

## Is the Fracking Moratorium for life or just for Christmas?

The government has called a halt to shale gas extraction - or fracking - in England amid fears about earthquakes. However, it stopped short of an outright ban.

The indefinite suspension comes after a report by the Oil and Gas Authority (OGA) said it was not possible to predict the probability or size of tremors caused by the practice. The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy said that, after the OGA concluded that further seismic activity could not be ruled out, "further consents for fracking will not be granted" but continued with "unless the industry 'can reliably predict and control tremors' linked to the process."

Boris Johnson has recently appointed Rachel Wolf, a fracking lobbyist to write the Tory Party manifesto on Fracking and we wait with interest to see what it says. The Business Secretary Andrea Leadsom is still acknowledging the huge potential of UK shale gas to provide a bridge to a zero carbon future, and later she stated that the moratorium may be temporary - imposed "until and unless" extraction is proved safe. Cuadrilla, the UK's leading shale gas company have already stated that they hope to overturn the government moratorium on fracking by proving that it can be safe despite triggering earthquakes.

Understandably many anti fracking campaigners are sceptical and believe the moratorium will only be in place until after the results of the elections are announced and could be removed before Christmas. The Labour, Lib Dem and the Green Parties want a permanent ban and say this is just an election gimmick designed to save Tory seats in marginal constituencies.

While being as excited as anyone, about all the headlines re the fracking moratorium. It raises so many more questions.

- How long will it last and will it continue if the Conservative Party is re-elected?
- What happens to sites such as Preston New Road, where a license to frack has already been granted, does the moratorium extend to them and will permission be withdrawn?
- What happens to areas, such as Marsh Lane and Harthill, where planning permission has been granted via public inquiries, are these decisions being revoked?
- There is some dispute over how 'fracking' is being defined? Does it include, test drills and listening wells? Is 'fracking' defined by the amount of gas collected, and as such, will some operations that expect a lower yield of gas still be allowed?
- Does the moratorium also include tight shale gas, acid stimulation and acidisation?

**These questions have been put to the Government and local MPs for Clarification. If this information is not forthcoming can we assume that the announcement of a moratorium on fracking is merely a political election ploy?**

We meet on the first Wednesday of the month at 7.30 in Suite 2 Old Station, High Street Edwinstowe. NG21 9HS See also our facebook page - [Frack Free Sherwood Forest&Edwinstowe](#)

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