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Websites / partner links:

NFLA: <http://www.nuclearpolicy.info>
(Also links to Facebook & Twitter)

CNFE: <http://www.cnfe.eu>

Mayors for Peace globally and in Europe:

<http://www.mayorsforpeace.org>

<http://www.mayorsforpeace.eu>

KIMO: <http://www.kimointernational.org>

ICAN: <http://www.icanw.org>

ICAN UK: <http://www.ican-uk.org>

One month on and Johnson's nuclear ambitions suffer funding set-backs

Although Boris Johnson claims that 'nuclear is going to happen' and promises 'one new nuclear plant every year', the reality is that delivering nuclear is always slow, costly and complicated.

Only one month after the government announced their ambition to build up to eight new nuclear plants, generating 25% of Britain's electricity needs by 2050, the nuclear wheels are beginning to fall off.

Sizewell C: Locals and twitchers up in arms and on the march

In a brilliant coup, local activists from Stop Sizewell C and Together against Sizewell C descended on London to lobby the Aviva AGM to urge the insurer not to provide financial backing for the project.

The two groups also hosted a 2 mile march from Leiston which ended with a rally on the beach at Sizewell overlooking the plant.

In the latest setback, French-owned nuclear power operator, EDF Energy, has announced that Hinkley Point C will now cost £3 billion more and take one year longer to build, and possibly even longer.

The latest inflated cost estimate for building the plant is now £25-26 billion and the earliest the plant will become operational will be July 2027, a full ten years behind schedule.

These activities were heavily, and generally favourably, reported in the media.

The NFLA supported these actions by sending a letter of solidarity which was read at the rally and gave the marchers good heart as they knew they are not alone.

We also wrote to the Chair and Chief Executive of Aviva asking them to back renewables instead of nuclear.



Marchers opposed to Sizewell C (left) and the NFLA letter of support being read to the crowd at the rally (right), Sizewell B behind. Images: Stop Sizewell C

Ministers have been scrabbling around for new foreign investors as the government's decision to exclude the Chinese from British nuclear projects means that both Sizewell C and Bradford may be in jeopardy. Greenwich University estimates Sizewell C may actually cost £35b.

Without the Chinese investment there remains a big funding shortfall.

NFLA Steering Committee Chair Cllr David Blackburn said in his letter to marchers that they were in the right, and that the NFLA was with them.

The RSPB has also just staged a protest opposing Sizewell C outside the Business Department, supported by the actor Samuel West. Minsmere bird reserve is threatened by the plans.

NFLA media releases, May 2022:

(On NFLA website)

- A further £10.7 billion from taxpayers for decommissioning; NFLA believes that green investments could fund the work – 25 May
- £3 billion more, 1 year longer: Latest price hike and further delay at Hinkley Point C – 20 May
- NFLA Chair to join speakers line up to promote Vienna disarmament conference – 18 May
- NFLA seek assurance that UK reactors are Russian uranium free – 17 May
- Stand firm against demands to extend reactor life: anti-nuclear activists' plea to regulator – 13 May
- Proud to Stand with Suffolk against Sizewell C: NFLAs back Sunday's march and rally – 12 May
- Time to 'do a whole lot of good for our planet': NFLA call on Aviva to invest in renewables, not Sizewell C – 11 May
- NFLA registers formal protest at Secretary of State's Sizewell misconduct - 4 May

NFLA Briefings, May 2022 (on website)

Briefings no 234, 235, and 236.

Sizewell C: NFLA registers protest at Minister's misconduct.

The NFLA has written to the most senior civil servant in the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, Permanent Secretary Sarah Munby, to protest about the misconduct of the Secretary of State, Kwasi Kwarteng MP over Sizewell C.

The Minister has repeatedly and publicly pledged government backing for the project, despite official consent for

the development not having yet being granted.

This is contrary to the Ministerial code which urges office holders not to make public statements that could be seen as prejudicial, prior to a formal decision being announced.

NFLA Chair, Councillor David Blackburn said: "*As a local elected member carrying out a planning function in a local authority, I should expect to be*

subject to censure and sanction if I behaved in such a prejudicial matter over even the most minor planning matter".

"Surely then a Minister dealing with a matter of such national importance must be held to a higher standard?"

Subsequently the department announced that decision day has been put back by six weeks to 8 July; interestingly the news being announced by another Minister.

Seismic testing plan could endanger Irish Sea life

Nuclear Waste Services, part of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority responsible for finding a site for the Geological Disposal Facility, has recently announced that Shearwater GeoTech, a specialist survey company which works for the oil and gas industry, will be carrying out seismic testing in the Irish Sea in the summer.

NWS is authorised to dump nuclear waste underground up to 22 kms from the shoreline. Three coastal search areas in West and South Cumbria are under consideration.

Seismic testing involves sending blasts of sound from air guns every ten seconds for four weeks or more through the ocean. The sound penetrates deep under the ocean floor to relay information about the geology.

Many scientists believe that these sounds also harm aquatic creatures, such as whales and dolphins, and can even kill them.

The NFLA is working with Lakes against the Nuclear Dump on this issue.

There is a petition at <https://www.change.org/p/save-the-whale-and-the-snail-stop-nuclear-waste-services-blasting-the-irish-sea> which shall be presented on World Ocean Day (9 June).

Stand firm AGR plea to Chief Nuclear Inspector

With the Business Secretary rumoured to be pressing EDF Energy to seek an extension in operations at Hinkley Point B and at the other AGR sites, the NFLA with other

anti-nuclear activists, wrote to the Chief Nuclear Inspector at the Office of Nuclear Regulation asking him to 'stand firm' in keeping to the closure programme. Hinkley Point

B is due to close in July 2022 and the final AGR in 2028. The graphite cores that moderate the nuclear reactors are now cracking. The NFLA is seeking a meeting to discuss the AGR closure programme.

Our thanks to outgoing members

The NFLA wishes to record its thanks to all outgoing Councillors who have served on our Steering Committee.

We particularly want to acknowledge the past commitment of:

Councillor Ernie Galsworthy, our outgoing Welsh Chair, who also formerly served as Chair of the Steering Committee during a period of ill-health, and

Former Councillor Sean Chaytor, who served as English Vice-Chair and NFLA Vice Chair on Nuleaf (the LGA Nuclear Legacy Advisory Forum).

Our very best wishes to you both for the future.

All former members are warmly invited to remain involved with our work as individual members.

Forthcoming webinars for NFLA members

CND Webinar: Nuclear Power: Insecure, Unsafe, Unsustainable

Organised by CND's trade union advisory group.

6 June, 7 PM (UK time)

<https://cnduk.org/events/nuclear-power-insecure-unsafe-unsustainable/>

International Uranium Film Festival (online)

May 19 to May 29

<https://uraniumfilmfestival.org/>

NFLA wants decommissioning costs met by green investment

The Nuclear Liabilities Fund was established by the Government in March 1996 to 'ensure that future generations are not burdened by (nuclear) decommissioning costs'.

Present day taxpayers are though becoming increasingly burdened as the investment income raised by the Fund fails to keep pace with ever-increasing expenditure, with a hit to the public

purse of £10.68 billion paid into the fund over the last two years.

The NFLA would like to see the Nuclear Trust, which manages the fund, being given more latitude to invest in green energy projects.

NFLA Chair Councillor David Blackburn, explained why the NFLA is backing more freedom being granted to the Trust over investment decisions:

"Recent history has proven that their investments in projects of social value have yielded far better returns than those obtained through the miserly interest rates secured from investing with the National Loans Fund."

"The Trust has recently become committed to sustainable investment and it would be wonderfully ironic if profits made from green energy could fund the shutdown of Britain's toxic and outdated nuclear reactors."

NFLA Chair speaks at prestigious peace conference

NFLA Chair Councillor David Blackburn was honoured to be asked to speak on a webinar hosted by the Mayors for Peace European Chapter on 25 May.

The webinar examined how local Councils across Europe can influence their national governments to sign the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and achieve multi-lateral nuclear disarmament.

The NFLA is a member of ICAN, the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons.

David was joined on the platform by H.E. Ambassador Alexander Kmentt of Austria, who will chair the first meeting of the 61 states parties to the Treaty in Vienna next month, and Beatrice Finn, Executive Director of ICAN and winner of the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize for her work. Several European Mayors also spoke.

Cllr Blackburn outlined how the NFLA continues to oppose nuclear weapons convoys in the UK; are passing resolutions in member councils calling on the UK Government to sign the Treaty; and work to highlight the injustice shown to British nuclear test veterans and their families, who are still without any recognition and compensation from the UK Government 70 years after the first atom bomb test.

Threat of nuclear waste incinerator looms over Preston

In March, Westinghouse which operates the Springfield's Nuclear Fuels Limited plant just outside of Preston, announced a partnership with US firm Perma-fix to develop a nuclear waste incinerator. This facility would receive intermediate and low-level waste sourced from the UK and Europe. Perma-fix operate a similar facility at Hanford in the United States which has been criticised for its poor safety record. The NFLA and Radiation Free Lakeland have raised concerns in letters to local Planning Authorities and the National Planning Inspectorate. We shall be keeping a close eye on developments.