



FFBRA NEWSLETTER NUMBER TEN

FUTURE EVENTS

In Balcombe

FFBRA Information Day, Bramble Hall, Saturday 18 January

Our next FFBRA meeting will be at Bramble Hall RH17 6HR on Saturday 18 January from 11 am till 1 pm and will be another Coffee Stop/ Exhibition. Please make a note in your diary. There will be tea, coffee, cakes and children's play area. Please come along and do feel free to bring along non-members. Cuadrilla's new planning application is expected to be made public after Xmas. If, as expected the application is made public by then, FFBRA will display information about it in the Hall.

Beyond Balcombe

Carols at Downing Street Friday 20th December

Message from Charles Metcalfe to all members

"A group of us will be going to 10 Downing Street to hand in a letter from FFBRA to the Prime Minister, on Friday 20th December, at 1pm.

We have a 20-minute slot, during which we intend to deliver the letter, hang some gifts on the Christmas tree outside Number 10, take photos and sing a carol. And if there are any press who want to talk to us, we shall be happy to do that as well.

However, only 6 of us are allowed inside the gates to Downing Street. But we would welcome support from other members of FFBRA and the Balcombe community, and would like to suggest that we could sing a few carols outside the gates to Downing Street after we have delivered the letter. So, anyone who would like to join us would be welcome (particularly if they have a strong carolling voice!).

Those of us taking the letter in will probably travel on the 10.37 train, to make absolutely sure we're there in time. But the 11.37 should get you there in time as well".

NEWS AND INFORMATION FOR OUR MEMBERS

Status of Cuadrilla New Planning Application to Return to Lower Stumble

Some good news - Cuadrilla's new application has now been delayed until the New Year. A frack free Christmas for all!

On the 27th September Cuadrilla lodged an application for flow testing the well, 3 months later it is still to be validated so it will not be available to the public until next year.

Submit an Objection to Celtique's Application to Drill for Oil / Gas in Fernhurst

SDNP/13/05896/CM The installation of a well and associated infrastructure, including access road and soil bunds, for the drilling of a vertical borehole and contingent horizontal borehole from the same well for the exploration, testing and evaluation of hydrocarbons for a temporary period of three years Nine Acre Copse Vann Road Linchmere West Sussex

The site, Nine Acre Copse, in Fernhurst is in the South Downs National Park which is a precious resource for the whole country and so everyone can object.

You can either object online

<http://planningpublicaccess.southdowns.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=makeComment&keyVal=MXND0MTU01X00>

or by writing to Planning Services, SDNPA, Hatton House, Bepton Road, Midhurst, West Sussex, GU29 9LU, quoting ref: SDNP/13/05896/CM.

It is important that each objection is personally formulated, expressing your own concerns. Photocopied or template responses may be ignored.

Objections should be specifically in reference to this site. Expressing general concerns about issues such as government energy policy will be ignored. Do not object on the grounds of adverse impact on house prices – unfortunately this is not a valid reason to object.

Your objection can be as long or short as you like. As well as helping a Sussex neighbour, this will be good practice for objecting to the Lower Stumble application from Cuadrilla when we receive it.

Issues about the proposed site from www.frackfreefernurst.com

Traffic, Access & Roads

Vann Road is a narrow country lane with numerous pinch points that is unsuitable for large vehicles and heavy loads. Towards the village, many cars are parked along the road. The construction thickness of the road is less than ideal and it is impractical for this to become the access for a major industrial

activity. There will be a massive increase (up to 2000%) in heavy goods vehicles along Vann Road, through Fernhurst and surrounding villages and towns, passing at least two schools. Extra HGV traffic will cause pollution, change the quiet nature of the rural roads and pose a serious risk to walkers, cyclists, horse-riders and children. Access to the site from Vann Road cannot be achieved without HGVs crossing onto the wrong side of the road.

Environmental & Health Impacts

Water:

A cocktail of chemicals will be added to the drilling fluid to “stimulate” the well. This contaminated water will either be left in the well or returned to the surface and stored before being removed. The site is in a surface water safeguard zone.

The proposed well will be drilled vertically to 2km and horizontally. Geological faults surround the site, and no detailed geological survey has been conducted. Faults act as a conduit allowing fluids to move between strata and possibly contaminate water sources.

Air:

Excess gas will be flared off, which will result in a number of highly toxic carcinogenic chemical and, possibly, radioactive Radon gas being released into the atmosphere. The prevailing wind will take these emissions toward Fernhurst, less than 1 mile from the site. Emissions from HGVs and diesel generators will also impact local air quality.

Light, Noise and Visual Impact:

The rig will be 45 meters high, 15 meters higher than the trees that are meant to screen the site. The rig will be partially visible from numerous places.

The rig, which is situated less than 350 meters from the nearest houses, will be in operation 24 hours, 7 days a week and will be floodlight at night. The site currently, is a quiet, tranquil and dark area at night.

These trees screening the site are deciduous and will provide little effective screening or mitigation to light and noise pollution, especially during the winter months.

Wildlife and Habitat:

The site is within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and is adjacent to an ancient bluebell wood. The area immediately surrounding the site is home for rare and protected species, including bats, honey buzzards, hobbies (a type of falcon), nightingales and sky larks.

Other impacts:

The proposed site is within 250 meters of the Fernhurst Furnace, a scheduled monument and some of the best preserved remains of their type in the Sussex Weald. Celtique are proposing to drill horizontally in the direction of the furnace.

Watch a Video “Fracking in Sussex”.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2n4kq3-6ryE>

Only 4 minutes. Specifically about Sussex with details of current and possible future drill sites and the impact on the Sussex countryside. It also shows where the current licenses are in Sussex. Very informative.

Industry Lobbying and Fracking Myths

There is an enormous industry that has developed around lobbying on behalf of the oil/gas industry. The industry lobby has penetrated to the heart of the Cabinet office, where Lord Browne, chairman of Cuadrilla, is “Lead Non-Executive Director”. Much misinformation has been fed to the media. Let’s dispel some of these myths.

Myth 1 *‘They’ve been fracking for years, all over Britain.’* No. **One** British well (in Lancashire) has been fracked using this controversial kind of fracking. DECC confirms this. The difference is one of scale – fracking of old used low pressures and small volumes of water and additives. It’s like comparing a corner shop to a hypermarket.

Myth 2 *‘Fracked gas will mean lower energy prices’.* No, not in Britain. We are part of a European free market. Economists, bankers, Ofgem and even Cuadrilla agree that shale gas will not bring low gas prices.

Myth 3 *‘David Cameron: fracking will create 74 000 UK jobs’.* DECC advisors AMEC cut that prediction by a third. In any case, 90% of fracking jobs are specialised. Most of these workers will not be from the local area and the jobs will be of a temporary nature.

Myth 4 *‘UK regulations are strong and effective’.* Untrue. Our regulations were never strong, and are being slackened. Environment Agency (EA) staff are being cut by 10%. The industry self-monitors. The EA relies mainly on a reassuring Friday afternoon fax from Cuadrilla.

Myth 5 *‘It all happens so deep down that nothing can migrate’.* Gas and fluid frequently leak up the outside of wells. Natural faults can act as conduits. Our Balcombe oil is so shallow that even a man-made fracture could reach the aquifer, according to a study by the University of Durham.

Recruitment:

The more members the more powerful FFBRA will be in stopping Cuadrilla from returning to Balcombe. Membership is £1 and includes a weekly newsletter. A membership form has been emailed with this week’s newsletter. Return completed forms to Sue Taylor, Little Meadows, Stockcroft Road, Balcombe, RH17 6LL (the house is 6 houses down from the Oldlands Avenue end of Stockcroft Road). You can also email the form back to members@frackfree-balcombe.co.uk

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