



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
HINKLEY A & B STAKEHOLDER GROUP (SSG)
HELD AT THE CANALSIDE, MARSH LANE, BRIDGEWATER, TA6 6LQ
TUESDAY, 23 SEPTEMBER 2025**

Attendance/Apologies list

Present

Cllr L Redman
Graham Pearn

Chair
Vice Chair

Voting Members

Cllr H Davies
Cllr S Goss
Cllr K Hewson
Mr A Jeffery
Cllr C Morgan
Cllr R Perrett
Cllr M Phillips
Cllr J Roberts
Ms M Smith

Somerset Councillor for Watchet, Williton and Stogursey
Stogursey Parish Council
Bawdrip Parish Council
Green Party
Stogursey Parish Council
Otterhampton Parish Council
Wembdon Parish Council
Nether Stowey Parish Council
West Somerset Green Forum

Appointed Members

Ms T Bond
Mr N Kimmins

Somerset Council
Somerset Council

EDF

Mr D Uminski
Ms H Dyer
Mr D Stokes
Mr M Pardo

Technical & Safety Support Manager
Environmental Safety & Chemistry Group Head
Communications Officer
External Communications Manager

NRS

Mr M Pitts
Mr J Craig
Mrs S Fry

In Attendance

Mr B Broadley
Ms N Caplin
Ms L Platts
Mr A Wintle
Mr J McNamara
Ms P Hatt
Dr J Long
Ms R Austin

ONR Hinkley B
Environment Agency
Environment Agency
Environment Agency
NDA
NDA
NDA
Minute Taker

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Members of the Public

Mr A Bedford
Mr J Freeman
Mr J Smolden
Mr R Wallis

Amentum
Independent
Stop Hinkley
Staff of Ms R Gilmour MP

Apologies

Cllr J Addison
Mr A Debenham
Ms N Fauvel
Ms R Gilmour
Mr B Hamilton
Cllr M Hodson
Ms V Thomas

Cannington Parish Council
Stop Hinkley
Station Director, Hinkley Point B, EDF
MP for Tiverton and Minehead
NRS
Spaxton Parish Council
Environment Agency

1. WELCOME

94 The Chair (Cllr Redman) opened the meeting and welcomed new members, reminding all attendees to sign in. The agenda had been circulated prior to the meeting. Graham Pearn introduced himself as the new Vice Chair.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

95 Apologies had been received as listed above.

3. OPEN PUBLIC Q&A SESSION

96 No public questions were received.

4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 3 MARCH 2025

97 Ms Smith stated that the main point of her question about plutonium had not been captured. The relevant Parliamentary Committee had been informed just prior to the last SSG meeting that the plutonium store at Sellafield was at a critical point and would take billions of pounds and 100 years to clear. The Chair asked that Ms Smith email him the specifics of her question following the meeting to be added to the previous minutes and answered.

98 The Chair summarised the action tracker. Point 13 had been closed. Point 18 would be covered during the meeting's reports. On point 32, the Chair asked that Cllr Goss email in to clarify her question. On point 35, the Chair explained that Andy Munro from NRS would be the relevant contact. Mr Munro's details would be shared alongside the minutes of the current meeting. Action point 47 related to Ms Smith's aforementioned question. Point 56 remained open, as the question had yet to be answered.

99 Responding to the Chair, Ms Fry confirmed that the slides of the previous meeting could be found on the SSG website. The Chair noted that communications related to the final action point had been added to the previous meeting's minutes. The action tracker would be attached to meeting minutes going forward.

100 The minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2025 were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

5. STATION DIRECTOR'S REPORT – HINKLEY POINT A STATION

101 Mr Pitts apologised for his lack of attendance at the previous meeting due to illness. He confirmed that fuel element debris retrieval was running ahead of schedule. Compared to 2024, the speed of recovery had greatly improved. The dry vaults project was in its infancy, but making progress. The planning application for new welfare facilities had been approved and the pre-conditioning facility moved into the active commissioning phase.

102 Mr Pitts observed that Hinkley A was now moving into an operational phase. Due to organisational changes, all accountability for the site was now under the purview of the site director. The targets for Hinkley were summarised and most were rated green, though roof work had been impacted by hot weather.

103 A video on milestone success at the pre-conditioning facility, specifically polymer encapsulation, was played. Mr Pitts commented on vault retrieval and packaging project work, which was currently eight weeks ahead of schedule. A simplified waste map was presented.

104 Mr Pitts reported that there were 14 new apprentices on site for the year and a promotional video related to the apprenticeship induction was played. Mr Pitts highlighted that the site was also now offering work experience placements to local schools. The sites socioeconomic work

was reported on, with the Chair noting that NRS grant funding was focused on maximising benefit as locally as possible. Mr Pitts added that the site volunteering programme had stepped up in recent times. There had also been a shift in approach on sustainability, recognising that it was broader than just recycling. This had led to initiatives including the monthly gardening club. Alan Cummings from the NDA had visited in the last period.

105 Cllr Phillips asked about the plan for the main buildings. Mr Pitts noted that prep machines in the main buildings were of wooden construction and there had been some popping. The equipment was in an exclusion zone and on a watchlist. The buildings themselves were part of a longer term investment plan and were regularly inspected. The cranes had been taken out of service.

106 Mr Jeffery asked when the first encapsulated waste would be added to the intermediate waste store. Mr Pitts stated that December 2025 was the target date. The Chair asked if the project plan could be shared once in place. Mr Pitts confirmed that this would be included in the slide deck going forward.

107 The Vice Chair asked if there was a set funding timetable. Mr Pitts stated that the deadline was currently end of decade. Cllr Morgan asked if there was any provision for people with physical disabilities to visit or work at the site. Mr Pitts confirmed that the site was accessible to those with disabilities.

6. STATION DIRECTOR'S REPORT – HINKLEY POINT B STATION

108 Mr Uminski reported that there had been no significant nuclear or environmental events during the period. There had, however, been some minor industrial safety lost time incidents, with two individuals needing to take time off work. External speakers visiting the site to discuss safety issues had proved effective refreshers for staff.

109 All oil had been removed from the gas circulator system in reactor four and work to remove some bulk chemicals was underway. EDF has applied to the Environment Agency to vary Hinkley Point B's radioactive substances permit, ahead of transfer to NRS in 2026.

110 Mr Uminski reported that defueling efforts at reactor three were making good progress, with 282 of 308 assemblies removed as of the meeting. At that rate of progress, reactor three would be complete by the end of October. Early preparation had led to two irradiated fuel assemblies being successfully bottled and the site was working towards being declared fuel free in early 2026.

111 Both the Environmental Impact Assessment for Decommissioning Regulations (EIADR) and Environmental Statement were with the Environment Agency for assessment. Once defueling work was complete, the active effluent discharge line would also be reassessed and likely modified. A submission would be made to ONR regarding the site's emergency arrangements once it was fuel free.

112 It was anticipated that most waste at Hinkley B during commissioning would be conventional waste and there were no plans to remove waste from the dry vaults during the decommissioning process. A small amount of waste from the active effluent treatment plant would need to be decommissioned in future. The site was working with the NRS to determine the best strategy for disposal of this waste.

113 Mr Uminski noted recent awards, local charity work and site visits. Staff and contractors were constantly reminded about road safety standards and being a 'good neighbour'. At an upcoming safety day in October, road safety would play a significant role.

114 Cllr Davies asked the length of the 'care and maintenance' period. Mr Uminski stated that this phase would be in excess of 80 years. Cllr Goss suggested that waste stored at Hinkley B would remain until a geological disposal facility (GDF) was commissioned. Mr Uminski confirmed that this was accurate. Waste would remain on the Hinkley estate. The Chair added that changes in Government strategy on this point had been communicated between meetings.

- 115 Ms Smith asked the impact of changes to the risk assessment format to include a 'fresh pair of eyes'. Mr Uminski commented on the site's multi-layered approach to risk assessment. The lead team had sought to spend more time in the field to this end and had discussed approaches to managing risk, including coaching staff.
- 116 Cllr Kimmins asked how changes in the emergency procedure might affect the Civil Nuclear Constabulary (CNC). Mr Uminski explained that, once the site was fuel free, CNC presence would no longer be required. A release plan for CNC officers would come into effect throughout 2026. The Chair noted that this might be a beneficial plenary session topic at the March 2026 meeting.
- 117 The Chair asked if there was an element of consultation to the emergency plan changes. Mr Uminski confirmed that internal documentation would be shared with Somerset Council during the process. The Chair asked if there were any planning issues in relation to modifying the active effluent discharge line. Mr Uminski confirmed that this project was in its very early stages. Further information would be shared as it progressed. Ms Dyer stated that planning changes would be likely.

7. NRS CORPORATE REPORT

- 118 Mr Craig introduced himself. Mr Hamilton had been unable to attend, as he was at a community roadshow event in Hunterston. The spending review had made clear the budget for the remainder of the current Parliament. The focus on frontline decommissioning work would remain. Senior staff would be subject to a mutually agreed voluntary exit process, but it was yet to be confirmed whether this would be rolled out to other grades.
- 119 A national community engagement programme had been launched, hence Mr Hamilton's presence in Hunterston. Mobile exhibitions would be present both on site and in the community. The local community would be polled and three in-person focus groups of young people, adults and SSG representatives conducted. Once the final report was complete, the findings would be shared with all SSGs. Research showed that there was a real knowledge gap in the wider community about work on the site. The engagement programme would go some way to remediate this and better understand local views. The Chair asked if the terms of reference for the local polling mentioned could be shared.
- 120 **ACTION: Mr Craig to share the terms of reference for NRS local polling and the polling results already received from other sites.**
- 121 Cllr Goss asked what proposals were being discussed. Mr Craig clarified that this polling was general engagement work, seeking to understand the community's knowledge of the site and their priorities for the future. Ms Hatt added that the previously undertaken stakeholder survey had been national. Current polling efforts were about drilling down into local specifics.
- 122 Ms Smith asked if there was a target figure being pursued in terms of overall savings. Mr Craig stated there was currently no monetary target. Ms Smith asked if monetary cost would be assessed. Mr Craig confirmed that this would likely be assessed in the future, as the corporate restructuring of NRS continued, and shared with the SSG.
- 123 **ACTION: Mr Craig to share NRS corporate restructuring plans with the SSG as they progressed.**

8. NDA REPORTS

- 124 Mr McNamara joined the meeting via Microsoft Teams. The Chair clarified that Mr McNamara had been unable to travel due to illness. SSG meetings would continue to be held in person.
- 125 Mr McNamara commented on developments as a result of the spending review. The Government had allocated the highest ever settlement to the NDA, but over a five-year time horizon, meaning that some projects might be paused or slowed. The SSG would be kept updated on any changes put in place as a result of this.

- 126 Hunterston and Hinkley would be the first two sites to transition from EDF and the SSG would be provided with regular updates. The 12-week public consultation on the five-year strategy was underway and would be discussed further during the plenary session later in the meeting. The final strategy would be published in March 2026. Cross-party groups for nuclear had been set up in both Scottish and Welsh devolved governments and discussions as to whether the Vulcan Naval Reactor Test Establishment would also transition to the NDA for decommissioning were underway.
- 127 On the question of plutonium at Sellafield, Mr McNamara highlighted that £5 million had been invested in creating a ceramics hub, £2.5 million of which had already been allocated to research into making the plutonium safe before eventual its disposal in the GDF. More recently, the Government had announced the NDA's commitment of another £154 million towards a new laboratory at Sellafield, creating over 100 jobs.
- 128 The Chair noted possible NDA involvement in the decommissioning of Ministry of Defence (MoD) sites, the nearest to Hinkley being in Plymouth, and possible input the Hinkley SSG could give. Mr McNamara stated that engagement with the UK and Scottish governments on this was underway. Currently, MoD representatives attended the Dounreay SSG. A similar community meeting for nuclear MoD sites also existed, attended by the same regulators.
- 129 Cllr Jeffery asked how the NDA might be required to pause or slow down its progress due to the spending review. Mr McNamara clarified that the NDA was still in the reassessment phase. It was a question of appropriately allocating spending over five years, rather than not having sufficient available funds. The NDA had become accustomed to a one or two-year funding cycle. The Chair added that more details would be shared once they became available.
- 130 Cllr Goss highlighted that some GDF employees had already been offered redundancy. Mr McNamara explained that there would be a programme of voluntary redundancy across the group, ensuring that as much money as possible was allocated to frontline services. Lincolnshire had dropped out of the consultation process on the GDF, requiring a significant reassessment of staffing, but taking forward the GDF remained Government policy.
- 131 The meeting was adjourned between 10.57 and 11.09.

9. PLENARY SESSION

- 132 ***NDA Strategy 5***
- 133 The Chair noted that he had put together a draft response the SSG might like to submit to the Strategy 5 consultation. If not agreed, the Chair would submit it as an individual.
- 134 A video introducing NDA Strategy 5 was played. Dr Long introduced herself. The national mission of the NDA and its four key strategic themes were outlined. This fifth iteration of the strategy would ensure that the organisation was on course to deliver, reflecting changes in regulation and legislation and experiences in the sector globally. A related integrated impact assessment was available on the website.
- 135 The NDA was working with Government to ensure that lessons learned over time were incorporated into the strategy moving forward. The NDA was also supporting Government with its decisions on plutonium and advanced gas-cooled reactors (AGRs). It had not yet been decided whether the Vulcan site would transition into the NDA group. Overall, there were efforts being made to look past the labels across the group and work as one organisation to maximise value nationally.
- 136 A key element of the strategy was its articulation of medium-term aspirations, including the retrieval of most waste from high hazard silos, dealing with plutonium and working with regulators and Government to implement legislation enabling work without a nuclear license were safe and relevant. The NDA was working with communities and local councils to understand, for example, how land across the estate might be better used.

- 137 The NDA's role in the wider nuclear enterprise was also an important element of the strategy. Dr Long clarified that the NDA would not become the only UK nuclear organisation. Its mission remained waste-informed, proportional decommissioning of legacy sites and the associated efficient use of group resources, bearing in mind holistic sustainability.
- 138 Some critical enablers had been changed. For example, sustainability had been removed as a critical enabler and included as a principle instead. Asset management and continuous improvement had been grouped together. The concept of safe stewardship had been made more explicit and aspirations for success added. The consultation would close on 29 September and included a number of specific questions, but respondents were also able to provide their own comments if they wished.
- 139 Ms Smith asked about references in the strategy to climate change and if there was flexibility to incorporate rapidly increasing sea levels. Dr Long explained that environment had been split out as a standalone critical enabler to facilitate a greater focus on the topic. It must be embedded throughout the mission and plans. Developments were constantly monitored and reviewed to incorporate changes as they occurred. Cllr Goss suggested that the issue of flood protection was more relevant for new nuclear sites, rather than those being decommissioned.
- 140 Cllr Goss observed that it was unlikely a GDF would be complete within 25 years, given that a site had yet to be identified. Dr Long agreed that this was an ambitious target. It was nevertheless helpful to articulate such aspirations to encourage progress.
- 141 Cllr Roberts noted that he had often asked about plans for the land at Hinkley A and B sites, but had yet to receive an answer. There must be a direction of travel.
- 142 **ACTION: The Chair confirmed to take the question of land usage at Hinkley A and B away to seek a substantive response.**
- 143 Dr Long added that Strategy 5 included more emphasis on careful consideration of future use of the estate, including regional and local engagement. Final decommissioning was too far in the future to finalise a use for all sites in the near term. Cllr Roberts suggested that the obvious answer was for nuclear sites to remain so.
- 144 The Chair reiterated that the consultation would close in just under a week's time. He would circulate his drafted response, but was conscious given the little time remaining that it would not represent the views of all SSG members. He would not submit it as an SSG response unless there was clear consensus. Members were encouraged to feed into the consultation individually if they had not already done so.
- 145 ***NDA/NRS Stakeholders' Survey***
- 146 Ms Hatt introduced herself, highlighting the online stakeholder summit taking place on Monday 3 November, invitations for which would soon be circulated. Members were encouraged to sign up to the online stakeholder database if they did not already receive updates through the SSG. The Chair noted that he often forwarded on updates to SSG members as he received them.
- 147 Ms Hatt highlighted that, previously, surveys had been carried out every few years through in-depth interviews. More recently, shorter pulse surveys had been conducted in order to capture the comments of a broader range of stakeholders. There had been 204 respondents from three key groups: community stakeholders, the nuclear industry and public bodies.
- 148 Key findings from the survey were reported across three main areas: trust, leadership and transparency. There had been positive results in terms of confidence in the NDA's leadership, the criticality of the NDA to the clean up of the UK's nuclear legacy and the organisation's engagement with the public. The relationships between operating companies had also been considered alongside perception of the NDA corporate centre.
- 149 A number of areas for improvement had been identified through the survey, including perceptions that the NDA did not deliver value for money, understanding of the organisation's

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role internationally and industry and supply chain concerns about receptiveness to feedback. There was also a need to improve stakeholder views on adherence to best practice across the group and holding operating companies to account.

150 The NDA continued to reflect on the survey's findings, only a snapshot of which had been presented. The wider findings would be shared on website in due course. There would be a session at the 3 November summit on the NDA's international work, reflecting the lack of understanding identified during survey.

151 Mr Wallis asked about the difference in results in terms of the NDA's leadership and engagement. Ms Hatt suggested that it was easy for the organisation to fall into the trap of using technical terminology and acronyms, assuming a deep knowledge of the nuclear industry. There might therefore be a gap between how well the NDA felt it was articulating its progress and the reception of this at the ground level.

10. OFFICE FOR NUCLEAR REGULATION (ONR) REPORT HINKLEY A & B

152 Mr Broadley noted that ONR reports had been circulated prior to the meeting and were available on the ONR website. Since the previous meeting, there had been various engagement with Hinkley B around preparations for the end of defueling, fuel free verification and the related future change in emergency arrangements. The EIADR was nearing completion. The ONR was working through comments from the consultation period and was due to determine whether consent would be granted. The outcome would be published on the ONR website and shared with the SSG in the coming weeks.

153 More generally, performance across both sites had been as expected. There had been some engagement in relation to low level issues. Climate change had been a key issue reviewed and discussed across the past year.

154 Cllr Goss highlighted that the removal of CNC officers would leave Stogursey parish dependent on Avon and Somerset police service, which was already overstretched. She suggested that some CNC officers might be retained. Mr Uminski stated that the retention of some CNC officers in the area was already under consideration.

155 **ACTION: Chair to seek a formal response from the CNC on future plans to share with SSG members between meetings.**

156 Cllr Roberts asked if Hinkley B would be unlicensed once fuel free. Mr Broadley clarified that the site would remain licensed once fuel free. The regulatory requirement for CNC officers was driven by the presence of nuclear fuel, rather than nuclear waste. The ONR could feed this back local concerns in terms of recommending changes to the legislation going forward. An attendee observed that CNC presence would likely need to increase again in future, given developments at Hinkley C. The Chair noted that Hinkley C had chosen to move forward with a slightly different community engagement structure.

11. ENVIRONMENT AGENCY REPORT HINKLEY A & B

157 Mr Wintle noted that he would cover both sites in Ms Thomas' absence. After a recent inspection at Hinkley A, the Environment Agency was satisfied that a suitable asset management system was in place. There had also been a permit review, which had highlighted some areas of potential change. Mr Wintle emphasised that this did not represent non-compliance, but rather areas of possible variation due to future changes in the site's activity. The environmental monitoring programme inspection was in progress, with the results likely to be ready for the next SSG meeting.

158 At a joint inspection with the ONR in January on the Hinkley B's work towards decommissioning, no non-compliance had been identified. Information on the site's combustion activities had been received and reviewed, with no issues identified. The

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Environment Agency was also satisfied that the site was compliant with the relevant permit following a best available techniques review.

159 Mr Wintle noted Hinkley A had provided the information requested on its combustion operations. The Environment Agency had been pleased with the quality of the application submitted. A radioactive substances permit variation had been received from Hinkley B in April 2025 and the Environment Agency was satisfied that the site was reducing its emissions. The request changes had been made to the permit as a result. The effective date would align with the site being fully defueled.

160 The permit transfer application from EDF to NRS had been received. There would be consultation on the application, because the only effective change would be to the name of the operation. The Environment Agency would ensure that NRS was competent to take on the site. The radioactivity in food and the environment report had been updated and the 2024 report would be published in the coming months. The 2024 habits survey had been published in March 2025 and was available through the link in the report.

12. CHAIR'S REPORT AND TO NOTE ITEMS CIRCULATED BETWEEN MEETINGS

161 The Chair noted that the following items had been circulated between meetings:
162 'Have your say' on the NDA
163 Leadership changes at NWS and NTS
164 ONR consultation – EIADR application for consent for HPB
165 Consultation on the EDF Energy Nuclear Generation Ltd EIADR Application for Consent for the Hinkley Point B Site
166 Environment Agency – Environmental Permit Consultation
167 Sebastian Koa – Recruitment for interviews for PhD research
168 Hinkley Point B variation EPR/CB3735DT/V008
169 Launch of public consultation on NDA Strategy 5
170 ONR site inspector's quarterly SSG report for Hinkley Point B Q2 – 1 January to 30 June 2025
171 Placeholder – NDA Strategy 5 Webinar – 5 September
172 Register now for the NDA Strategy 5 Webinar
173 Reminder – Invitation and registration link for NDA Strategy 5 Webinar
174 Election of new Vice Chair
175 Sent on behalf of the NDA – Reminder – Invitation and registration link for NDA Strategy 5 webinar

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

176 ***New Hinkley SSG Constitution***

177 The Chair noted that the revised constitution had been circulated ahead of the meeting. SSG member unanimously approved the new SSG constitution.

178 ***Hinkley Point Display at Blake Museum***

179 The Chair highlighted efforts to mark the legacy of Hinkley Point through a possible display at Blake Museum. He asked if members felt such a display would be of interest to the community and if the SSG should therefore work with the museum and both sites to create it.

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180 Ms Smith asked if all points of view would be included in such a display. The Chair confirmed that they would. Any display should be as transparent as possible to preserve the real history of the sites.

181 ***Plenary for next meeting***

182 The Chair referred back to his earlier suggestion that the next plenary session focus on the transition from EDF to NRS. There were no further suggestions from members.

183 ***2026 meeting dates***

184 The Chair noted the upcoming meeting dates of Tuesday 17 March and Tuesday 15 September 2026. He invited members to direct questions to him or the new Vice Chair in the interim.

185 Cllr Davies suggested that a revised membership list be circulated. The Chair confirmed that he would do so. It would also be his aim to grow the SSG's membership over the coming six months.

186 **ACTION: Chair to circulate a revised SSG membership list.**

187 Cllr Goss advised that attendance might increase again to previous levels if meetings took place three times a year, rather than twice. The Chair stated that he would be driven by the membership in this regard. The recent consensus had been that two meetings was sufficient, due to the state of the sites, and the current meeting was due to finish well ahead of the scheduled end time. Cllr Roberts seconded Cllr Goss's suggestion that meetings again take place three times per year.

188 **ACTION: Chair to circulate a poll to members about the frequency of SSG meetings.**

189 Ms Smith thanked the Chair for his communications between meetings, which were helpful. Ms Fry noted the upcoming March 2026 Hinkley community roadshow, asking members to share any suggestions as to where in Bridgwater it would be best placed.

190 There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 12.23.

Next meeting date: Tuesday 17 March 2026.