



NUCLEAR
SouthWest

Connect - Showcase - Lead

Welcome

Securing Energy, Driving Growth

Wednesday 28th January 2026

www.nuclearsouthwest.co.uk

Supported by:



Somerset
Council





Welcome

Cllr David Woan,

**Lead Member,
Somerset Business
Partnerships**



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AGENDA

09:45 - 09:55	Opening Remarks – Cllr David Woan, Lead Member, Somerset Business Partnerships
09:55 - 10:15	Keynote Address – Jay Bhart , Chair of Nuclear South West
10:15 – 10:45	GB Energy – Nuclear - Helen Perthen, Chief Commercial Officer
<i>10:45 – 11:00</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>
11:00 – 11:15	SEC Newgate Research Report Presentation - Drew Aspinwall, Associate Director
11:15 – 11:30	GSW: A New Nuclear Future - Professor Dame Judith Petts DBE
11:30 – 12:10	Panel Session "<i>Securing Energy, Driving Growth</i>" - hosted by Andrew Cockcroft, Hinkley Point C
12:10 – 12:30	Panel Session "<i>What next for Nuclear South West?</i>" - hosted by Matthew Williams, SEC Newgate
12:30 – 12:40	Closing Remarks – Jay Bhart



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Keynote:

**Jay Bhart ,
Chair of Nuclear
South West**



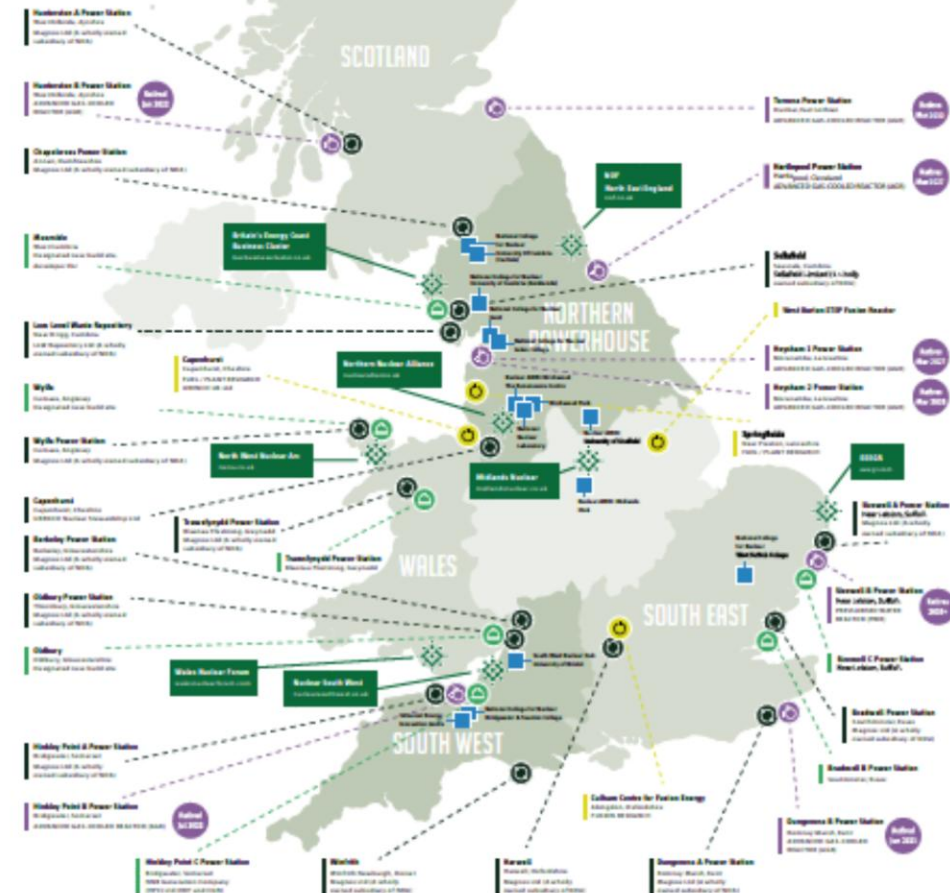
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A glimpse of the UK's nuclear regions

Key

- Existing Site
- Proposed New Build Site
- UK Decommissioning Site
- Retirement of current fleet
- Nuclear Regions Base
- Infrastructure



Sources:
 • Three months into the year, and three big steps forward – Great British Nuclear blog
 Nuclear Power in the United Kingdom – World Nuclear Association

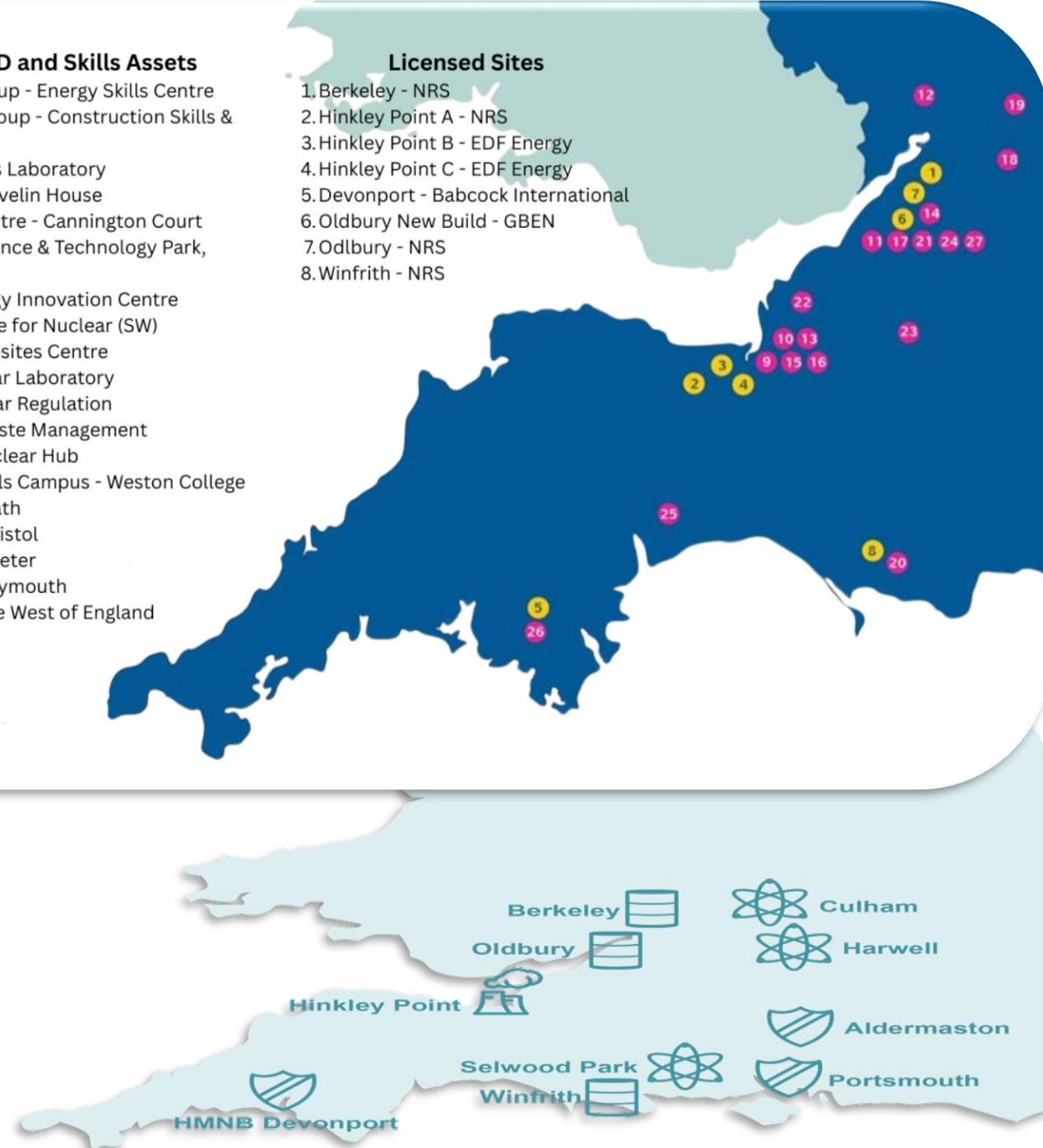
#NuclearRegions

Major R&D and Skills Assets

- UCS College Group - Energy Skills Centre
- UCS College Group - Construction Skills & Innovation Centre
- Bristol Robotics Laboratory
- EDF Energy - Javelin House
- HPC Visitor Centre - Cannington Court
- Gloucester Science & Technology Park, Berkeley Green
- Somerset Energy Innovation Centre
- National College for Nuclear (SW)
- National Nuclear Laboratory
- Office of Nuclear Regulation
- South West Nuclear Hub
- South West Skills Campus - Weston College
- University of Bath
- University of Bristol
- University of Exeter
- University of Plymouth
- University of the West of England

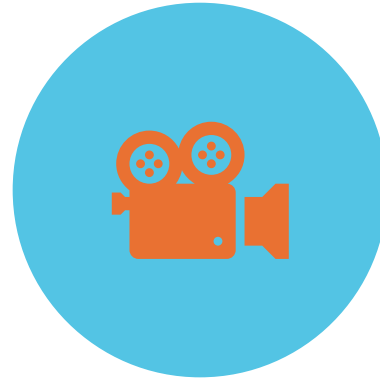
Licensed Sites

- Berkeley - NRS
- Hinkley Point A - NRS
- Hinkley Point B - EDF Energy
- Hinkley Point C - EDF Energy
- Devonport - Babcock International
- Oldbury New Build - GBEN
- Oldbury - NRS
- Winfrith - NRS





CONNECT



SHOWCASE



LEAD



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Thank you



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Helen Perthen,

**Chief Commercial Officer
GB Energy - Nuclear**



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See separate PDF for
GB Energy – Nuclear slides



Drew Aspinwall,

**Associate Director
SEC Newgate**



***UK Public's Perceptions of
Nuclear Energy in 2025.***



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A photograph of four large, grey, cylindrical cooling towers of a nuclear power plant. They are situated behind a body of water, and their forms are clearly reflected in the calm surface. The sky above is a mix of blue and white, with wispy clouds. The towers are emitting a light mist or steam from their tops.

Methodology and Objectives.

Methodology

- **Online survey of n=2086 respondents**
- The sample comprised of 18+ United Kingdom and Northern Ireland residents, nationally representative across age, gender and region.
- Fieldwork: September 2025

Research Objectives

- **Explore public opinion on nuclear** compared to other sources of renewable / low carbon energy.
- **Explore understanding and misconceptions** surrounding nuclear energy
- **Investigate levels of acceptability** towards the development of Small Modular Reactors vs Nuclear Power Stations.

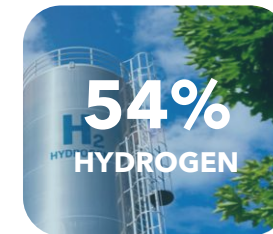
The UK public are divided on nuclear, with only half feeling positively toward it as a low carbon source.

Additionally, a quarter (25%) of the UK feel negatively towards nuclear as an energy source. This is significantly higher than any other source.

SENTIMENT TOWARDS RENEWABLE / LOW CARBON ENERGY SOURCES (% SHOWN IS NET POSITIVE 6-10)

MORE POSITIVE

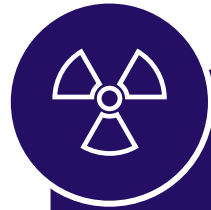
LESS POSITIVE



Source: Nuclear Energy Survey, 2025. Q1. How positive or negative do you feel about the following renewable/low carbon energy sources?
Base: n=2086

Top negative beliefs reveal a wide range of negative nuclear beliefs to overcome amongst the UK public.

NUCLEAR-NEGATIVE BELIEFS (TOP 4 NEGATIVE BELIEFS – % SHOWN IS NET "I BELIEVE THIS" 6-10 OUT OF 10)



62%

Believe nuclear energy **produces harmful waste** that can't be disposed of safely



59%

Believe the UK **relies on foreign companies** to build nuclear energy infrastructure



58%

Nuclear energy infrastructure causes **major disruption for local communities** where it's being built



56%

Nuclear energy infrastructure takes **too long** to build

Source: Nuclear Energy Survey, 2025. Q2a/Q2b. Here are some things that people may believe about nuclear energy. With 0 being 'I don't believe this at all' and 10 being 'I believe this completely', indicate how much you believe each of the following statements. Base: n=2086

However, the UK public also have strong positive perceptions of nuclear energy as a reliable, efficient source that can boost the UK's economy.

76%

believe nuclear is a reliable, efficient or high generation energy source



74%

believe nuclear energy can boost the UK's economy (i.e. through job creation or investment)



Source: Nuclear Energy Survey, 2025. Q2a/Q2b. Here are some things that people may believe about nuclear energy. With 0 being 'I don't believe this at all' and 10 being 'I believe this completely', indicate how much you believe each of the following statements. Base: n=2086

Stimulus shown.

Nuclear Power Station



Nuclear power stations are one of the ways that electricity is generated in the UK. They are **large-scale facilities** - one nuclear power station being built currently in the UK is **roughly the size of 250 football pitches**.

They also require **substantial investment** to build - generally tens of billions of pounds. This often comes from **public and private** sources.

They **currently provide around 15% of the UK's electricity**, with a generating capacity of approximately 6.5 gigawatts (GW). This could produce enough electricity for all of the homes **in an area with as many people as London and the South East of England** every year.

They use nuclear fission to heat water, which generates steam to turn a turbine and generate electricity. They need to be **located near a water source** like a river or the sea as they require **large volumes of water** in order to create the steam and keep them cool.

They use uranium or plutonium as fuel, which means they also **create radioactive waste**. This takes **centuries to decay** (become not radioactive) and needs to be **stored safely** for that time.

As part of the UK's broader energy strategy, **nuclear power stations continue to play a vital role** in providing **low carbon** energy alongside other sources.

Small Modular Reactors (SMRs)



A new nuclear technology called Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) is now beginning to emerge, with one already built in both China and Russia.

These work the same way as nuclear power stations but use smaller reactors that can **be built in a factory and then assembled on site**.

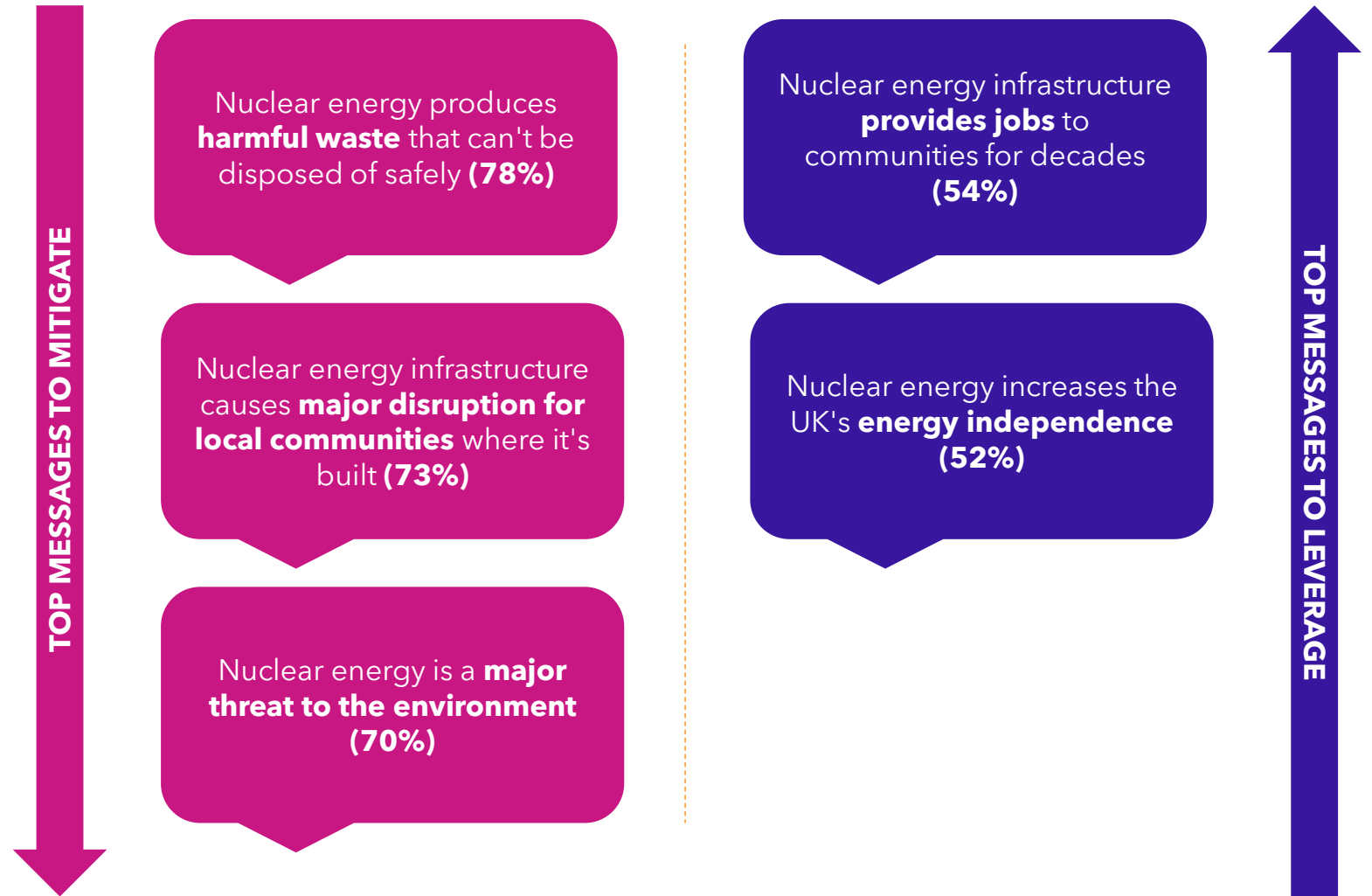
The site of where a small modular reactor would be placed is **roughly the size of four football pitches** and is likely to cost between £1.8 billion and £3 billion. Though they are still yet to be developed in the UK, their funding is expected to come from a **mixture of public and private sources**.

Overall, they would **generate less electricity than conventional nuclear power stations** - typically, 300MW, or enough electricity to **meet the needs of all of the households in a city the size of Leeds**. However, they can be built **more quickly and cheaply** than conventional nuclear power stations, and **closer** to the places that need energy.

The **UK Government has committed £2.5 billion to support the development of SMRs**. As part of the UK's broader energy strategy, SMRs are expected to play a vital role in **providing low carbon energy** alongside other sources.

Combatting nuclear negative beliefs will be critical to driving acceptance of SMRs among those who currently find SMR development unacceptable.

COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY WITH THOSE WHO FIND IT **UNACCEPTABLE** TO DEVELOP AN SMR IN THEIR LOCAL AREA



Source: Nuclear Energy Survey, 2025. Q2a/Q2b. Here are some things that people may believe about nuclear energy. With 0 being 'I don't believe this at all' and 10 being 'I believe this completely', indicate how much you believe each of the following statements. Base: Respondents who say it is unacceptable to build small modular reactors in their local area n=526

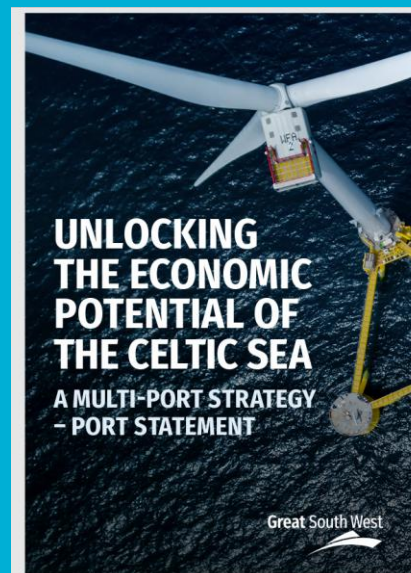
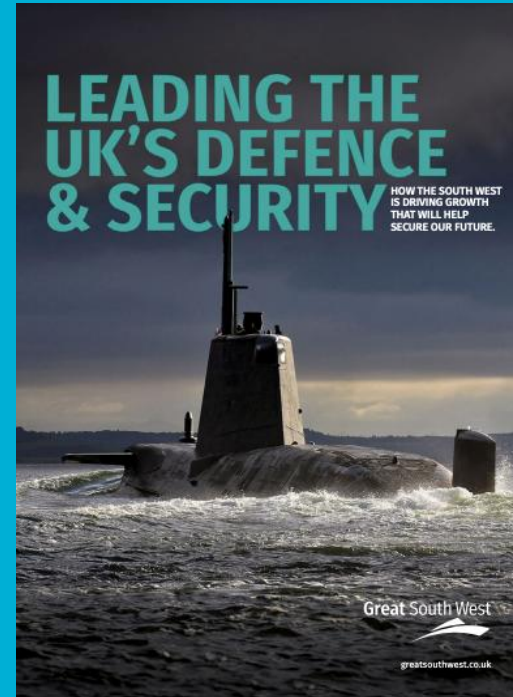
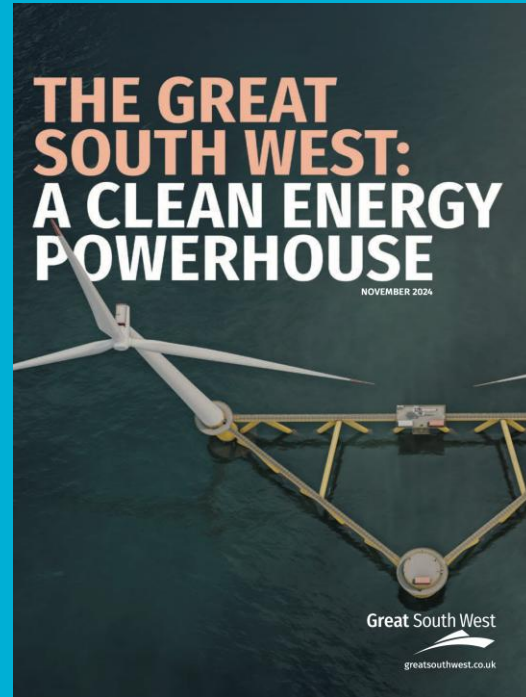
**Professor Dame Judith Petts DBE,
Chair,
Great South West Energy
Programme Board,
Great South West**



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Key Insights Into The Region's Economy





THE GREAT SOUTH WEST A NEW NUCLEAR FUTURE

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To access 'A New Nuclear Future' and find out more about our insights into the region's economy and key industries, please the scan QR code or visit www.greatsouthwest.co.uk/insights



Panel Session:

"Securing Energy, Driving Growth"



**Andrew Cockcroft,
Hinkley Point C (Host)**



**Dame Judith Petts,
Great South West**



**Matt Tudor,
University Centre Somerset
College Group**



**Tom Robinson,
SWNH**



**Stefan Cecchini,
Turnball Infrastructures**

Panel Session: ***"What next for Nuclear South West?"***



**Matthew Williams,
SEC Newgate
(Host)**



**Jay Bhart,
Nuclear South West**



**Corinne Matthews,
Nuclear South West**



**Andrew Cockcroft,
Hinkley Point C**



Closing Remarks:

**Jay Bhart,
Chair of Nuclear
South West**



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Thank you for attending.

For more information / register your interest in
supporting Nuclear South West
please contact:

sam.orchard@nuclearsouthwest.co.uk

NSW Interim Co-ordinator



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