



*Nuclear Free Local Authorities Steering Committee*

# information

**NFLA Media release - for immediate release, 25<sup>th</sup> November 2014**

## **NFLA holds its Annual Policy Seminar in Edinburgh considering the major nuclear policy trends for 2015 and the ongoing impact of the Fukushima disaster**

The Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NFLA) Steering Committee holds its 2014 Annual General Meeting and Annual Policy Seminar, in its 34<sup>th</sup> year of operation, in Edinburgh City Chambers. (1)

The Annual Policy Seminar brings together three expert speakers that will consider what are the likely directions of the debate on nuclear weapons, nuclear power and alternatives to nuclear energy in the UK and Ireland in 2015 – a pivotal year with the UK General Election, potential radical political change in Ireland, the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty Review Conference, the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombings and the Paris International Climate Change Conference.

The seminar will also consider the current situation around Fukushima amidst ongoing concerns that fundamental problems remain in the remediation of the stricken site, and many of the most pressing issues are still to be dealt with. The human cost of the Fukushima disaster will also be highlighted.

The speakers include:

- Kate Hudson, General Secretary of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND).
- Pete Roche, NFLA Scotland Policy Advisor.
- Rob Edwards, Sunday Herald Environment Editor.

Kate Hudson will talk about the current state of play with the Trident debate and prospects for the replacement of Trident submarines to be scrapped. She will also outline the recent 'Rethink Trident' initiative, a statement signed by a number of disarmament organisations, Parliamentarians and prominent individuals who oppose Trident replacement. (2)

Pete Roche, with over four decades experience analysing the nuclear energy field, will consider how the nuclear power debate may change in 2015. With serious financial issues besetting the companies wanting to build new nuclear reactors at Hinkley Point, and a likely legal challenge of the European Commission's approval of UK new nuclear, nuclear power is in trouble. Despite the fact that nuclear power can only ever make a very minor contribution to reducing carbon emissions it appears to be diverting all the available public resources and attention away from the real solutions. At this rate the UK could get to 2025 and find that, not only has nuclear failed to deliver, but any realistic hope of implementing an alternative strategy has been extinguished. Globally the centralised model of power production is dying and being replaced by a decentralised model. But, with the UK Government fighting this trend it could be up to local government in 2015, along with the Irish and Devolved Governments, to push through major changes of direction in energy policy in order to keep the lights on and guarantee low carbon emissions through the next decade and onwards. (3)

Rob Edwards will conclude the seminar with an overview of a recent visit to Japan as part of a Green Cross International Fukushima study tour (4). NFLA has been co-operating with Green Cross for some time and supports their work in Japan assisting evacuated communities and understanding the public health and safety and international implications of the worst disaster in the history of nuclear power.

NFLA Chair Councillor Mark Hackett said:

"I am looking forward to being in Edinburgh for the 34<sup>th</sup> NFLA Annual General Meeting and Annual Policy Seminar. 2014 has been a topsy-turvy year in the nuclear policy debate, and 2015 is likely to be

**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT VOICE ON NUCLEAR ISSUES**



*Nuclear Free Local Authorities Steering Committee*

# information

even more critical in deciding if new nuclear power has a future, and if new nuclear weapons will be pursued. NFLA will remain at the heart of these debates over the next 12 months as it seeks to challenge the need for new nuclear and the superior alternatives of renewable energy and a nuclear weapons free world.”

For more information please contact Sean Morris, NFLA Secretary on 0161 234 3244.

Notes for editors:

- (1) NFLA Annual Policy Seminar, Diamond Jubilee Meeting Room, Edinburgh City Chambers, 1.15pm – 3.30pm. ‘Future nuclear policy trends in 2015 – a critical year in the energy and nuclear non-proliferation debates’.

## **FINAL PROGRAMME:**

- |        |  |
|--------|--|
| 1.15pm | Registration   |
| 1.30pm | Welcomes: Councillor Nick Gardner, NFLA representative for Edinburgh City Council and Councillor Mark Hackett, NFLA Steering Committee Chair.                                  |
| 1.40pm | Rethinking Trident and changing the political discourse on nuclear weapons – Kate Hudson, General Secretary, Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament.                                 |
| 2.05pm | Nuclear power – an unnecessary distraction from the critical challenge of developing low carbon policies to mitigate climate change? Pete Roche, NFLA Scotland Policy Advisor. |
| 2.30pm | Fukushima – still a major risk to a nuclear renaissance? Reflections on a recent Green Cross study tour of Japan – Rob Edwards, Environment Editor, Sunday Herald.             |
| 2.55pm | Panel discussion chaired by NFLA Scotland Convener, Councillor Bill Butler (for a 3.30pm finish).  |

- (2) Rethink Trident website: <http://www.rethinktrident.org.uk>.
- (3) NFLA Policy Briefing on Local Authority Energy Service Companies: [http://www.nuclearpolicy.info/docs/briefings/A239\\_\(NB125\)\\_Local\\_authority\\_energy\\_trusts.pdf](http://www.nuclearpolicy.info/docs/briefings/A239_(NB125)_Local_authority_energy_trusts.pdf)
- (4) Report of the Green Cross International Fukushima Study Tour by Tonia Moda, Green Cross Sweden: <http://www.gcint.org/green-cross-blog/report-green-cross-study-tour-japan-10kms-fukushima-daiichi-power-plant>

**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT VOICE ON NUCLEAR ISSUES**