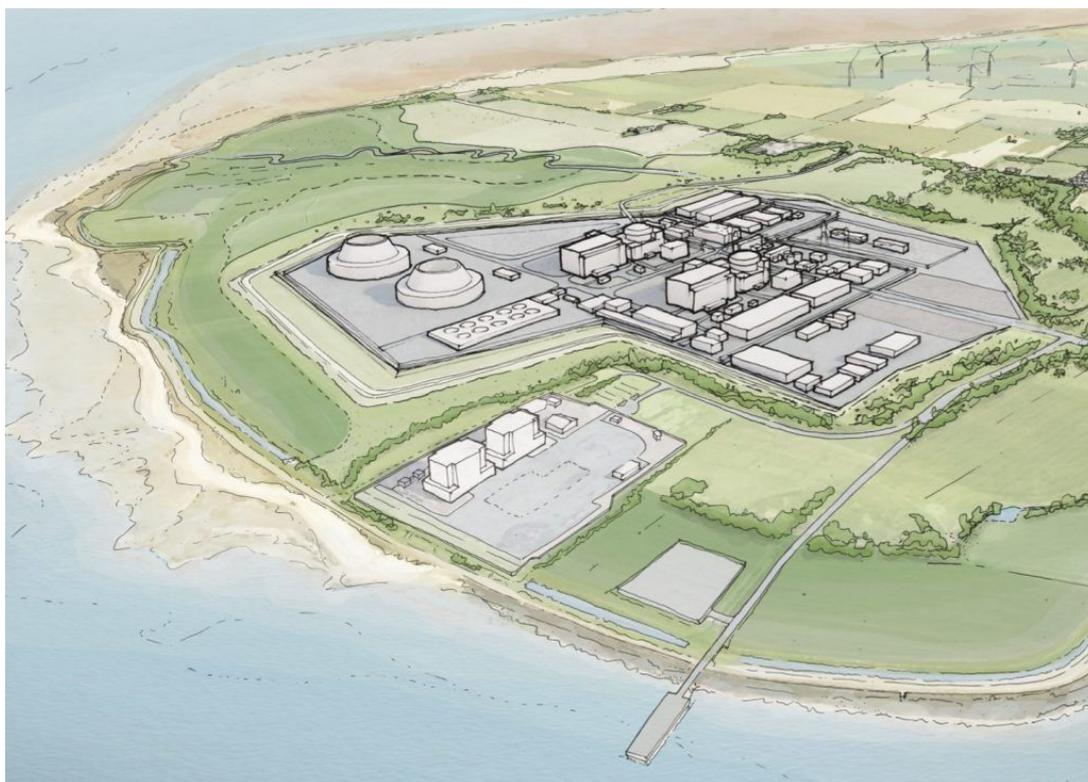


Dear Friend



Welcome to our last newsletter in April. The month ends here in tempestuous mood: we had a thunderous downpour of hailstones this morning. But this email brings you - among other news - a delightfully sunny walk,

Our picture today is an aerial impression of the land near Othona's other centre in Essex. Not as it is, but as it might become. More of that in a moment.

First some 100% good news

If you visited us some years ago you may remember **Alison Wright**, then our caterer. We've just heard that her firstborn, a son Cassius, arrived yesterday afternoon. I'm sure lots of Othona folk join me in sending love and congratulations to Alison and husband Dave.

Grandma Christine assures me, judging by photos, Cassius is "gorgeous" and his mum is pretty radiant too. Babies born now, it seems to me, will always be a specially precious generation. Although grandparents, for instance, can't visit to cuddle them yet, many of them will have their parents closer for longer in their early months.

Come Walk With Me 4

Today's walk was filmed last week before the weather broke. There's a bit of 'bouncy camera' effect, but I hope you'll enjoy it nonetheless. If it weren't for the virus we'd be running an event here this week called *The Good Life*, in collaboration with our good friends who farm organically nearby. [This walk](#) (a video of about 10 minutes) visits some of their land and their farm shop.

Othona Centre under a Nuclear Shadow?

Othona began in Essex where our other centre is to this day. The landscape is very different there, but like us they are near the sea on a stretch of relatively unspoilt coast.

Way across the fields, near the village of Bradwell, you see two large buildings remaining from the old nuclear power station (Bradwell A) that stopped generating back in 2002. But go there today and you'd also see all sorts of heavy equipment digging boreholes to test the feasibility of a second nuclear station, Bradwell B.

[This annotated sketch](#) shows you the relative positions and sizes of Othona and power stations A and B. St Peter's Chapel, also marked, is the 7th century building where Othona people - except during lockdown - can meet for worship morning and evening.

There's no certainty about Bradwell B yet and the Othona Community doesn't have any official position on it as of now. Some of us are viscerally opposed to any nuclear power; some of us recognise it as vital in weaning our society from fossil fuels so as to avoid a climate disaster. Whether the economic case for nuclear will make much sense as the cost of renewables decreases remains to be seen. Some things, however, are clear.

The impact of this plan on the whole area would be colossal. New roads are proposed to bring in construction traffic. A workforce of around 9,000 would be needed for the building. And the construction site - larger than the finished station - is set to extend to *within a few metres* of Othona's buildings!

For a community like ours where peaceful environments and biodiversity are treasured, the prospect of this development is a massive shock. As a local resident told me "the proposals sweep away businesses, cottages, peoples homes. peoples' lifestyles, old and environmentally friendly roadways and verges [and a] nature reserve". (I understand many locals are opposed to the plan, in spite of the employment it would bring.) When you consider nuclear site security, waste management, vehicle movements... even when the construction phase (10 years or more) ended this would pose an unprecedented challenge to Othona as we've known it.

The development, if it happens, will be a collaboration between EDF (Electricité de France) and the Chinese company CGN who'd be designing the reactor. The proposals are open for public consultation until 1st July. While feedback is sought mainly from local residents, anyone can have their say especially if, like Othona visitors, they have a stake in the area. If you'd like to know more [this website](#) gives you access to the proposals and ways to give your feedback, while this is the [website for the main local opposition campaign](#).

Join us in chapel via Zoom this Sunday?

The first Sunday of the month is when we usually have an open evening featuring **One World Worship** (and a simple meal free to all comers). Now our local friends can't come and join us physically - but you can, digitally. Our focus will be on both the joys and the sorrows of this unique time.

What can you expect? Well, that's partly up to you! Between now and Saturday we'd love to hear from you with any suggestions: maybe some music or a reading that's supporting you in lockdown. And especially we welcome your concerns - for situations or individuals - and requests for prayer that we can all share as we light candles on Sunday.

Please REPLY to this email by 4.00pm on Saturday to help us prepare. (We may not be able to include everybody's contribution.)

Are you already familiar with Zoom? If not, let us encourage you to give it a try. Up to 100 people at a time can log in. We'll begin the meeting on Sunday at 16.30 BST (4.30pm) and the service itself starts at 17.00. During that half hour Robin will be here online to help anyone struggling with connection problems.

All you do - at some time between 16.30 and 17.00 - is [click here to join Zoom Meeting](#) In case your computer asks you for it, the Meeting ID is: **826 3414 4764** You might like to have a candle of your own ready to light during the worship.

Cats

Oh, I hoped I could bring you comments today from the Othona cats, Otto, Catkin and Tibby. But you know what? The cats have got each others' tongues! I'll see if I can tempt them out of their reticence next time.

The rest of us wish you some May Merriment, in spite of it all

Tony - on behalf of all of us isolating at Othona: Robin, Liz, Kate, Gavin and Sean