

Dungeness B Nuclear Power Station. 9th February 2018.



On a cold & very wintery Friday 9th February 2018, fifteen Meopham u3a members met at DUNGENESS B power stations award winning visitors centre for a two hour, 1.5 mile tour of the working nuclear station.

Following a rigorous security check we were issued with safety clothing and a very useful ear piece/ speaker, our guide was very knowledgeable & friendly with lots of interesting snippets - the uranium used here after importation is dispatched from SPRINGFIELD - (home of Homer Simpson!!!!!!), this is near Preston, Lancs.

The plant was designed & built in the 1960's, no C A D (computer aided design) then, we'd only just got electronic calculators, the plant is a gas cooled reactor plant (A.G.R) still using the original boilers & reactors units from 1965.

The plant itself is a huge site creating enough electricity to supply two million homes. Surprisingly the site creates next to no noise or any excess heat, unlike fossil fuel sites which can be both noisy & can create excess heat.

We visited all areas of the power station including the enormous reactor hall. Two reactors are based here, the massive turbine hall (what a feat of British engineering, the engineers amongst us were very proud), another piece of kit was the 3m diameter cooling ducts for the seawater cooling.

Something like 98% of the uranium is able to be recycled/reactivated and returned for further use, in an average year 50% of the uk's home electricity is generated by nuclear power, one pellet of uranium (the size of an ear plug) can produce as much power as 800kg of coal, 1kg of uranium can power a light bulb for 140 years!!!

EDF have recently invested £150 million which has extended the life of DUNGENESS B until 2028, the station employs around 1000 local people, putting some £50 million into the local economy.

We were all agreed that the guides & the tour was most interesting & educational and we recommend everyone to visit if they have an interest, 01797-343-728 or Dungenesbtours@edf-energy.com. All tours are free, you can visit the exhibition display centre any weekday 9 - 4pm, tours need to be booked 30 days in advance, subject to availability.