



Newsletter

June 1994

NUCLEAR REVIEW DETAILS AND TIMETABLE ANNOUNCED

The government has finally announced further details and a timetable for its long-awaited Nuclear Review, which could help decide the fate of the UK nuclear industry.

Nuclear Electric and other nuclear companies have already been asked to produce papers outlining their commercial justification for wanting to build more power stations. These should be published soon. Submissions from other interested parties, either criticising NE's case or making fresh points, then have to be made to the Department of Trade and Industry by the end of September.

Issues to be considered by the review, which will be conducted largely in private by DTI civil servants, are:

- The potential for commercially viable nuclear power, especially the possibility of private finance.
- The potential for complete privatisation of the nuclear industry.
- The management of nuclear waste and decommissioning liabilities.
- The future of the "fossil fuel levy", which is the source of NE's present 10% subsidy on its electricity sold to the grid.
- Whether nuclear power offers any benefits or disadvantages for the environment, for diversity of fuel supply, and for security of fuel supplies.

Although the government says that "all substantive submissions" to

the review will be made publicly available, this excludes "commercially confidential" information, internal papers and reports, and advice from external advisers.

In a separate announcement, the Department of the Environment said it would be conducting a parallel investigation into the management of radioactive waste. This will look at government policy on nuclear waste, disposal options and the protection of human health and the environment. A "consultation document" will be published later in the summer. It is unclear how the two reviews will mesh together.

National environmental groups have already criticised the way in which one of the major issues of public concern about nuclear power - what to do with the waste - has been divorced from consideration of whether the industry should be allowed to expand. Friends of the Earth's Simon Roberts asked rhetorically: "How can an industry with a liability like nuclear waste round its neck be expected to be bankrolled by the City?"

SHE will now be preparing its own submission to the review in consultation with other anti-nuclear and environmental groups.



NUCLEAR NEWS

HINKLEY A TO RUN FOR 40 YEARS?

Nuclear Electric has reaffirmed that it would like to keep running the aged Hinkley A power station for up to 40 years. This followed a report from the Health and Safety Executive about refurbishment work at all of Britain's 11 Magnox reactor sites.

Three Magnoxes have already closed - at Hunterston in Scotland, Trawsfynydd in Wales and Berkeley in Gloucestershire. £100 million has been spent on modifications to deal with problems common to all Magnoxes, including the metal fatigue which forced the closure of Trawsfynydd.

Hinkley A was opened in 1965 and originally expected to operate for a maximum of 25 years. Given the dangers of continuing to run a power station that would never be licensed today, its electricity output is tiny. There is also nothing in the HSE report which gives the green light for its operation for 40 years - or any particular time period - and it will still be subject to regular HSE reviews.

ROAD TO NOWHERE?

Nuclear Electric is reported to have started preliminary work on building a road near the village of Comwich which could be used to bring in large parts for a Hinkley C power station.

The road would take traffic from the NE-owned wharf on the River Parrett estuary to the main road from Cannington to Hinkley Point. Under plans discussed at the time of the 1988-89 Hinkley C Public Inquiry, the wharf would be used to ship in large reactor parts from France, such as the giant steel pressure vessel.

After complaints that it was too dangerous to use the narrow village high street, the agreed

route now skirts round the edge of Comwich, passing through open fields. The land has been bought up by the company.

If Nuclear Electric is seriously intending to build this road, it will almost certainly be doing so in order to avoid having to apply for a renewal of the planning permission, which expires in July. Given that they don't yet have agreement to build Hinkley C, it could turn out to be an expensive road to nowhere.

NO NUCLEAR COMPROMISE!

Former Greenpeace worker Simon Boxer has helped set up "No Nuclear Compromise!" - a new network committed to peaceful direct action against the nuclear industry. The group hopes to build on the success of actions in the aftermath of the government's decision to allow THORP to go ahead, and to galvanise the current militancy over issues like new major roads.

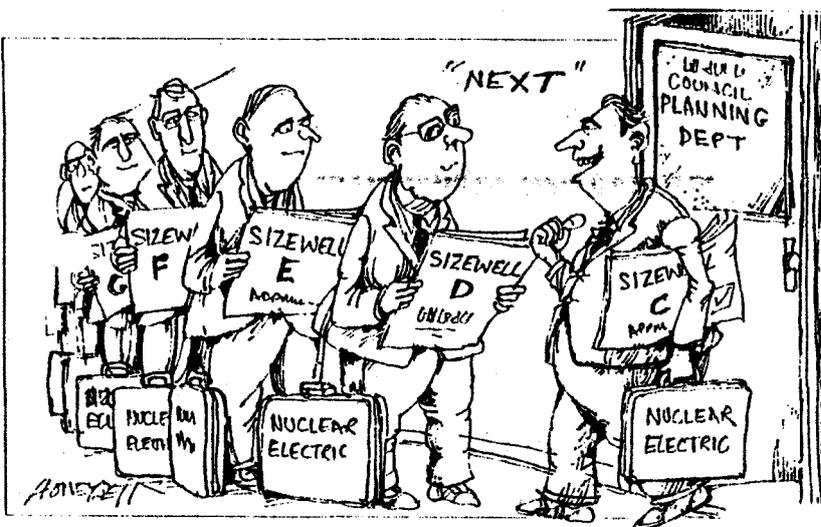
Further actions are planned at Sizewell, and at Sellafield on June 18-20 at the end of a "March Macabre" from London. Further details from No Nuclear Compromise, 2 St. Lloyes Terrace, Exeter EX2 5DD (0392 496303).

SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL OPPOSES NEW SIZEWELL C STATION

Suffolk County Council has registered a lengthy and detailed objection to the Nuclear Electric plan for a third power station on the Sizewell site. This would be an even larger "twin" Pressurised Water Reactor.

The move could substantially hold up NE's plans for the site, even if it gets government go-ahead to raise the funds following the Nuclear Review. If a local authority objects, there has to be a public enquiry by law, although its terms of reference could be dictated by the government.

The potential delay to Sizewell C has rekindled speculation that Hinkley C could be pushed back to the top of Nuclear Electric's priority site list. The argument for switching to Hinkley C is not just that there is already planning permission, but because it might be possible to maintain some of the Sizewell B workforce - now in danger of being dispersed when that project ends.



DUNGENESS ACTION SOCIETY OF HASTINGS

SHE NEWS

SHE VISIT TO YEOVIL ECO-HOUSE

The visit organised by SHE to the Yeovil "Ecohouse", held just before the AGM on April 13th, was a great success. Many supporters and friends attended, and were given ideas to make their own homes more energy efficient.

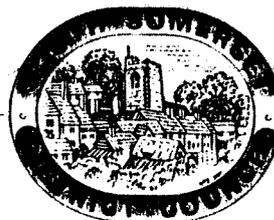
One major innovation in the house was a heat exchanger, installed in the loft, which ducted warm damp air from the so-called "damp" rooms (kitchen and bathroom). This was then used to heat fresh air from outside which was piped to the "dry" rooms (living and bedrooms). As stale damp air is taken away and there is a constant supply of fresh, filtered air coming into the house, it is not necessary to open windows and allow heat to escape.

Even the house plants had a part to play, as they help in filtering air and removing pollution.

Different types of plants work on different pollutants. Formaldehyde, for example, is absorbed by Spider plants, Sweet heart plants and Mother-in-law's tongue. Benzene (from tobacco smoke) is absorbed by English ivy and Peace Lily, Trichloroethane (from solvents) by Chrysanthemums, and Ammonia by Yucca plants.

There were other modifications you would expect to find, such as double glazing and low energy light bulbs. A small display unit showed how much less power was used by a low energy bulb. The hot water and heating was provided by a condensing gas boiler, and the kitchen appliances were all energy efficient. The whole house had been thoroughly insulated and gaps sealed to prevent draughts. Even the door bell was solar powered to save energy.

There were bags to sort kitchen waste for recycling and three types of compost bins were demonstrated in the garden. Of these, the "wormery" uses tiger worms to eat vegetable based kitchen waste, whilst the "green cone" bin is suitable for all types of kitchen and garden waste, and will turn it into compost using heat from decomposition. There was also a more conventional compost bin.



Unfortunately, the house, which is on a typical post-war housing estate of semi-detached houses, was only open to the public for a limited time, and will now be occupied. The plan is to monitor the long-term advantage of the project with the aim of introducing some, or all, of the modifications to the local council's housing stock.

Valerie Davey

HINKLEY INCIDENT LIST

SHE now has a reasonably up to date list of incidents which have occurred at both Hinkley A and B stations since 1977. This is based on official records from the Health and Safety Executive, the power station's own fortnightly newsletter and other sources. If any member would like a copy, please write in.

SAFE ENERGY NEWSDON'T LET THEM BLOW
WIND ENERGY AWAY!

Former SHE Coordinator Danielle Grunberg is launching a new campaign with the British Wind Energy Association to bolster the tarnished image of renewable energy.

The BWEA is compiling a list of people interested in supporting the development of wind power in Britain. The aim is to build up a core of supporters prepared to defend the advantages of the technology against the current backlash.

There are now over 20 wind farms operating around Britain, producing power for the homes of over 200,000 people. But despite their acceptance by many people who live nearby, there is now a wave of near-hysteria surrounding some of the newest planning applications for sites. On the back of fears that a favourite local view will be spoiled has been built a mass of misconception and distortion.

Wind energy enthusiasts are now being asked to write to their local newspapers, local authorities and MPs putting the record straight. The aim is to support the message that using the wind to generate electricity is clean, economic and will avoid the production of large amounts of carbon dioxide by conventional power generation. It is particularly important to respond

to the flood of negative letters now appearing in local papers around the country.

The BWEA has produced a briefing paper covering the questions most often asked in criticism of wind energy. For more information, please write to the British Wind Energy Association, 42 Kingsway, London WC2B 6FX (071 404 3433)

GLASTONBURY FESTIVAL, held each year at Pilton in Somerset, will have a new landmark this year to match the famous pyramid stage on which some of the world's top musicians perform. A 100 foot high wind turbine will be erected near the stage as a symbol of the benign qualities of renewable energy.

The turbine is being specially brought over from Denmark. If the wind blows, it will contribute to the electricity to the stage. It will also be linked to an exhibition by Greenpeace about the best ways to combat global warming. Wind energy is high on the shortlist.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- June 25- 10th National Conference
26 on Low Level Radiation & Health, Glasgow. Any SHE member interested in attending for SHE (expenses paid), please contact SHE asap.
- June 25- Manchester International
July 3 Peace Festival, with rallies, concerts, women's events, talks etc. Details from Nuclear Policy Unit (061 234 3325).
- July 11 SHE Committee Meeting, 54 South Lane, Nether Stowey, 7.30pm. Call 0278 732681 for directions.

SHE, Hockpitt Farm, Nether Stowey, Bridgwater, Somerset TA5 1EX.
0278 732921 (Crispin Aubrey)
Membership 0460 240241 (Val Davey)

STOP HINKLEY EXPANSION**ANNUAL REPORT****1993****Annual General Meeting**

The AGM was held at the Somerset Inn, Yeovil on April 13th 1994 (delayed so that it could coincide with a visit to an energy-saving show house). Fifteen supporters were present. Reports were presented by the Supporters Secretary, the Press Officer and the Treasurer. Extracts are printed below. Full copies of the originals are available from SHE on request.

Officers elected for 1994 were: Supporters Secretary: Valerie Davey; Treasurer: Judith Campbell; Press Officer: Crispin Aubrey. It was agreed to continue the policy of not appointing a Coordinator until it was clear whether or not the Hinkley C plan would achieve a higher profile. Discussion included the prospects for Hinkley C and the issue of public consultation over decommissioning plans.

Supporters Secretary's Report

We started 1993 with 400 supporters, including a number who pay by monthly standing order. The average monthly standing order receipt was £486, which is 18% down on 1992. During the year, 51 subscribers did not renew, and 12 standing orders stopped coming through. We also had one new subscriber. This meant that 16% dropped out, which I feel is not bad considering the fact that opposition to Hinkley Point is not currently a high profile issue.

Although not all the 1994 renewals have come through yet, it looks as though this year will be about the same, and I am glad to say that more supporters are taking up the standing order option. I am sure that our supporters value the bi-monthly newsletter, which keeps them up to date.

We did start the year with a database problem, which caused a few hiccups, and I do apologise to supporters who experienced problems as a result. One major difficulty was to match the standing orders with the correct donor. These have all been sorted now, except for one donor whom I have been unable to identify.

Valerie Davey

Press Officer's Report

The main issue underlying the year's activities has continued to be the potential effect of the government's promised Nuclear Review on the prospects for building Hinkley C. Nuclear Electric still has a planning permission lasting until 1997, but no financial approval to raise the estimated £2 billion it would cost. The review is supposed to settle this issue, possibly by deciding that NE must raise the finance in the private sector rather than from the public purse. Meanwhile, the company has indicated that its preferred next site for a power station would be at Sizewell in Suffolk.

In the event, the review was first "brought forward" to 1993 and then delayed by a number of factors, including the start-up of the THORP plant at Sellafield. Jane Roberts, a former SHE membership secretary and now a lecturer at Cheltenham and Gloucester College, has agreed to prepare a submission for SHE.

Lengthy SHE objections were submitted to both THORP and the proposed Sizewell C. Members were also encouraged to protest. The THORP issue generated one of the biggest protests at any British nuclear plan, but unfortunately the plant was still given the go-ahead by the government.

Press interest was aroused during the year by a number of local events, including a "reprieve" for Hinkley A, allowing it to continue operating, concern about long-term storage of nuclear waste at Hinkley Point, the decision by Somerset Trust for Nature Conservation to take funding from nuclear Electric, and blockading of the power station in protest at the THORP go-ahead.

A new SHE information leaflet was produced, aimed at people coming fresh to the issue. Copies were sent to all members as well as to every school in Somerset. Routine enquiries throughout the year to the SHE office come from both the media and from members, and include people concerned about whether they should move house close to Hinkley Point.

A number of talks have been given to school classes during the year about the disadvantages of nuclear power and the advantages of other methods of producing energy. SHE mounted displays in Yeovil town centre and at the Cannington Agricultural College Open Day.

A visit was organised in September to see Britain's first wind farm, at Delabole in Cornwall. This was extremely successful, and managed to take in another nearby wind farm with a different design of turbine.

SHE has been represented at the bi-monthly meetings of anti-nuclear groups in Manchester (to discuss the nuclear review and related issues) and also at the decommissioning strategy meeting in Cardiff.

Crispin Aubrey

Treasurer's Report

Income from membership fees, standing orders and donations came to £7966, compared with £10310 in 1992, a fall of about 22%. However, against this drop in income, administration costs were cut by nearly £3000.

The committee decided last year to close the Ideal Energy Exhibition, which was sold for £1500, and the balance of £3959 in the IEE bank account transferred to SHE. The Land Rover used for towing the exhibition was sold for £1800. This capital raised from the IEE, together with the reduction in admin costs, meant that we ended the year with £15034 in the bank account.

Judith Campbell

SHE Income and Expenditure Account 1993

<u>Income</u>	£	<u>Expenditure</u>	£
Membership	1479.00	Fees	1795.75
Donations	652.06	Post and stationery	368.67
Standing Orders	5835.00	Phone and fax	153.24
Misc. income	151.03	Travel	257.00
From IEE	3952.42	Book-keeping	506.75
Land Rover	1800.00	Auditor	265.00
Delabole trip	125.00	Photocopier	1003.84
Bank interest	206.75	Newsletter	474.95
	<u>14201.26</u>	Leaflets	417.92
		Subscriptions	31.00
		Miscellaneous	69.70
		Loan to IEE	21.25
		Delabole trip	209.37
			<u>5574.44</u>

Balance at bank 31.12.93 - £15034.56