

## **Nuclear shutdowns are part of routine and show system is working properly**

The comments by Shirley-Anne Somerville MSP (your report, 16 April) illustrate the myopia that often characterises debate over nuclear energy.

Shutdowns, whether for maintenance or for cautionary safety inspections and investigations, are routine in any power generation system, and in a highly technical system such as nuclear are necessary and to be applauded rather than derided.

Rather than showing that nuclear is "unreliable", these incidents highlight the safety record of the industry.

Last week I visited British Energy's Hunterston B station in North Ayrshire. On the morning of my visit, every single turbine at the nearby Ardrossan and Dalry wind farms was static, producing not a single watt of electricity. What will the SNP do in ten years' time when – under Ms Somerville's so-called "clean, green energy" policy – there will be no Hunterston or Torness operating to power our schools, hospitals and homes – blow the windmills round with their hot air?

What these shutdowns really highlight is the need for new, more reliable replacement stations to keep our lights on for the next 50 years.

PHILIP LARDNER

Parkinch

Erskine, Renfrewshire