

Renewed challenge to South West MPs to reject 'folly' of Hinkley, as Commons Committee says deal fails to protect consumers



Green Party

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Green MEP, Molly Scott Cato, has accused government ministers of saddling consumers with higher energy bills because they have had their 'heads stuck in the radioactive sand' over Hinkley.

The accusation comes as MPs on the Commons public accounts committee concluded that the government had failed to protect consumers over the price it has promised to pay for electricity from the new nuclear power station and that the subsidy contract would hit poorest households hardest [1]. The latest negative assessment of Hinkley follows news in September that the drop in costs of off-shore wind power has made it much cheaper than nuclear [2].

Hinkley is expected to cost billpayers £30bn over the 35-year contract, adding £10-£15 to the average household energy bill. The government agreed a price of £92.50 per megawatt hour for electricity generated from Hinkley. Meanwhile, two firms confirmed in September that they can build offshore wind farms for a guaranteed price of £57.50 per megawatt hour.

Molly Scott Cato said:

"The economic illiteracy of this government on energy policy is reconfirmed again. They have had their heads stuck in the radioactive sand on Hinkley and this will cost consumers dear; particularly the poorest in society.

"This tragedy is all so unnecessary. The South West and other parts of the UK are richly endowed with a variety of renewable energy resources, chief amongst them off-shore wind. We can cut both energy bills and carbon emissions by going all out for renewables.

"On the back of this new evidence I again challenge MPs in the South West to unite against the folly of Hinkley and back a renewable energy revolution. This would be good for consumers; good for jobs and good for the regional economy."

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