



## The work of the Nuclear Free Local Authorities in 2019 40 Years as the Local Government Voice on Nuclear Issues

Annual Newsletter 2020

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### Useful website Links:

**NFLA:** <http://www.nuclearpolicy.info>  
 (includes links to NFLA Facebook & Twitter)  
**Mayors for Peace:** <http://www.mayorsforpeace.org>  
**KIMO:** <http://www.kimointernational.org>  
**CNFE:** <http://www.cnfe.eu>  
**ICAN-UK:** <http://www.ican-uk.org>  
**ICAN global:** <http://www.icanw.org>



Some of the members of the NFLA Steering Committee at the 2019/20 AGM

NFLA SC & English Chair:  
 Councillor David Blackburn

SC Vice Chair:  
 Councillor Bill Butler

NFLA Secretary:  
 Sean Morris

NFLA All-Ireland Co Chairs:  
 Councillor David Healy and  
 Councillor Karen McKeivitt

NFLA All-Ireland Secretary:  
 Eamonn Keaveney

NFLA Scotland Convenor:  
 Councillor Feargal Dalton  
 Vice Convenor:  
 Councillor Audrey Doig

NFLA Scotland Secretary:  
 Cathy Birrell

NFLA SC / Scotland Policy  
 Advisor: Pete Roche

NFLA Welsh Forum Co-Chairs:  
 Councillor Ernie Galsworthy  
 and Councillor Sue Lent

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## NFLA SC Chair's Introduction

This Annual Newsletter provides NFLA member authorities with a general summary of its work throughout 2020.

The year was dominated by the restrictions created by the Covid-19 pandemic, which meant NFLA meetings had to move to online video conferences from late March onwards.

The NFLA celebrated its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. NFLA is seen both as a respected and a cogent local authority voice on all aspects of nuclear & energy policy.

In 2020 it provided a quality support service for its member local authorities by responding to nuclear policy issues and being proactive in influencing the

national and wider international nuclear & energy agenda. Despite the pandemic, the NFLA has managed to hold six Steering Committee meetings.

Each NFLA National Forum has held a number of informative webinars that have included Ministers, leading councillors & officers and nuclear policy experts.

The 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of

the Hiroshima & Nagasaki atomic bomb attacks and the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the NFLA were also commemorated.

The year ended with a high profile NFLA / ICAN and Mayors for Peace Europe webinar. I fully commend our work in 2020 to you.

***Cllr David Blackburn  
 NFLA SC Chair***

## 40 years as the key local government voice on nuclear policy

national and wider international nuclear & energy agenda.

To achieve this, NFLA works closely with groups like the Mayors for Peace, KIMO International, Cities for a Nuclear Free Europe, ICAN-UK and a large number of regional, national & international anti-nuclear disarmament & environmental

groups.

It interacts with the LGA NuLEAF & the COSLA SCCORS radioactive waste groups, national & international government agencies, key nuclear regulators, the NDA and RWM.

The following pages, and the NFLA website, outline some of this work in more detail.

**Mayors for Peace Briefings in 2020**

*All can be found on the NFLA website.*

No 27: Progress in developing the European Chapter and associated events.

No 28: The impacts of the Covid-19 global pandemic on Mayors for Peace and UN activity

No 29: Plans for commemorating the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Hiroshima & Nagasaki atomic attacks.

No 30: Events held for the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and Ireland formally ratifies the TPNW

No 31: The TPNW to enter into force and plans for a major European Chapter webinar

**New Nuclear Monitor Briefings in 2020:**

*All can be found on the NFLA website.*

No 60: Financing the Hinkley Point project

No 61: Submission to Bradwell B local consultation

No 62: Response to the UKAEA call for a site for an experimental nuclear fusion reactor

No 63: Sizewell C Irish transboundary response

No 64: New nuclear and climate change issues

**The main organisations the NFLA interacted with in 2020**

On behalf of its members, the NFLA interacts with a large body of organisations on all aspects of nuclear policy.

In 2020 these included:

**The UK Government** – BEIS, MOD, Foreign Office, DEFRA, Parliamentary Select Committees, MPs & Lords.

**Republic of Ireland Government** – Foreign Affairs, Environment and Energy Departments, TDs & Senators.

**Devolved Governments** in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

**Regulatory bodies** – ONR, FSA, SEPA, NDA, PHE, CoRWM, EPA,

NRW, COMARE and the Environment Agency.

**LA groups** – Mayors for Peace, CNFE, the Alliance of Regions in Europe, KIMO, NuLEAF, & SCCORS.

**International bodies** – European Commission, OSPAR Commission, OECD NEA, IMO, IAEA and the United Nations.

**NFLA Steering Committee work throughout 2020**

The NFLA Steering Committee (SC) is the main decision-making body of this UK & Ireland organisation.

It met in January, March, May, June, September and November. Its November meeting also include a special webinar which commemorated the 40<sup>th</sup>

anniversary of the NFLA.

Reports considered at these meetings include updates on new nuclear build, radioactive waste policy, nuclear safety, low level radiation and health, climate change and the alternatives to nuclear power, nuclear security, nuclear transportation and nuclear

emergency planning.

A key part of the work is to respond to all relevant consultations.

Updates on nuclear weapons policy, defence diversification strategies and Mayors for Peace are also provided.

Such work will continue in 2021.

**NFLA English Forum public meeting and webinars**

In 2020, the NFLA English Forum held a public meeting in March and two webinars in June and October.

The March public meeting was held in Suffolk and looked at

the environmental and other concerns around Sizewell C & Bradwell B.

The June webinar was held jointly with the NFLA Welsh Forum to look at Hinkley Point issues affecting both

sides of the Bristol Channel and renewable energy issues.

The October webinar focused on best practice in promoting local energy. These are all on the NFLA website.



The Mayor of Granollers speaks at a Basel Peace Office seminar on the European Mayors for Peace Chapter



Manchester officer Elena Tompkins does work experience in the Hiroshima Mayors for Peace office



Linda Pentz Gunter of Beyond Nuclear International speaks at a meeting on the impacts of low-level radiation on women



A packed audience in Saxmundham, Suffolk hears of the environmental and other concerns over building the Sizewell C and Bradwell B reactors



The Irish Energy and Climate Change Minister Eamon Ryan speaking at the NFLA All Ireland Sustainable Energy Forum webinar

## NFLA All Ireland Sustainable Energy Forum webinars

The NFLA All Ireland Sustainable Energy Forum provides an innovative cross-border consideration of energy issues impacting on Ireland.

The Forum held webinars in June and September 2020.

The June webinar

looked at how Councils tackle the climate emergency, and on creating a 'green' recovery to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The September webinar had a keynote speech from the Irish Energy & Climate Change Minister Eamon Ryan. It also looked at climate adapt-

ation plans, a report on a 'near miss' between a submarine & ferry and Sellafield matters.

Regular contact with core Irish Government agencies has taken place through Dr Paul Dorfman, who is the NFLA representative to the EPA's Radiation Issues Committee.

## NFLA Scotland meetings, seminar and webinars in 2020

NFLA Scotland met four times in 2020.

A business meeting and seminar was held in Glasgow in January. The seminar looked at Hunterston, Scottish energy policy & pension divestment issues.

Online Forum business meetings were also held

in April, June and October.

These meetings considered all aspects of Scottish nuclear policy, renewable energy and waste matters.

The October meeting also held a special webinar with a presentation on the

state of the Hunterston B reactor and other AGRs around Scotland and England.

The Forum receives invaluable policy advice from its Policy Advisor Pete Roche and business support from the Forum Secretary Cathy Birrell.

## NFLA Welsh Forum webinars in 2020

The NFLA Welsh Forum held two very well attended webinars in 2020.

In June it held a joint webinar with the NFLA English Forum.

This looked at Hinkley Point issues both sides of the Bristol Channel and local energy matters.

The October webinar looked at the ICAN Cities

Appeal, the Hinkley mud dumping issue, the prospects around new nuclear in North Wales and local Council energy projects.



The Deputy Mayor of Barcelona speaks at the NFLA / M4P / ICAN webinar

**NFLA General Policy Briefings in 2020:**

- No 195 – Benefits of a Scottish Energy Development Agency
- No 196 – NFLA SC January meeting action points
- No 197 – Impact of low-level radiation on women
- No 198 – NFLA SC March meeting points
- No 199 – Tackling the climate emergency in the UK & Ireland
- No 200 – Covid-19 and the prospects for a green stimulus
- No 201 – Scottish nuclear policy progress
- No 202 – NFLA SC May meeting action points
- No 203 – Investigation of ‘near miss’ incident between a nuclear submarine & ferry in Irish Sea
- No 204 – NFLA SC June meeting actions
- No 205 – The future of the aging AGR reactor fleet
- No 206 – NFLA SC September meeting actions
- No 207 – A Green Recovery to Covid-19
- No 208 – Is a 100% renewable scenario possible?
- No 209 – NFLA SC November meeting actions
- No 210 – Brexit and NFLA policy

**Nuclear power debate – key obstacles to new build remain**

A core part of NFLA work in 2020 remains challenging the UK Government’s assertion of the need for new nuclear build.

considering a new ‘RAB’ finance model which NFLA sees as giving a huge and risky subsidy to new nuclear.

Bradwell remain in consideration, and the idea of ‘Small’ Modular Reactors is being pushed hard. Even fusion has re-emerged.

The financial weaknesses in these projects has come to the fore, with the Wylfa B project cancelled. This has led to the Government con-

The Hinkley Point C has had its base built, but financial issues and problems with a parallel reactor in France pose questions over the project. Sizewell and

Issues with older nuclear reactors has also come to the fore, particularly keyway root cracks in aging plants like Hunterston B.

**Radioactive waste debate – deep repository or near surface?**

A key issue in nuclear policy remains the large radioactive waste legacy and how it is to be dealt with.

are found by consensus.

The NFLA responded in detail to the NDA Strategy for 2021-25 and attended Scottish rad-waste policy processes.

The NFLA believe that the waste burden still requires much work to make it safe and secure. No new waste should be permitted until long-term solutions

In 2020 the UK & Welsh Governments continued in a new attempt to seek a volunteer to host a deep underground radioactive waste repository. By the end of the year Copeland & Allerdale Councils had started early engagement processes.

NFLA will continue to interact on these debates within the LGA NuLeAF and the COSLA SCCORS Forums, the NDA, RWM, CoRWM and the nuclear regulators.

**Nuclear weapons and the Trident replacement debate**

The NFLA is heavily involved in the UK and international nuclear weapons debate. NFLA has worked with Mayors for Peace and ICAN to encourage its members to pass resolutions that

support the Nuclear Weapons Prohibition Treaty. The TPNW comes into force in 2021.

clear disarmament debate.

A major joint webinar was held with Mayors for Peace & ICAN on the nu-

Work is also ongoing in the area of defence diversification via a Steering Group chaired by the NFLA Secretary.



ICAN Executive Director Beatrice Fihn speaks at the NFLA / M4P / ICAN webinar



ICAN Campaigns Director Daniel Hogsta speaks at the NFLA / M4P / ICAN webinar



Dr Tytti Erasto of SIPRI speaks at the NFLA / M4P / ICAN webinar

## Co-operation with international partner groups

The NFLA has worked closely with a number of international groups in various nuclear policy areas in 2020.

NFLA work closely with the Mayors for Peace, and two meetings of the UK & Ireland Chapter were held in 2020. It also joined with the European Cha-

pter of Mayors for Peace and ICAN on a high profile and well attended webinar.

In the NFLA's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary webinar it also invited speakers from Cities for a Nuclear Free Europe and KIMO International to speak of their close partnership over many years.

It also cooperated on a number of initiatives with these two groups and the Alliance of Regions to Phase-out Nuclear Power in Europe.

NFLA is a member of the Nobel Peace Laureate ICAN coalition and joins in the ICAN UK network.

## NFLA supports 'climate emergency' work across its Forums

A key part of the work of the NFLA is offering a realistic alternative to nuclear power.

Its policy is that energy needs can be provided by a wide renewable energy mix including wind, wave, district heating, hydro-electric, tidal, CHP and solar sources. This is coupled

with a Councils-led and ambitious energy efficiency programme, battery storage & local energy projects.

2020 saw this issue become much more prescient across local government as over 270 Councils in the UK and Ireland passed 'climate emergency' resolutions.

The wide concerns of the effects of climate change and the need for deep decarbonisation is a core activity now for the NFLA.

In 2020 NFLA produced a number of reports on best practice in decentralised energy across the UK and Ireland which were very well received.

### **Radioactive Waste Policy Briefings in 2020: All can be found on the NFLA website.**

- No 81 – NFLA response to planned discharges from the HMNB Clyde bases at Faslane & Coulport
- No 82 – NFLA response to the NRW consultation on EDF's application to dump dredged materials in Cardiff Deep Grounds
- No 83 – NFLA response to NDA Strategy 4 2021-25
- No 84 – Beaufort's Dyke area of the Irish Sea and nuclear risks within it

## NFLA Steering Committee Chair, Vice Chairs & Forum Chairs

The NFLA Chair & English Forum Chair is Cllr David Blackburn from Leeds City Council. He will stand again at the NFLA AGM in January 2021. The NFLA SC Vice-Chair is

Cllr Bill Butler of Glasgow City Council.

Forum Chairs in 2020 are Cllr Feargal Dalton in Scotland; Cllr David Healy and Cllr Karen McKeivitt in Ireland and Cllr Ernie Gal-

sworthy and Sue Lent are Co-Chairs of the NFLA Welsh Forum.

Sean Morris has been the Secretary of the NFLA since 2008.



NFLA All Ireland Forum Co Chair Councillor David Healy speaking at a Forum webinar

**Communication strategy in 2020:**

- NFLA submitted 68 media releases in 2020 across all aspects of nuclear policy. These are on the NFLA website.
- NFLA submitted over 30 letters to the media in 2020 across all aspects of nuclear policy, which were emailed to all its members.
- NFLA has both a Facebook page and a Twitter page. These are already reaching as many as 2,000+ relevant individuals and nuclear policy groups.
- NFLA relaunched with a new logo the NFLA All Ireland Sustainable Energy Forum as a refocus of its work.
- The NFLA website provides a detailed public interface with all of its reports, media releases, presentations and newsletters.

**Co-operation with key non-governmental groups**

The NFLA co-operates with a number of like-minded groups, when it can, to promote its aims and objectives.

NFLA webinar speakers in 2020 have come from groups like the Friends of the Earth, Geiger Bay campaign, the Nuclear Waste Advisory Associates, the

Nuclear Consulting Group, CND, ICAN-UK, the Nuclear Information Service and local site groups that are concerned with the development of new nuclear build.

The Secretariat has invited experts advising local Councils on how to develop energy policy.

The NFLA attends the BEIS NGO Forum, the ONR NGO Forum, the NDA NGO Forum and RWM Exchange Forums, the Scottish Nuclear Sites Forum and other relevant nuclear policy meetings. These allow NFLA to have a direct contact with key nuclear policy makers.

**Key priorities for the NFLA in its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary year**

The NFLA’s priorities for 2021 will be discussed at its 2020/21 AGM in January. They will be:

- challenging the need for new nuclear build;
- promoting safe long-term solutions for radioactive waste;
- advocating the many benefits of decentralised renewable energy solutions to tackle the

- climate emergency;
- advocating further research on the effects of low-level radiation;
- raising continuing concerns over nuclear safety issues;
- seeking improvements in nuclear emergency planning standards;
- co-operating with other groups that seek a nuclear power free

- and nuclear weapon free Europe and wider world;
- seeking reductions in airborne and marine radioactive discharges;
- highlighting the need for sound environmental and ethical principles across energy & nuclear weapons policy.

A Service Plan for this will be published shortly.

**Joining the NFLA and forthcoming meetings**

To join the NFLA please contact the NFLA Secretary for further details on our annual low & value-for-money affiliation rates. Joining NFLA allows all of its members and officers

to attend National NFLA Forum seminars and meetings, as well as four NFLA Steering Committee meetings. All of its research reports are also given first to its member authorities.

**Next SC meeting:**

The NFLA’s Steering Committee is provisionally set for 29th January 2021. This will include its 2020/21 AGM, held over from December 2020.