disco, for six months a network of speakers have played sounds that deter fish in the Severn Estuary from swimming close to the plant's pipes. The success of the test means project leaders are considering scrapping plans to flood 900 acres (364 hectares) of farmland in Gloucestershire, which was initially proposed to provide a compensating habitat for fish

[How Hinkley Point C's £50m 'fish disco' could save farmland - BBC News](#)

10 February – Wildlife Trusts: EDF's press release (PR) misrepresents the cost of its AFD and the impact that HPC will have on wildlife. It comes as England's leading nature groups and over 60 MPs publish a letter calling on the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ), Ed Milliband, to reject the three recommendations of the Nuclear Regulatory Review (Fingleton) which threaten to undermine protections for nature. Matt Browne, head of public affairs at The Wildlife Trusts, says: "The developers of HPC continue to misrepresent the impact that the nuclear plant will have on nature. The PR claims that a number of plant safety measures are fish protection measures. This is highly misleading and allows EDF to pretend that £700 million is being spent to protect nature, when the real figure is closer to £50m. It also misrepresents the number of fish affected by the proposed plant - they spotlight the suggestion that just two salmon will be killed per year when Environment Agency (EA) experts warn that 4.6 million fish will die every year – including critically endangered species such as European eel.

[EDF makes distorted claims about Hinkley C fish deterrent | The Wildlife Trusts](#)

10 February – Times: DESNZ, run by Ed Miliband, has admitted that it cannot name a single national park where regulations are holding up nuclear projects, despite a review urging that protections for the landscapes be reduced. The recommendation also relied on a blogpost written by a member of the reviewing panel, it has emerged.

11 February – Northern Echo: Plans for a new nuclear project powering factories and AI data centres could create 2,500 jobs in the North East, it has been revealed. The proposals involve building 12 advanced modular reactors (AMRs) in Hartlepool through a commercial partnership between US nuclear firm X-Energy and British energy giant Centrica.

[Nuclear reactor plans in Hartlepool could help create 2,500 jobs | The Northern Echo](#)

12 February – Renergie: Steve Thomas: Since the Starmer government came to power in 2024, it has made a series of announcements that have placed the UK at the forefront of the so-called Nuclear Renaissance. The government talks about a "Golden Age of Nuclear Power" in the country. However, a closer look shows that these announcements primarily concern what the government hopes to do and what it hopes to achieve, in the absence of new projects in the pipeline.

[UK sta al passo con la rinascita nucleare?](#)

14 February – Telegraph: Chancellor Rachel Reeves is this month expected to back controversial changes to nature laws meant to speed up the construction of nuclear power plants. Ms Reeves will pursue the reforms despite warnings that they risk putting Britain in breach of the post-Brexit trade deal. A leading British lawyer said the proposals would almost certainly fall foul of the UK-EU trade agreement in their current guise.

17 February – ONR: Following a pre-trial review hearing held today at Bristol Crown Court, a trial date has been set in the prosecution of two companies charged with health and safety offences at HPC. Two further charges were added to the indictment at today's court hearing, bringing the total of charges to four. The organisations face a charge of failing to plan, manage and monitor construction work without risks to health and safety. An additional charge that Laing O'Rourke Delivery Limited and Bouygues Travaux Publics SAS both failed to conduct a suitable and sufficient risk assessment of the risks to the health and safety of their employees has now also been added. Both organisations have pleaded not guilty to these charges.

[New charges added in rebar mesh wall incident at Hinkley Point C | Office for Nuclear Regulation](#)

18 February – Bridgwater Mercury: EDF has abandoned its plans to build a 1,000-bed campus for HPC workers near the M5 in Bridgwater. The construction workforce at HPC is expected to reach its peak in the coming months, with up to 15,000 people expected to be working on the build between 2026 and 2028. NNB Generation Company (HPC) Ltd. teased plans in late-July 2025 to create a huge new campus not far from junction 24 of the M5 - within walking distance of the motorway services which Welcome Break intends to deliver. These initial plans (known as a screening request) cleared the first hurdle in mid-August 2025, with Somerset Council ruling the proposed development would not lead to any substantial environmental damage. But the plans have now been withdrawn, with EDF saying the facility is "no longer required" due to the required workforce being "lower than earlier projections".

[EDF scraps plans for 1,000-bed Hinkley Point campus near M5 | Bridgwater Mercury](#)

19 February – Telegraph: Centrica (British Gas) is 'increasingly confident' that its plans to keep ageing fleet operational will get the go-ahead. Along with France's EDF, the energy giant is a shareholder in all five of Britain's remaining nuclear sites. Of these, four advanced gas-cooled reactor (AGR) sites are currently scheduled to shut between 2028 and 2030 - Hartlepool, Heysham One, Heysham Two and Torness - while the fifth plant, Sizewell B, is expected to be extended into the 2050s. However, the Government warned last month that the AGR closures risked leaving "a dangerous gap in Britain's low-carbon energy supply" because they would happen before new plants came online. It said it supported safely extending them if possible. Extensions for Hartlepool and Heysham One could be announced later this year. EDF confirmed last month it had "an ambition to generate low carbon electricity from all four generating AGR stations for as long as it is safe and commercially viable to do so".

20 February – Times The cost of HPC has ballooned to nearly £50 billion and the date when it is expected to be in service has been put back again to 2030. It does not augur well either for a second major new nuclear power station, Sizewell C (SZC) in Suffolk, which is in the early stages of construction. The news was revealed in statements in Paris on Friday by EDF, the state-owned French energy company contracted to build HPC and SZC. The company estimated that the cost of HPC was now £35 billion at 2015 prices. Adjusted for inflation, that translates to up to £49 billion. The original projected cost was £15 billion. The plant is already years late, as it was originally expected to go into commission in the mid-2020s. Some argue that the date could yet be pushed back into the 2030s, leaving a significant gap in UK energy policy after coal-fired power stations were closed, leaving the country increasingly dependent on giant wind farms in the North Sea. Consumer energy bills are at historically high levels.

22 February – The Observer: Delays and costs shouldn't dent faith in UK's nuclear plans, says ex-BEIS EDF UK chair Sir Alex Chisholm. In the 2030s, Hinkley's two reactors are due to finally start producing energy to power about 6m homes. The project's rocky road provides many salutary lessons, says Chisholm.

[Delays and costs shouldn't dent faith in UK's nuclear pla...](#)

23 February – TASC: Together Against Sizewell C Ltd (TASC) is extremely disappointed to learn that our appeal against the Secretary of State, Ed Miliband's, decision not to subject SZC's secret sea defences to public scrutiny and assessment has been refused.

[Appeal court refuses TASC's appeal against the High Court's Sizewell C JR application decision 23.02.26 – TASC – Together Against Sizewell C](#)

24 February – FT: More than 27 metres of cliff has been lost over a year in an area just 2km from SZC. Swaths of the eastern UK coastline are eroding faster than expected, forcing the demolition of homes and putting the spotlight on the risks surrounding a £40bn nuclear power plant being built at Sizewell. The coast around Norfolk and Suffolk is one of the fastest eroding in Europe but the disintegration has intensified in several parts in recent months

25 February – Telegraph: Electricity generated by SZC will cost roughly double the normal price of power, according to a new Government report. Estimates suggest that the power SZC produces will cost £120 per megawatt hour (MWh) in today's prices, compared with the current wholesale price of about £60 to £70. The extra costs will be added to energy bills. The disclosure was made in a review of the business case for SZC published by DESNZ. It is understood to be the first time SZC's power output has been costed

25 February – STV: ONR issued an improvement notice to EDF following the incident at its Hunterston B site near West Kilbride. In November, workers failed to ensure that the electrical cabling was “deployed safely” while undertaking work on the cooling water valves in one of the facilities on the site. ONR said that although no injuries were sustained, the incident presented a “significant potential risk to worker safety”.

[Hunterston nuclear station workers 'failed to ensure safety' after electrical cabling incident | STV News](#)

26 February – North Wales Live: Wylfa on Anglesey has already been selected by the UK Government to host three Rolls-Royce SMRs in what will be the first SMR nuclear plant in the UK. Rolls Royce is also to develop a heavy pressure vessels factory that will produce components for a fleet of SMRs - including at Wylfa. There are three sites shortlisted - in Sunderland, Teesside and the Gateway site on Deeside.

[North Wales nuclear factory proposal being prepared by Welsh Government | North Wales Live](#)

26 February – Wall Street Journal: “We are now entering a new phase in the golden age of nuclear,” declared Michael Shanks, a U.K. energy minister, as he recently talked up the country's plans to attract private investment in new reactors. His parade was swiftly dampened. Last week, Britain's first new nuclear plant in three decades cemented its status as the most expensive on record anywhere. The risk is that the U.K.'s contribution to the golden age is a cautionary tale about the cost of these megaprojects as the U.S. advances its own nuclear buildout. The best-case startup date for HPC was pushed back a year to 2030, compared with a target of 2025 when the project was approved in 2016. The price tag for the 3.2 gigawatt, two-reactor facility now stands at £49 billion in today's prices, or roughly \$66 billion. The 2016 estimate was £18 billion (in 2015 prices). Even Georgia's Vogtle plant—\$16 billion over budget, seven years late, responsible for a major bankruptcy—cost less, according to the International Energy Agency.

[How to Build the World's Most Expensive Nuclear Power Plant - WSJ](#)

4 March – FT: Letter Nicholas Malins-Smith: : The comment by Sir David King, the former chief scientific adviser, about how the eastern side of Britain is “tilting into the sea”, particularly around Norfolk and Suffolk, is the result of more than just aggressive coastal erosion caused by climate change (“Residents lambast ‘nuts’ location of Sizewell C as coastal erosion gains pace”, Report, February 24). Britain is still experiencing land mass movement where the north and western parts are slowly rising, while the south and eastern parts are sinking. This phenomenon is a very gradual geological process known as “glacial isostatic adjustment” (GIA). During the last ice age, the weight of massive ice sheets pressed down on Scotland and northern Britain, forcing the land to subside. Meanwhile, the southern part of Britain acted as a counterweight and was raised slightly. The melting of the ice sheets resulted in the land that was pressed down to begin slowly rising, causing a “see-saw” effect that lowers the south by an approximate equal amount. The “tilting” effect of GIA has been going on quite independently of more recent concerns about sea-level rise caused by climate change, although the combination exacerbates the likely impact on certain coastal areas. The Suffolk shoreline has long known about the effects of coastal erosion. Most of the original town of Dunwich was lost to the sea in storms a very long time ago. The little that is left of Dunwich is about 3.5 miles north of where SZC will be built.

5 March – Plymouth Herald: Plymouth’s Devonport Dockyard has been taken out of special measures after proving its nuclear submarine work is safe. The facility had been in “enhanced regulatory attention” since 2014 due to safety issues linked to ageing facilities, organisational capability and control of work. But now the ONR watchdog has said that Devonport Royal Dockyard Ltd (DRDL) has returned to “routine regulatory attention” following safety improvements.

[Nuclear watchdog takes Devonport Dockyard off special measures | Plymouth Live](#)

7 March – Guardian: A Japanese ‘conman’ tried to sell an undercover Drug Enforcement Administration agent nuclear materials - but how did he get them? Takeshi Ebisawa, sentenced to 20 years in prison last week, believed he was selling weapons-grade plutonium to Iran. In court last week, Ebisawa, 62, pleaded guilty to six counts of conspiracy to traffic nuclear materials, including uranium and weapons-grade plutonium, from Myanmar to other countries, as well as his participation in international narcotics trafficking, weapons and money laundering.

[A Japanese ‘conman’ tried to sell an undercover DEA agent nuclear materials – but how did he get them? | US crime | The Guardian](#)

8 March – Telegraph: Research from the Adam Smith Institute (ASI) has found that nearly two dozen new nuclear reactors proposed by successive UK governments since the 1980s have floundered - leaving the nation increasingly reliant on gas. During the period, the UK proposed 21 plants but only one - Sizewell B – was constructed. In contrast, France has commissioned more than 45 nuclear reactors during the same time, which now provide up to 70pc of its power. The ASI found that France's success in building nuclear power stations was a key reason for French consumers facing lower bills 40% cheaper than in the UK.

Roy Pumfrey for Stop Hinkley March 2026