



West Midlands

CAMPAIGN FOR NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

Mailing

January/February 2025



Lakenheath Alliance for Peace is a coalition of groups dedicated to preventing the return of nuclear weapons to RAF Lakenheath. On their website, they write: *RAF Lakenheath is in reality USAF Lakenheath and is the largest US airbase in Europe. It is assigned to United States Air Forces in Europe and Africa. Its Air Force units maintain combat-ready wings that are pledged to NATO, which plans, conducts, controls, coordinates and supports air and space operations in Europe, parts of Asia and all of Africa with the exception of Egypt. USAF Lakenheath is a threat to us all with its conventional weapons that have been deployed in Kuwait, Iraq, Afghanistan, Serbia, Libya, Syria, the Middle East and East Africa. But with nuclear weapons coming back it becomes even more dangerous.*

Read more here: <https://lakenheathallianceforpeace.org.uk/why-lakenheath/>

If you happen to be in the area on the last Saturday of the month, they hold regular vigils between noon and 2 pm. They are also giving advance notice of a Peace Camp in April which will include an interfaith service at the gates of the base on Wednesday 23 April, and an international peace conference on Thursday 24 April.

See also page 4 for information about US spy drones at RAF Fairford, and the planned demonstration there on 25th January.



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BITS FROM ABROAD

Iran could have an operational nuclear weapon within "weeks, maybe days," a former Israeli ambassador to the U.S. said, as Israel closely watches whether Iran could quickly pivot and produce such a weapon before next month's change of administration in Washington. Michael Oren told Newsweek that Iran will be dreading President-elect Donald Trump's return to the White House, adding that Tehran wouldn't "dare" to make the final push toward an operational nuclear weapon once the new administration takes over.

Newsweek 23rd Dec 2024

<https://tinyurl.com/5bdepmbx>

A new report from ICAN [*Israel's not-so-secret nuclear weapons*] looks at the reality and implications of **Israel's nuclear weapons** arsenal. ... Despite widespread acknowledgement by experts and former government officials of their existence, Israel and many Western governments maintain a policy of ambiguity about Israeli nuclear weapons. This pretence cannot continue. Nuclear disarmament is an essential component of a lasting peace agreement between Israel and Palestine, and in the region more broadly.

Beyond Nuclear 15th Dec 2024

<https://tinyurl.com/2hk5fmmu>

The world has never been in a more dangerous state, the head of Mi6 warned earlier this month. Sir Richard Moore, Britain's spy chief, is not the first world leader to be alarmed at the dangers posed by the war in Ukraine, the rhetoric from Vladimir Putin and the maverick North Korea's testing of missiles. Admiral Sir Tony Radakin, Chief of Defence Staff, warned this week that the world is "at the dawn of a third nuclear age" at the annual Rusi lecture, in which he pointed to the combined threats we face from four adversaries in particular: Russia, North Korea, Iran and **China**. It was the inclusion of **China** that attracted particular attention, however. While Britain and its allies have a reasonable idea of the nuclear capabilities and ambitions of the other three, China has become more of a mystery to Western officials.

iNews 8th Dec 2024

<https://tinyurl.com/5azavmnz>

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FROM THE MEDIA

The threat of a catastrophic nuclear conflict never truly subsided. And now, fears are intensifying once again amid a new arms race for tactical nuclear weapons, one being led by a Russian state already at war in Europe.

Telegraph 17th Dec 2024

<https://tinyurl.com/4mjdxw6h>

This is the moment a swarm of drones fly over an American air base which is set to become home to US nuclear weapons. The footage obtained by MailOnline features what is suspected to be drones, brazenly flying with bright lights, in the early evening darkness above RAF Lakenheath, Suffolk. Reports about American nuclear weapons being deployed to the base for the first time since the Cold War have heightened fears that Russia could be behind the drone activity.

Daily Mail 14th Dec 2024

<https://tinyurl.com/mr5zn2z5>

Hitting Iran now could halt its nuclear plan. Tehran is exposed and may rush to get the bomb. The West should give it a short, sharp shock. Rafael Grossi, director of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), said Iran was "dramatically" accelerating uranium enrichment to 60%, a short hop away from the 90% needed for weapons grade. There was no civilian programme that could justify such a move. Indeed, no other country has done so without in the end producing nuclear weapons. The IAEA calculates that Iran already has enough 60% purity stock to upgrade into four nuclear weapons. The collapse of Iran's proxies, the flimsy nature of Russian support for the regime, the erosion of Iranian air defence and the imminent arrival in the White House of Donald Trump point to the possibility of a galloping nuclearisation by the regime and a pre-emptive strike by Israel.

Times 10th Dec 2024

<https://tinyurl.com/mr3w4yyx>

The Nuclear Industry Association (NIA) is exploring ways to aid firms involved in civil nuclear projects to attain opportunities in nuclear weaponry, at the request of its members. ... One of the areas of interest which NIA members requested more focus on was nuclear weapons and military applications of nuclear power ... University of Sussex professor of science and technology policy Andy Stirling said it "provides yet more evidence of pressures to hide military costs behind supposedly civil nuclear activities".

New Civil Engineer 22nd Nov 2024

<https://tinyurl.com/38y33ec6>

TRIDENT AND RELATED NEWS

Aldermaston's nuclear bomb making factory AWE has been ordered to improve procedures after damaging an explosives component. The Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) has served an improvement notice on the Atomic Weapons Establishment following an incident at its Aldermaston site.

Newbury Today 21st Dec 2024

<https://tinyurl.com/28auc6sn>

The Submarine Delivery Agency (SDA) has detailed progress in its Dreadnought and SSN-A submarine programmes. HMS Dreadnought, the first of the next-generation strategic deterrent submarines, reached a key milestone with the completion of its largest structural segment, referred to as a "mega unit." ... The SDA emphasised this achievement as evidence of "the ongoing advancement of the Dreadnought programme." The agency stated that "robust performance metrics" have driven improvements, noting that collaboration with BAE Systems continues to stabilise the programme, mitigate risks, and capitalise on opportunities.

UK Defence Journal 19th Dec 2024

<https://tinyurl.com/3ytpf4pu>

A military convoy believed to be carrying nuclear warheads has been spotted moving along a road in Reading. The convoy was made up of a large police presence and unmarked trucks - typical of nuclear material transportation operations - moving along the Bath Road towards the Atomic Weapons Establishment in Burghfield.

Reading Chronicle 18th Nov 2024

<https://tinyurl.com/u6ebx5k4/>

WMCND at the Telford Arms Fair
In November a number of WMCND members travelled to Telford to join the protest outside the Arms Fair. Thank you to those who took part and to everybody else who showed their support in other ways.



NUCLEAR POWER

Sizewell C has won a legal battle against activists seeking for the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) to withdraw the nuclear power plant's nuclear site licence (NSL). The NSL was granted in April 2024. The decision was made following an assessment of Sizewell C Ltd's nuclear site licence application. ONR concluded that the application met the requirements set out in the regulatory guidance. The licence came into force on 7 May and was the first such licence to be granted in the UK for over a decade.

New Civil Engineer 4th Dec 2024

<https://tinyurl.com/5n6st8wd>

PhD student Joshua Bettles reflects on his three-week placement with the team from Nuclear Restoration Services (NRS) – part of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) group that is co-funding his studies – at former nuclear power station Sizewell A to further his understanding of how robotics could assist the clean-up mission on site. "My PhD is developing a novel system using collaborative robots (COBOTS) to enable the automated monitoring of personnel and items to detect radiological contamination. The use of robotics in hazardous environments has many benefits, including ensuring we are able to move people further away from potential harm."

NDA 27th Nov 2024

<https://tinyurl.com/vn4z44k7>

The MP for Chester South and Eddisbury has visited Urenco UK's nuclear facility at Capenhurst following the announcement in May that £196m would be spent on a new uranium enrichment facility. Aphra Brandreth toured the company's three existing nuclear enrichment plants, the largest of which, Urenco's E23 enrichment plant, produces more than 80 percent of the Capenhurst site's enrichment output.

Chester Standard 26th Nov 2024

<https://tinyurl.com/bdz53p5k>

The Channel Islands and France have agreed to share information in the event of a nuclear or radiological incident... If a nuclear or radiological incident was to occur in France's Cotentin Peninsula, the Channel Islands and France would provide information for emergency planning purposes, officials said.

BBC 26th Nov 2024

<https://tinyurl.com/3naa99zm>

What's On

January/February 2025

The next **Mailing** is due to be sent out at the beginning of March 2025.

At the recent **WMCND AGM**, Eric Harley was appointed Chair, Gill Cox was appointed Treasurer, and Pam Bishop was appointed Website Officer.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday 14th January at 19.30 via zoom. Please e-mail wmcndall@gmail.com for the zoom link.

Hereford Peace Council – Meetings at 10 – 11.30 on the second Monday of the months of January, April, June and September, at Friends Meeting House, King Street, Hereford.

Malvern Churches Justice and Peace group Prayers for Peace, 12 noon on 2nd and 4th Monday of the month (except Bank Holidays), Lyttleton Well Prayer Room, Church Street, Great Malvern.

Read the latest CND Magazine here:

<https://tinyurl.com/yc52rxy3>

GLOBAL NETWORK AGAINST WEAPONS AND NUCLEAR POWER IN SPACE

has produced a new podcast with PhD student Daniel Walsh (Northumbria University) who is studying the impact of spaceports around the world on indigenous people and the environment. You can watch the podcast here:

<https://tinyurl.com/5c69jldr>

Noticeboard

Peace posters: Hereford Peace Council produces monthly posters on peace topics, to be displayed as widely as possible. The posters are not dated.

The current posters are:

January 5.5% of the global carbon footprint results from military-related activity

Scientists for Global Responsibility

February 'Peace is the one condition of survival in this nuclear age.' *Adlai Stevenson*

Stevenson

Please contact jennywmcnd@gn.apc.org if you would like to use these posters.

Oppose US spy drones in Fairford

Over the past month there has been much activity at RAF Fairford in Gloucestershire which looks set to become a hub for long-range US spy drones like the Global Hawk and Reaper. These drones carry out secretive surveillance missions over Gaza and across the Middle East.

CND, along with Drone Wars and Oxfordshire Peace Campaign, are hosting two events in January to raise awareness about what's going on and put a spotlight on the base

The first event is an **online public meeting** on **Wednesday, 15 January 19.00 – 20.30**, to discuss Britain's intensifying complicity in far-reaching US military intelligence regimes, and their local and global consequences. You can register here: <https://tinyurl.com/2us6v8fc>

There will also be a **demonstration** on **Saturday 25th January 13.00 – 15.00** at RAF Fairford, G7 4DL. Information can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/452s5r73>

There will be at least one car going from Birmingham. If you would like to attend, please e-mail wmcndall@gmail.com

