A climate change general election?

A UK election being held on December 12th has seen climate change being one of the most important issues of the campaign.

All of the political parties are committing to a ‘zero carbon’ UK, though the date to deliver that ranges from 2030 to 2050.

There is strong support for renewables, but a difference of opinion on the type and scale of the mix. On new nuclear, there is support from two of the parties of its utility in reference to energy security, but others are totally opposed to it. On Trident, there are also divisions on those opposed to its replacement and those who see it as essential.

A NFLA media release calls on policies to deliver a renewable, safe & peaceful future.

Mayors for Peace European Chapter founded at Exec Con

The Mayors for Peace Executive Conference took place in Hanover, Germany on the 11th and 12th November.

The biannual meeting began with a special ceremony at Hanover’s Aegidenkirche on Remembrance Day. This church was badly damaged in bombing in the Second World War but has been made into a memorial for peace. A wreath was laid by the Mayors of Hanover, Hiroshima & Nagasaki.

The main meeting agreed to actions for 2020, the 75th anniversary of the atomic bomb attacks and to consider core new issues to take on for the next Action Plan. A new vision that looks at nuclear weapons abolition, safe and resilient cities and a culture of peace.

A special additional meeting founded a European Chapter of Mayors for Peace. With a good budget behind it, the Chapter will focus on European issues and developments. A report on it is on the NFLA & MFP websites.
NFLA media releases, November 2019: (On NFLA website)

- NFLA submits its view on Sellafield discharges
- NFLA welcomes Irish Youth Assembly climate declaration
- NFLA calls on all UK political parties to put climate change and multilateral disarmament as focal issues in general election campaigns

NFLA Scotland discusses Hunterston B and other concerns

The NFLA Scotland Forum held its final business meeting of the year in Glasgow City Chambers.

The NFLA Scotland Policy Advisor provided a detailed overview of Scottish nuclear policy. There was particular discussion over the issues with the aging Hunterston B Reactors 3 and 4. Reactor 4 has been temporarily restarted for four months, but it has been confirmed that it will close for checks again at the end of the year. The Forum agreed that the NFLA meets again with the ONR Deputy Chief Inspector early in the new year.

Reports were also provided by the NFLA Secretary and CND Scotland. A planned seminar had been re-scheduled. The Policy Advisor’s presentation is on the NFLA website.

NFLA AGM and meetings moved to January onwards

The calling of the UK general election and purdah rules has meant that the planned NFLA AGM and the NFLA Scotland seminar have had to be moved into January.

The NFLA Scotland Forum will host a business meeting, AGM and seminar on January 24th in Glasgow. The seminar will consider Hunterston issues, Scottish energy issues and nuclear weapons divestment policies.

The NFLA Steering Committee business meeting, AGM and Annual Policy Seminar have been moved from December 6th and is now on January 31st.

A NFLA English Forum / Mayors for Peace seminar is being planned in late February. The NFLA All Ireland Sustainable Energy Forum and NFLA Welsh Forum meetings will be held in March 2020. Further information will be provided next month.

Manchester launches art exhibition on NFLA’s 39th birthday

The NFLA celebrated its 39th anniversary by launching an art exhibition in Manchester Central Library.

The ‘50 Cities, 50 Traces’ exhibition has been set up by the Mayors for Peace German Chapter to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The launch had speeches from the Lord Mayor of Manchester, NFLA’s Manchester representative and the artist. It is on in the library until the end of January, and will go on to Bristol & New York.
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ONR NGO Forum looks at graphite debris, Sellafield & waste

A core role of the NFLA for its members is to represent them in relevant nuclear stakeholder groups. Its November meeting included interaction with the Chief and Deputy Chief Nuclear Inspector. Concern over military nuclear safety and waste was also looked at. A detailed look at ongoing safety issues at Sellafield as it moves away from reprocessing was also considered.

The NFLA Secretary took part in the Forum between group’s concerned about nuclear safety and the Office for Nuclear Regulation. The NFLA Secretary has been invited to meet the new ONR Chair in January.

The NFLA Secretary presented issues over nuclear safety to the ONR NGO Forum meeting held in London.

NFLA responds to Sellafield discharges consultation

NFLA have published a detailed submission on the Draft Decision Document by the Environment Agency on Sellafield’s permit on radioactive discharges to the local environment. The changes come as reprocessing at the Sellafield site, and the priority moves to risk alleviation, waste management and nuclear decommissioning.

It appears the EA have listened to NFLA comments made in an earlier consultation and planned discharge limits have lowered, but there needs to remain vigilance for the future. There remains concern over tritium levels on land and in the sea.

Of course, the historic discharges from Sellafield have made the Irish Sea one of the most radioactive seas around. NFLA is concerned there is simply not enough research being undertaken to long-term effects. It can be found on the NFLA website.

NFLA letters to the media November 2019:
(Sent to NFLA members)

- The precautionary principle needs to be considered in the emergency planning zone around Hunterston B
- There is more to our movement than an ‘irrational’ concern over radiation (on website)

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Forthcoming meetings of interest to NFLA members

BEIS NGO Forum, London, 4th December

NFLA Scotland Forum AGM and seminar, Glasgow City Chambers, 24th January 2020

NFLA SC, AGM and Annual Policy Seminar, Manchester Central Library, 31st January 2020

Other Forum meetings will be scheduled in the new year