Date: 28 Feb 2022
Subject: Developments and NFLA Progress Report, February 2022

1. Introduction

This paper outlines:

• the work of the NFLA Secretary since the last SC meeting on 4 February 2022
• the current issues and developments within the civil nuclear industry, renewable technology, and in connection with Mayors for Peace and nuclear disarmament

In recognition that the civil nuclear, peace and disarmament fields are currently dynamic (and with the military conflict in Ukraine constantly fluid), the NFLA Secretary is presenting the first of a series of monthly reports for NFLA member authorities and supporters as Bulletins rather than a single report for the next SC in May.

2. The work of the NFLA Secretary

2a. Consultation and Lobbying

Proposal to establish an NDA NGO Forum: Recognising a deficiency in stakeholder engagement, at a February meeting, representatives from a range of NGOs who attend the BEIS (Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy) and ONR (Office of Nuclear Regulation) Forums with ministers and civil servants called for the establishment of a new overarching NGO Forum for the NDA (Nuclear Decommissioning Authority). Previous discussions involving the then NFLA Secretary and NDA officials explored the possibility of such a Forum being established, but despite progress nothing materialised.

On behalf of the NGOs present, the NFLA Secretary drafted a letter to the Head of Stakeholder Engagement John McNamara and this was sent with the endorsement of 11 NGOs, which included groups involved in campaigns against new nuclear at Bradwell, Hinkley Point, Sizewell and Wylfa, as well as the proposals to develop a GDF (Geological Disposal Facility) in Cumbria.

In a very positive response, the Head of Stakeholder Engagement John McNamara confirmed that NDA also wanted to create an ‘overarching’ NGO Forum covering all of its subsidiaries: ‘We are committed to taking an NGO Forum forward and providing financial support to get it moving’. A meeting between NGOs and the NDA will now be arranged.
**Objection to latest Sizewell C planning application:** Cllr David Blackburn has written as NFLA Chair to East Suffolk Council registering strong objections to the latest planning application from EDF Energy relating to the proposed Sizewell C development. EDF are seeking to permission to test out its proposed methods for the construction of the power plant literally at the time when the Planning Inspectorate are about to make their report to the Secretary of State.

The application amounts to a massive admission that EDF still do not know if the site upon which they are proposing to build a new nuclear power station is suitable to take such a major infrastructure development. In effect the application concedes that EDF still need to conduct soil and ground anchor trails to determine if their strategy to stabilise the site during the construction of the plant will work.

The EDF design incorporates a cut-off wall approximately 60 metres deep, which surrounds the main nuclear platform, allowing the developer to remove soil and water down to 40 metres; their strategy relies upon employing ground anchors to hold the cut-off wall in place whilst the deep excavations are carried out, and undertaking deep soil mixing to create hard coastal defences.

If any site instabilities compromised this high-risk approach and sent the cut-off wall crashing down, it would endanger the lives of construction workers, and set the whole project back by many years, or forever.

EDF only now wants to trial this approach rather than at onset of the consultation process. If the trial fails, then the whole project could be further delayed or better yet scrapped.

The NFLA is also concerned that East Suffolk Council and the Environment Agency have not applied more scrutiny to the plan could well have an adverse impact on the habitat and wildlife of the Sizewell Marsh, Minsmere, and Walberswick Heaths and Marshes SSSI.

2b. **Media**

In February the Secretary has issued the following media releases:

- On shaky ground? Latest EDF planning application casts doubt on suitability of Sizewell site – 26 Feb.
- NFLA Chair urges Minister to ‘Think well over Sizewell’ – 25 Feb. The NFLA Secretary also did a radio interview on this with BBC Radio Suffolk on 25 Feb.
- Time for Wales to celebrate the 40th anniversary of nuclear-free declaration – 22 Feb.
- Decade of defueling looms for disaster that is Dungeness – 17 Feb.
- ‘Skegross’ not ‘so bracing’; spelling mistake offends resort residents – 16 Feb.
- Fusion delusion no answer to climate emergency or cost-of-living crisis – 11 Feb.
- Reactor approval does not justify Bradwell go-ahead – 9 Feb.
- NFLA backs East Lothian MP on government support after Torness closure – 3 Feb.
- NFLA demands deadly plutonium stockpile be placed ‘out of use’ – 3 Feb.
• Swedish drones shine light on potential threat to nuclear plants, say NFLA – 2 Feb.
• NFLA seeks jobs for local community on nuclear decommissioning work – 1 Feb.
• NFLA endorses call for real green energy on former nuclear sites – 31 Jan.

A newsletter has been released at the end of February.

All these materials can be found on the NFLA website.

Former NFLA Secretary Sean Morris has kindly agreed to continue to maintain the Twitter and Facebook accounts.

2c. Briefings

Since Feb 4 the Secretary has issued the following briefings:

• NFLA Policy Briefing 228: This one
• NFLA Policy Briefing 227: The potential impact of the conflict in Ukraine on nuclear power plants and potential nuclear escalation – 24 February
• Statements by Mayors for Peace and ICAN on Ukraine – 24 February
• NFLA Policy Briefings 226, 226A, 226B: Summary of key points and actions from the NFLA Steering Committee online meeting and Annual General Meeting, Annual Report and Service Plan - 14 February 2022

These briefings can be found on the NFLA website.

2d. Meetings and Webinars

The event was opened by the Lord Mayor of Manchester Cllr Tommy Judge, himself a former soldier, and the participants were joined by Rebecca Long-Bailey MP and Greater Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham. Other guests who joined remotely or by pre-recorded video included test veterans and descendants from the US and
Australia; representatives and academics from ICAN; British politicians; and a campaigning journalist from The Daily Mirror. The highlight of the event were testimonies from veterans; wives and widows; and descendants which were especially moving and powerful.

The NFLA / M4P Secretary was invited to speak at the event. When time permits, he will produce a briefing for NFLA and M4P member authorities, outlining the background and the actions members can take to support the veterans and their families in this historic 70th anniversary year.

All of the contributions on the day can be seen at https://www.labrats.international/2022seminar

Nuclear Free Wales at 40 webinar 23 Feb: On 23 Feb, peace activists in Wales celebrated the fortieth anniversary of the Nuclear Free Wales (Clywd) Declaration when Clwyd became the last of the original eight county councils to pass a resolution in support in 1982.

Cymru CND held a webinar to mark the event. There were over 20 participants, including the Chair of Welsh NFLA, Cllr Ernie Galsworthy. The NFLA Secretary spoke at the meeting.

The Secretary has attended the following formal meetings:
- ICAN in the UK – 8 Feb.
- NFLA Scotland Forum and AGM – 10 Feb. A presentation was made.
- ICAN Europe – 16 Feb.

The Secretary has also attended two other following webinars:
- Decommissioning the AGR Reactors, NuLeaf – 8 Feb.
- Star Wars comes to Scotland (about spaceports)– 15 Feb.

Informal introductory meetings have so been held with KIMO International (7/2), Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) (7/2), Yorkshire CND (9/2), Scottish CND (15/2)
3. New nuclear power developments

3a. Large nuclear reactors

**Hinkley Point C:** In late January, the Office for Nuclear Regulation granted permission for the start of bulk mechanical, electrical and heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (MEH) component installation work at the plant.

The forthcoming fit-out on the nuclear island of Hinkley Point C unit 1 is described as a “mammoth undertaking” requiring a workforce of up to 4000 at peak times, including welders, pipe fitters and electricians, working as an “alliance”.

This phase of work in Somerset will take place over three years with NNB Genco, the subsidiary created by EDF Energy, teaming up with four suppliers – Balfour Beatty Bailey, Doosan, Cavendish and Altrad.

Following an in-depth assessment by ONR of the MEH proposals submitted by NNB GenCo, the regulator has approved the start of this next phase of the project. A 36-page Project Assessment Report setting out ONR’s decision to grant permission for the start of bulk MEH was published on ONR’s website.

https://news.onr.org.uk/2022/01/permission-granted-for-next-construction-phase-at-hinkley-point-c/

A French nuclear engineering firm, Assystem, has been awarded a contract to ensure Hinkley Point C’s nuclear, safety, instrumentation and communications systems meet pre-determined operational requirements. Assystem will be a partner in the new Hinkley Point C Commissioning Alliance.

https://www.business-live.co.uk/manufacturing/nuclear-engineering-firm-assystem-agrees-22857008

The Save the Severn Estuary, a coalition of scientists, experts, individuals and organisations, are seeking a judicial review in the High Court of the decision by the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) to grant a license to EDF (Électricité de France) to dump sediment contaminated by the Hinkley nuclear power stations in the Severn Estuary near Portishead. This is a consequence of building a water intake for the new power station which will kill millions more fish when operational.

The estuary is an internationally designated Marine Protected Area and campaigners charge that the dumped materials, including chemical and radioactive contaminants, will spread on the strong tidal currents all around the Estuary, depositing on its mud on banks and beaches, impacting the safety and wellbeing of the estuary, its inhabitants and coastal populations of Avonmouth, Bristol, Newport, Cardiff, Barry and beyond.

Already many 100,000s of tonnes have been dumped - with much more still to be dredged and dumped. Campaigners charge the MMO of neglecting to collate evidence, blatantly misusing regulations and failing to conduct any meaningful public consultation prior to issuing the licence.

The case will be heard on 8-10th March. In court, the group’s legal representatives Leigh Day will be seeking the quashing of EDF’s license. They are now fundraising to raise the £60,000 needed for the legal action and are around halfway to the mark.
A video showing the impact of the mud dumping can be seen at: https://vimeo.com/680161449/cd0cbffbb8

The appeal for crowdfunding can be found at https://www.crowdjustice.com/case/save-the-severn-estuary/

**Sizewell C:** In early February in a bizarre development, EDF submitted a planning application to East Suffolk Council, for soil and ground anchor trials, to determine if the site can be stabilised during the construction of Sizewell C, which will involve deep excavations. This at the point when the Planning Inspectorate was about to make its recommendation to the Secretary of State as to whether the development should proceed.

The project relies on a "cut-off" wall, approx 60m deep, surrounding the main platform. EDF's plan is to use ground anchors in the (buried) layers of crag to hold the cut off wall in place during excavation so it does not collapse into the void, and use deep soil mixing to build the Hard Coastal Defences without the ground beneath failing. If either of these events occurred it would be catastrophic, placing the lives of construction workers at risk, and setting the whole project back by many years, or abandoned.

Also see Section 2a) about the NFLA’s objections to EDF’s latest planning application.

**Bradwell B:** In early February, the Office of Nuclear Regulation (ONR) has just granted Generic Design Assessment approval to the Chinese Hualong UK HPR1000 reactor for potential use in a future new power station at Bradwell in Essex.

However, Chinese investors face increasing hostility from government ministers, many legal and financial hurdles, geological challenges with the site, and hardening local opposition before any development can proceed.

The China General Nuclear Power Group CGN owns 66.5% of the Bradwell B project and a 20% stake in Sizewell C, but the UK Government is now looking to exclude Chinese investment in nuclear plants, and has recently passed the National Security and Investment Act in order to do so.

https://news.onr.org.uk/2022/02/nuclear-regulators-complete-uk-hpr1000-design-assessment/


3b. **Small Modular Reactors**

**Rolls-Royce seeks regional partner to host SMR factory:** Rolls-Royce has now invited bids from several of England’s regional development bodies and the Welsh government to be the location of its main factory to build its planned fleet of small modular reactors (SMRs). Essentially Rolls-Royce are looking for financial and other support as a sweetener to locate their factory site. It is reported the factory needs a six-acre site, will cost between £100-200 million to build and will create up to 200 direct jobs. The factory would construct the reactors, which would then be transported by road to the outlying sites.
Rolls-Royce hopes to initially build four SMRs and claims they could be operational by the end of the decade, each supplying 0.47 gigawatts (GW) of energy (compared with Hinkley Point C’s 3.2GW) at an estimated cost of £2.2bn (against £23bn for Hinkley Point.


3c Fusion Reactors

Royalty rolled out to endorse fusion: After high profile visits by Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng to Hinkley Point C and Sizewell, and by PM Boris Johnson’s visit to Wylfa, royalty has now been rolled out to back fusion.

At the end of January, HRH The Prince of Wales visited the UK Atomic Energy Authority’s experimental fusion reactor experiment, the Joint European Torus (JET) tokamak at the Culham Science Centre, Oxford. The project was originally opened by HM The Queen in 1984.

Despite the self-congratulatory tone and fictional claims in the accompanying BEIS departmental media release (below), it is hard to overlook that, after almost four decades, fusion as a viable and safe power source is still no nearer to fruition.


Scientists claim fusion breakthrough: Only nine days after the royal visit, JET scientists claimed a supposed ‘major break-through’ with a fusion reaction being sustained for five seconds and generating 11 megawatts of power (about enough to boil 60 kettles).

However, many experts are sceptical. Emeritus Professor of Energy Policy Stephen Thomas of the University of Greenwich outlined for the NFLA a possible motivation for the latest claims: “It has always been said that fusion breakthroughs occur when there is a need for more public funding.” Other reports claim that the experiment had to be closed-down after five seconds because the containment of the reaction was in danger of being compromised.


Finding STEP a home: As part of the process of securing a site for a new experimental fusion reactor, the UK Atomic Energy Authority has just concluded a series of five Community Forums with the shortlisted host areas: Ardeer, North Ayrshire; Moorside, Cumbria; Goole, East Yorkshire; West Burton, Nottinghamshire and Severn Edge (Oldbury and Berkeley) in Gloucestershire.

The Spherical Tokamak for Energy Production (STEP) programme is backed by £220 million of government funding. STEP has been conceived as a successor to the ITER
project under construction in France since 2013. ITER is planned to be completed in late 2025 and is designed to create and sustain a plasma of 500MW (thermal power) for 20 minutes, with just 50MW of thermal power injected into the reactor.

In reference to Ardeer, the NFLA got a recent complimentary mention in The National.

https://step.ukaea.uk/step-siting/

https://eandt.theiet.org/content/articles/2022/01/locations-for-the-uk-s-first-fusion-energy-power-plant-revealed/


4. **Existing nuclear power stations**

**Dungeness:** Dungeness was the first AGR plant ordered in 1965, but only become fully operational two decades later.

An inspection by the Office of Nuclear Regulation (ONR) in September 2018 found operational components in Dungeness B 'corroded to an unacceptable condition', the plant closed and despite several false starts it never reopened. On 7 June 2021, operator EDF Energy announced that Dungeness B would move into the defueling phase with immediate effect

EDF has still not submitted a safety case for defueling to the ONR, and local press has reported that the Dungeness B plant may take up a decade to defuel. Defueling costs for Britain’s AGRs were recently estimated by EDF to amount to £3.1 – 8.0 billion depending on various factors. These costs will be met by the taxpayer-funded Nuclear Liabilities Fund. Delays at Dungeness could cost an extra £0.5 billion to £1.0 billion.

5. **Radioactive Waste**

5a. **Dounreay:** The NDA has planning permission for six low level radioactive waste vaults with a total capacity of 175,000 cubic metres. Two have been built, each holding the equivalent in waste of between 370 and 450 double decker buses. The next phase of construction is expected to start later this year and take until 2026 to complete. The vaults are designed to store the waste containers filled with cement-based grout, for hundreds of years.

https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-highlands-islands-60116278

Below staff inside one of the vaults – BBC News
5b. **Geological Disposal Facility**

**Theddlethorpe, Lincolnshire:** The Working Group has now identified the Search Area for the potential GDF. This covers the wards of Withern & Theddlethorpe, and Mablethorpe. In a gaffe, the NDA produced a map giving Skegness the unfortunate misnomer of ‘Skegross’ causing local offence and requiring profuse apologies after the error hit the national press.

Although the former gas terminal site in Theddlethorpe remains the focus for the GDF (69 acres), the site is not of itself big enough as a surface area of 1 sq KM (or 247 acres) is required. Much of the area is though farmland and protesters claim that the planning authority has failed to honour their promise to return the gas terminal back to agricultural use once it became redundant. Off-shore containment will also be considered.

The Working Group is now be looking for new members to enable the transition to a Community Partnership.

![Map of Theddlethorpe and Mablethorpe Search Area](map.png)

**Above: The Mabelthorpe and Theddlethorpe Search Area**

Elsewhere activists in GOTEC (Guardians of the East Coast) will be contesting a casual vacancy on Theddlethorpe Parish Council in a by-election. Currently there are five vacant seats. Four others have been earmarked for co-option, but pro-GDF Councillors have set such onerous requirements of candidates seeking selection that some have been summarily rejected. The NFLA Secretary is currently pursuing some procedural enquiries with the National Association of Local Councils that may assist GOTEC is securing fairer play from their Parish Council.
Allerdale, West Cumbria:

Below: The Allerdale Search Area:

Mid-Copeland, West Cumbria:

Below: The Mid-Copeland Search Area
South-Copeland, West Cumbria:

Below: The South Copeland Search Area:

The Leader of Cumbria County Council, Cllr Stewart Young, has refused renewed requests to reverse his decision not to participate in the Copeland GDF Community Partnership stating that the underground nuclear waste dump would result in "the loss of thousands of well paid jobs."

https://www.newsandstar.co.uk/news/19883634.cumbria-county-council-leader-rejects-call-join-gdf-discussions/

Campaign group Lakes against Nuclear Dump (LAND) has recently reported surveillance of opponents of the plan to locate a GDF in Cumbria by specialist companies, Brandwatch, MHP and Press Data, to carry out surveillance employed by then Radioactive Waste Management (now Nuclear Waste Services). Social media, postal correspondence, and conversations have allegedly been monitored, and false information passed to police about one local activist. Much of the information was revealed through a Data Subject Access Request. South Lakeland MP Tim Farron found the reports 'severely concerning'. The Secretary will take up this issue at the next meeting of the Radioactive Waste Management Exchange in March.


5c. Overseas GDFs: A study commissioned by Norwegian Nuclear Decommissioning concluded that deep borehole disposal is a viable and cost-effective solution for all the long-lived nuclear waste that is being stored in 5 European countries – Croatia, Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway and Slovenia. One or more deep geological repositories will still be required for the bulky Intermediate Level Waste (ILW) and non-heat generating High Level Waste (HLW), but using boreholes in part could lead to significant cost savings overall. The next stage would be the development of a full-scale demonstrator project.
On the 22nd December the Swedish Government approved the extension of the final repository for short lived radioactive waste in Forsmark. The extension is required to accommodate decommissioning waste from Sweden’s current nuclear power plants. The application for a permit to extend the repository was submitted in 2014 and was approved by the regulators and Östhammar municipality. Following Government approval, the decision requires final ratification by the regulatory bodies.

6. **Nuclear Safety:**

**Fukushima:** Eleven years on after the Fukushima disaster, the Japanese Government has plans to release millions of tons of radioactive water stored at the damaged nuclear plant into the sea over decades starting in spring 2023. The plan is to dig an undersea tunnel to make the discharges about 1km from the plant, and temporary pits are being dug to store the water prior to discharge.

An average of 150 tons of radioactive water was produced each day last year as rainwater and groundwater has flowed into the damaged reactor buildings mixing with water used to cool the melted nuclear fuel. Although the contaminated water is treated it cannot remove deadly tritium, a beta-emitting radioactive isotope of hydrogen, and other radioactive materials. The purpose of the pits is to enable the treated water to be diluted with seawater to reduce the contamination to a low enough level to discharge into the sea.

Drilling work for the tunnel scheduled for early 2022 has however now had to be held back until June, and opposition to the plan remains fierce among local residents, local fishermen, who fear the destruction of their livelihoods, and even overseas governments.

[https://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/14536446](https://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/14536446)

Above: Storage tanks at Fukushima (photo: [www.asahi.com](http://www.asahi.com))
7. **Political**

7a. **UK and Devolved Governments**

**Contracts for Difference:** The Government has conducted a consultation on the fourth round of its CfD which it claims will deliver three times as much renewable energy capacity as the three previous rounds combined. Within the fourth round, £200 million has been made available for offshore wind (the government’s favoured renewable), £75 million for ‘emerging technologies’ (including £24 million ringfenced for floating offshore wind and £20 million for tidal stream projects), and £10 million for established technologies, such as solar and onshore wind.


**£60 million funding for floating offshore wind:** The Government has announced £31.6 million of UK government funding, matched by more than £30 million of industry funding, through the Floating Offshore Wind Demonstration Programme, for development of innovative floating offshore wind technologies. At the end of January, 11 successful projects were each awarded up to £10 million.

The UK is already home to the world’s largest deployment of offshore wind, however floating turbines, which can be deployed in deeper waters than conventional turbines, will boost energy capacity even further by allowing wind farms to be situated in new areas around the UK coastline where wind strengths are at their highest and most productive.


**More funding for energy storage:** The first tranche of £6.7 million in government funding has just been awarded to twenty-four projects based across the UK through the Longer Duration Energy Storage competition, which is worth £68 million in total.

These projects will develop new energy storage technologies that can utilise stored energy as heat, electricity or as a low-carbon energy carrier like hydrogen. Ranging from the development of thermal batteries to converting energy to hydrogen, they have been selected because of their potential to improve technology performance and reduce the cost of meeting net zero. Successful projects could benefit from a greater tranche of funding from a second phase of the competition, which will support these projects towards commercialisation, encouraging private investment and creating new jobs.


**Northern Ireland Assembly:** In February, the NIA backed a net zero carbon target for the region by 2050. Members of the Legislative Assembly voted by 50 to 38 in favour of an amendment proposed by the Green Party to the Northern Ireland Climate Change Bill making a commitment to cut carbon emissions across the region not by the planned 82%, but a more challenging 100%.
40 years after the Nuclear Free Wales (Clwyd) Declaration: On 23 Feb, peace activists in Wales celebrated the fortieth anniversary of the Nuclear Free Wales Declaration when Clwyd became the last of the original eight county councils to pass a resolution in support in 1982. Cymru CND held a webinar to mark the event.

A touring exhibition will crisscross Wales from April to December. Amongst the exhibits will be an original banner created by Thalia Campbell.

This previously saw service in protests at the Greenham Common cruise missile base in the 1980s (right).

7b. European Union

France: President Macron’s obsession with civil nuclear continued with his February announcement that at least six and possibly up to fourteen new nuclear reactors will be built by 2050 as a rebirth of France’s nuclear industry. Given the length of time it has taken so far to build Flamanville 3 and the dire state of EDF’s finances, the reality is unlikely to match ambition. Civil nuclear provides about 70% of the nation’s electricity, but output is at its lowest level as more existing power stations are taken offline for repairs and upgrades. In better news he also announced a major acceleration in the development of solar and offshore wind power.

https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/feb/10/france-to-build-up-to-14-new-nuclear-reactors-by-2050-says-macron

See also section 7a. for more woes for EDF.

Taxonomy: The French government has been successful in getting the European Commission to maintain its taxonomy stance favouring nuclear and gas as green. This means these developments can attract EU structural funding. The EU Commission publishing the Taxonomy Complementary Climate Delegated Act on 2 Feb. Although the EU Taxonomy regime supposedly defines “economic activities (that) can be considered environmentally sustainable”, in a spectacular act of greenwashing, the Commission has stated “that there is a role for private investment in gas and nuclear activities in the transition” to European climate neutrality, giving the green light for approval for these less-than-green energy sources.

The Austrian Government has announced it intends to sue the European Commission at the European Court of Justice if the current Taxonomy proposal enters law, whilst Germany’s vice-chancellor Robert Habeck has stated that Berlin will examine the contentious proposal before considering a potential lawsuit.

https://beyondnuclearinternational.org/2022/02/03/grimmm-news/

7c. CNFE (Cities for a Nuclear-Free Europe)

In a recent letter to member cities of CNFE, including Manchester and the NFLA, Jan Dictus from the Secretariat of Cities for a Nuclear Free Europe lambasted the decision over taxonomy: 'It sends the EU's climate and energy policy on a completely wrong path. If you or I, or our pension fund, want to invest our savings in “green energy”, there is a big chance that our money is used for lifetime extension of an old nuclear power plant. Thus, as a result, there will be less finance available for renewable energy.'

8. Commercial and Statutory

8a. EDF

EDF UK has reported significant losses for 2021 due to the ongoing impact of COVID-19 and high global gas prices. The company’s UK EBITDA fell to -$21 million in 2021 from £712 million in 2020, and its UK EBIT to -£1.7 billion from -£862 million. Its residential business was loss-making as wholesale power prices surged, but it was unable to recoup this from customers due to the price cap. Ofgem this month announced that the price cap for the summer period is increasing by 54% in response to the historic high prices. EDF took on over 650,000 customer accounts in 2021 through the Supplier of Last Resort (SoLR) mechanism, as other companies closed due to the price squeeze. Of the 27 suppliers that closed, the company took on the customers of Green Network Energy, Utility Point, Zog Energy.

https://www.current-news.co.uk/news/edf-uk-reports-significant-losses-due-to-high-global-gas-prices


EDF CEO Jean-Bernard Lévy announced on 22 Feb that 12 nuclear reactors were currently shut down in France, including six linked to a corrosion problem on a safety system. Worryingly Monsieur Levy conceded that "six were shut down because we detected, very unexpectedly, a corrosion problem in certain places where we should not see this corrosion at all, and so we stopped them to examine them, to fully understand what is happening."

https://m.investir.lesechos.fr/actualites/edf-12-reacteurs-a-l-arret-en-raison-de-probleme-de-corrosion-pdg-2004147.html

The French state said on 18 Feb it will inject around 2.1 billion euros into EDF to ease the financial pain inflict by nuclear reactors going offline and the government making the firm supply power below market prices.

Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire said the state capital injection will be made via a rights issue, announced by EDF, aimed at raising 2.5 billion euros to plug holes in the company's balance sheet. In other words, France will continue to own the bulk of EDF equity.

8b. **NDA**

On 31 January, the NDA launched Nuclear Waste Services, bringing together Low Level Waste Repository Limited, Radioactive Waste Management Limited and the Integrated Waste Management Programme. This business will maintain its current commitments to the Low Level Waste Repository and to the GDF programme.

Nuclear Waste Services will be led by Chief Executive Officer Corhyn Parr, formerly NDA’s Director of Integrated Waste, and Board Chair Adriène Kelbie, formerly the Chief Executive of the ONR.

Following the retirement of Prof. Cherry Tweed, NWS, has appointed Neil Hyatt as its new Chief Scientist. Mr Hyatt, who is based at the University of Sheffield, has experience in the treatment and management of radioactive waste nationally and internationally. He has served as a member of the government's independent Committee on Radioactive Waste Management (CoRWM).


Please also see section 2b. for details of the ongoing work to establish a new NGO Forum in which the NFLA is playing a lead role.

9. **Renewable technologies and climate emergency**

**More Insulation needed in UK:** The UK must do more to insulate the country’s draughty homes, warns Britain's climate change chief. Chris Stark, head of the UK’s Climate Change Committee, told the BBC he rates government policy on insulation as "very poor". Insulation, together with renewable power, is the way out of the current energy crisis, he says. Two-thirds of homes, or 19 million, need better insulation, according to government data.

The key issue is the cost. Britain is frequently described as having some of the oldest and least energy efficient housing in Europe. Retrofitting - adding insulation to existing homes - can be very expensive and Mr Stark says the government isn't doing enough to help fund this costly work. The government needs to provide "a sharper incentive for most people to make these investments in improving the energy efficiency of the home that they live in," he told BBC News.


**Fracking to End in UK:** In a victory to environmental campaigners, in February Cuadrilla has announced that it will permanently plug and abandon its two shale wells in the northern Bowland Shale gas formation in Lancashire, drawing a line on Britain’s failed fracking industry.

Cuadrilla set out plans to permanently seal the two shale gas wells drilled at the Preston New Road Lancashire shale exploration site over two years after the government’s Oil and Gas Authority ordered the shutdown.

The OGA’s rules state that only wells ‘which have real value’ can be suspended rather than decommissioned”. A spokesperson for the OGA said it expected a ‘timely plugging and abandonment of non-producing wells’ under its rules.
Francis Egan, Chief Executive of Cuadrilla, called the decision ‘ridiculous’, whilst Tory MP Craig McKinlay, Chair of Conservative Net Zero Scrutiny Group, called it ‘madness’. In contrast, UK Greenpeace’s Head of Climate Kate Blagojevic said: “all this industry has given us are a couple of holes in a muddy field and some minor earthquakes.”

https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/feb/10/fracking-firm-cuadrilla-to-permanently-abandon-controversial-uk-sites?fbclid=IwAR2KI6EOIzsvwm_JqrMoA8tilJJHGaA1d1A33FuIzgo885_TFqJDQnCVq8

**First battery-diesel hybrid train enters service**: Chiltern Railways and Porterbrook engineering have retrofitted a 20-year old diesel train with a powerful battery to reduce fuel consumption and CO2 emissions by 25%; a 75% decrease in noise and a 70% decrease in nitrogen oxide. The two-carriage train, named HybridFLEX, can travel at speeds of up to 100mph. The UK Government has pledged to phase out all diesel-only trains by 2040.


**Welsh Free Bus Travel pilot**: With support from the Welsh Government, Newport bus services were free to passengers during the month of March in an extended pilot to remove cars from the city centre. If successful, the model may be rolled out across Wales. Free public transport was one of 58 recommendations in the Burns Report – which was commissioned to find alternatives to car travel in the South East Wales, covering Newport and the wider Gwent area.
Welsh Renewable Energy Park: Aberthaw, the last coal-powered power station in Wales, was closed in 2020 and has since lain empty. In February, the Cardiff Capital Region, a group of councils in South-East Wales, announced they were planning to buy the site and redevelop it with renewable energy generation and a large business park. Tidal power may be under consideration as the site is located on the coast of the Bristol Channel, and tidals streams near Aberthaw are some of the region’s fastest. Potential options include a lagoon or separate giant underwater turbines. Interestingly, the site had previously been mooted as a potential site for a prototype fusion reactor.

Are these the first factory-built homes to guarantee zero energy bills? A modular housing pioneer and a specialist alternative asset manager are set to deliver homes that promise zero energy bills, saving new owners up to £40,000 over 20 years. Offsite specialist ilke Homes, in partnership with Gresham House and shared ownership agent SO Resi, will install the factory-built home on a site in Stanford-le-Hope, Essex as part of a wider 153-home scheme.

Drax plans to invest further £3 billion in ‘renewable’ energy in next decade: Drax, the Yorkshire based power generator, has reported plans to invest a further £3 billion over the next ten years in renewables after acquiring Pinnacle Renewable Energy Inc last year for £222 million. After converting from coal, the CEO of Drax Group, Will Gardiner, claims they have reduced their carbon footprint by 95% and are now the UK’s largest renewable generator by output. However, the company has been mired in controversy with accusations that it burns biomass sourced from North America which many environmentalists say is unsustainable.

Wind farm owners paid to hold back power: Wind farms have been paid to refrain from producing up to half of the electricity they are capable of generating, according to research that led MPs to warn that "inappropriate" decisions on wind power were "forcing excess costs onto consumers". An analysis found that, in 2020, three large wind farms in Scotland were paid a total of £24.5 million to fail to produce about half of their potential output. Researchers said the "constraint payments", which are ultimately added to consumer bills, were being fuelled by a high concentration of onshore wind farms in Scotland often leaving the electricity grid unable to cope on windy days. The Renewable Energy Foundation, a charity that publishes energy data, said the problem would continue “until there is more than sufficient interconnection between Scotland and the centres of demand in England".
More battery storage for Scotland: Canadian renewable company Amp Energy has announced the development of the 800MW Scottish Green Battery Complex – split between Hunterston, Ayrshire and Kincardine, Fife – is expected to be operational in April 2024. It will comprise two 400MW battery arrays providing 800MWh of storage capacity, the biggest systems of their type in Europe.


10 Mayors for Peace:

Peace Tree in Leeds commemorates passing of Leeds Council resolution favouring Treaty Ban

To mark the passing of a resolution favouring the nuclear ban treaty, Leeds City Council, planted a tree in Park Square. Fundraising paid for a plaque explaining the significance of the tree and the decision by Leeds City Council.

In early February, NFLA Chair and Leeds City Councillor David Blackburn, joined members of Leeds Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament [CND] to commemorate the plaque’s installation.

Ukraine: With reference to the tense military situation in Ukraine and the threat to nuclear plants there and the possible employment of nuclear weapons, please refer to ‘NFLA Policy Briefing 227: The potential impact of the conflict in Ukraine on nuclear power plants and potential nuclear escalation – 24 February’.

The President of Mayors for Peace and the European Chapter of Mayors for Peace have issued statements on the situation, as has ICAN. These can be found with the briefing on the NFLA website.

In more recent news, the Chernobyl site has been captured by Russian forces with reports that the passage of military vehicles has stirred up radioactive dust increasing atmospheric radiation levels significantly. There are also currently press reports of Russian forces near the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, and a Russian missile strike against a radioactive waste store near Kyiv. President Putin has also put his strategic nuclear forces on high alert – a very threatening development.


https://metro.co.uk/2022/02/28/ukraine-war-russian-missiles-hit-nuclear-waste-site-16186392/
11. **Forthcoming events with links:**

   **‘Nuclear Convoys: did you know that nuclear warheads could be driving through your town?’ webinar – Thursday 3 March 6.30-7.30pm. Organised by CND, NFLA and Nukewatch.**

   Join CND, NFLA and Nukewatch for this online webinar to discuss nuclear convoys. Nuclear bombs often travel along Britain’s roads, putting at risk the communities which they travel through. No radiation warning symbols are carried and neither the public nor local authorities are warned of these nuclear convoys. This webinar will discuss these convoys, the dangers they pose and share how you can get involved in tracking them as part of the campaign to scrap Trident.

   With guest speakers Councillor David Blackburn, NFLA Steering Committee Chair; Juliet Macbride, Nukewatch; and Rob Edwards, *The Ferret*. Chaired by Dr Kate Hudson, CND General Secretary.

   **Register at [https://cnduk.org/events/nuclear-convoys-did-you-know-that-nuclear-warheads-could-be-driving-through-your-town/](https://cnduk.org/events/nuclear-convoys-did-you-know-that-nuclear-warheads-could-be-driving-through-your-town/)**

   **‘Nuclear power: not fit for purpose?’ webinar - 14 March 7pm. Organised by CND**

   Nuclear power is increasingly marketed as part of the solution to the climate crisis and there is considerable support for it from trade unions. In fact it’s dirty, dangerous, expensive, won't help with our climate problems, and there are far more jobs in renewables.

   Recent news shows that French nuclear corporation EDF is in real financial trouble, and their current technology is facing big problems. A design flaw recently manifested in the EDF EPR reactor in Taishan, China, may affect all the other EPRs in France, Finland and even Hinkley C - currently being built in Somerset.

   Academic expert and NFLA advisor Dr Paul Dorfman will brief us on this subject.

   Organised by CND’s Trade Union Advisory Group

   **Register at [https://cnduk.org/events/nuclear-power-not-fit-for-purpose-cnd-webinar/](https://cnduk.org/events/nuclear-power-not-fit-for-purpose-cnd-webinar/)**

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