



NEWSLETTER 3 - 2017

EKAF UPDATE

Due to several committee members being away and the venue being unavailable our quarterly meeting planned for the 21st June was cancelled. Fortunately, with no current threat in our area, the quarterly committee meetings are mainly a means of keeping the group active in case any company takes over the PEDL areas relinquished by Coastal Oil & Gas and we also decide appropriate support for other groups.

On 3rd July EKAF committee member Julie Wassmer attended a public meeting in Aylesford titled Fracking and Climate Change where the key speaker was Labour shadow Secretary of State, Barry Gardiner. The session can be viewed on Youtube at the following link:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B1mJWs1Y2AY&feature=share>

Julie wrote an article about the event for the Canterbury & Whitstable Times which can be read on the EKAF website:

<http://www.eastkentagainstfracking.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Aylesford-meeting-30717.pdf>

ELECTION

The unexpected election result was a great result for us opponents of fracking since it resulted in the removal from the Queen's Speech the Tory's manifesto pledge to make shale gas exploration a "permitted development". Had this been included in the Queen's Speech it would have removed local Authorities' and planners' powers over granting drilling permits and instead it would have made them the responsibility of the National Planning Regime. i.e. the Government! Whilst this development is to be welcomed, the appointment of the climate change denier, Michael Gove, as Minister in charge of environmental policy will need careful monitoring!

PETITION

The Financial rewards to local energy projects are being quietly slashed - **by up to a massive 93%**. These payments aren't subsidies - they are given to local energy projects to reward them for lowering electricity costs for all consumers. The decision to slash payments to local energy was dominated by the Big Six. No-one was invited to represent renewables or community energy interests and it's therefore an attack on local, clean and democratic energy. A petition to challenge this policy can be signed at the following link

https://secure.1010uk.org/stop-big-six-squashing-local-energy?utm_source=0707_EBemail_BA

Another attack is intense lobbying by some politicians and media outlets (Murdoch's in particular) to use Brexit to scrap the UK's commitment to meeting EU's clean energy targets

<https://secure.greenpeace.org.uk/page/s/clean-power-uk-petition?>

[ddref=9E335&source=em&subsource=20170711egem01&utm_source=gpeace&utm_medium=em&utm_campaign=20170711egem01](https://secure.greenpeace.org.uk/page/s/clean-power-uk-petition?ddref=9E335&source=em&subsource=20170711egem01&utm_source=gpeace&utm_medium=em&utm_campaign=20170711egem01)

Further to this assault on EU clean energy policy Friends of the Earth have a template to lobby your MP:

https://act.foe.co.uk/act/tell-your-mp-protect-eu-nature-laws?utm_source=Friends+of+the+Earth+Communications&utm_campaign=9af5cc58a5-LM1707015&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_383af65c6b-9af5cc58a5-21154085

Emeritus Professor David Smythe update

You may recall that last year Emeritus Professor David Smythe had his university access withdrawn and since then he's been fighting Glasgow University to have it restored. David's sent the following update:

<http://www.eastkentagainstfracking.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/David-Smythe-update.pdf>

PROTEST ACTION

Reclaim the power are organising a rolling protest attendance in Lancashire throughout July:

https://reclaimthepower.org.uk/fracking/?link_id=0&can_id=c37dfb64789adf34f3b20e7ae3a9615c&source=email-get-down-to-preston-new-road-and-stop-fracking&email_referrer=get-down-to-preston-new-road-and-stop-fracking&email_subject=get-down-to-preston-new-road-and-stop-fracking

GENERAL NEWS: UK

UK Taxpayers could face a bill for £billions for N Sea oil rig de-commissioning

<http://www.eastkentagainstfracking.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/N-Sea-dismantling-costs.pdf>

UKOG's plans for devastating Southern England:

<https://drillordrop.com/2017/06/30/ukog-outlines-plans-for-seven-drill-sites-across-southern-england-and-says-its-looking-for-more/>

US Fracked gas comes into Kent!

Many of you will have seen the news about the first consignment of US fracked gas being delivered to the Isle of Grain facility:

<http://www.kentnews.co.uk/business/mep-issues-warning-after-us-fracked-gas-arrives-on-isle-of-grain-1-5101125>

Ken Cronin used the concerns of Green MEP Keith Taylor to promote UK fracking:

<http://www.kentnews.co.uk/business/trade-association-hits-back-at-mep-after-us-fracked-gas-arrives-on-isle-of-grain-1-5104370>

There is however an interesting aspect to the Isle of grain facility which wasn't mentioned in any of the reports and that's that the facility can, and frequently does, also export gas from the same terminal:

<http://media.nationalgrid.com/press-releases/uk-press-releases/corporate-news/grain-Ing-reload-service/>

I emailed NG Grain to ask where the gas was exported to and how much was exported.

Unsurprisingly I received the reply that "*The details and destination of the cargoes reloaded are commercially confidential*".

One of the many arguments against fracking in the UK is that, contrary to misleading statements from UKOG and the Government, UK fracked gas will not be used exclusively to ensure security of domestic gas supplies but will be traded on the open market where the UK will have to bid for it in competition with World demand. To make matters worse, last year the government withdrew support for a massive offshore underground gas storage facility which had ensured some security / stability of supplies during a cold spell. This is detailed in the following report from Private Eye:

<http://www.eastkentagainstfracking.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Private-Eye-gas-storage.pdf>

Fracking impractical in UK: USA campaigner's assessment

<https://drillordrop.com/2017/06/15/fracking-is-impractical-in-the-uk-us-campaigner/>

17th May: Judge refuses challenge against Government

<https://drillordrop.com/2017/05/17/breaking-judge-dismisses-challenge-to-government-minister-over-reopening-lancashire-fracking-inquiry/>

UKOG secures funds to commence drilling at Billingshurst W Sussex

<https://drillordrop.com/2017/05/19/ukog-secures-funds-to-begin-oil-drilling-at-broadford-bridge-in-west-sussex/>

CPRE does u-turn on fracking

<https://drillordrop.com/2017/06/19/rural-campaigners-toughen-policy-on-fracking-and-call-for-moratorium/>

OTHER NEWS

Texas study finds fracking can cause earthquakes and environmental damage

<http://www.houstonchronicle.com/business/energy/article/Study-of-oil-and-gas-drilling-finds-pollution-and-11229156.php>

Republic of Ireland bans fracking

<http://www.thejournal.ie/readme/fracking-we-argued-and-protested-we-persisted-and-we-succeeded-3446300-Jun2017/>

POSSIBLE GOOD NEWS!

Banks reluctant to invest in UK shale

<http://energydesk.greenpeace.org/2017/07/14/uk-fracking-bank-loans-challenge/>

Major environmental impact study planned

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/jul/05/inquiry-fracking-blackpool-tremors>

In keeping this newsletter relatively brief I've just included the main items which I consider to be of relevance to our supporters. Around the country much is happening with many of the companies starting drilling. Daily updates of the latest developments can be followed on Ruth Hayhurst's excellent Drill or Drop website:

<https://drillordrop.com/2017/07/03/july-2017-drilling-headlines/>

John Clandillon-Baker 17/07/17

EKAF Secretary

email: eastkentagainstfracking@gmail.com

website: www.eastkentagainstfracking.org.uk