



FFBRA NEWSLETTER NUMBER NIGHTEEN

NEWS AND INFORMATION FOR OUR MEMBERS

Balcombe Parish Council Poll Results

Brilliant result – a clear majority to oppose the oil and gas industry was returned on all three questions. A big thank you to all who contributed to this result. Every vote counts!

Number of eligible voters: 1507
Total number of votes cast: 901
Turnout: 59.8%

Question 1

Cuadrilla has made a new application to West Sussex County Council for planning permission to flow test the exploratory well that it drilled during the summer of 2013. This includes security fencing, an enclosed testing flare and site restoration. How should Balcombe Parish Council (BPC) respond to this application?

Result

“BPC should support this application”	309	34% of total vote
“BPC should oppose this application”	536	60% of total vote
“BPC should make no comment”	16	
“I am not sure how BPC should respond” ...	36	

Question 2

If an application does or may involve hydraulic fracturing (fracking), how should Balcombe Parish Council (BPC) respond?

Result

“BPC should always support such an application”	133	22% of total vote
“BPC should always oppose such an application”	548	61% of total vote
“BPC should treat each application on its merits”	201	
“I am not sure how BPC should respond”	16	

Question 3

If an application does not involve hydraulic fracturing (fracking), how should Balcombe Parish Council (BPC) respond?

Result

“BPC should always support such an application”	198	22% of total vote
“BPC should always oppose such an application”	463	52% of total vote
“BPC should treat each application on its merits”	221	
“I am not sure how BPC should respond”	15	

The result can be expressed as a percentage averaged over all three questions:

“Always Support” 24% “Always Oppose” 58%

Some comments on the results

“Fantastic! Can the BPC now firmly state that the village officially opposes Cuadrilla being here?”

‘If planning permission for flow testing is given against the communities wishes and Cuadrilla return to Balcombe, they will be doing so without the social license from Balcombe residents. On their conscience be it when they drive their toxic, radioactive, hazardous waste past my children’s primary school, meters away from their classrooms. We are David against Goliath and despite fighting a massive propaganda machine and the government’s intent on driving this industry into our countryside, we will win.’

“This is just the best news - I’m over the moon! Really looking forward to our Parish Council now declaring their intention to oppose any new Cuadrilla licenses!”

How to Object to Cuadrilla’s Application

Don’t mention

- Fracking,
- House prices
- Government’s energy policy

Do mention any of the following

Air Pollution

- Prevailing winds will take any pollution from the site across the village.
- Flaring of gas can result in a number of toxic chemicals being released into the atmosphere. There is clearly a potential danger to health.
- Emission limits for the most toxic gases are only subject to “spot samples” by Cuadrilla
- Heavy goods vehicle traffic and diesel generators also impact local air quality

Water Pollution

- The site is close to the Ardingly reservoir which provides water to many households in Sussex
- There are streams close to the site that flow to the River Ouse which is connected to the Ardingly reservoir
- Cuadrilla have already drilled horizontally for some 1,700 feet through the Micrite formation (a type of limestone) at a depth of approximately 2,350 feet below ground level.
- They have drilled a borehole through the aquifer and now they want permission to put acid and other chemicals down it which risks polluting the aquifer
- Contaminated waste water from the well can find its way up to the surface through the faults in the rocks and into the aquifer.

Noise Pollution

- Day and night there will be noise from
 - Industrial diesel generators
 - Pumps
 - Flaring
 - Trucks
- Last year Cuadrilla breached their planning conditions and exceeded their noise limits.
- Cuadrilla's projected noise levels do not take into account the prevailing wind direction or the contours of the land

Geological Faults

- There are three geological faults near the well site, including the Paddockhurst Park Fault
- The horizontal borehole drilled by Cuadrilla in the summer has already pierced the Paddockhurst Fault
- Faults act as conduits allowing fluids to rise up through the strata.
- Forcing thousands of gallons of hydrochloric acid 2,350 down the vertical borehole and then 1,700 feet along the horizontal borehole will have unpredictable results.

Waste Disposal

- Where will all the polluted radio-active waste water go? There is no information given in the application.
- The route from the site to the motorway will take radioactive, hazardous waste pass the school within meters of the children's classrooms..

Wildlife

- Ancient woodland to the north and southeast of the site
- Stream only 25 metres to the southeast of the site
- Bat survey (only done after drilled had started and so probably faulty and under-estimating the bat population) recorded many types of bats in the area (common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, noctule, serotine and myotis)
- Lighting from the site will disturb the bats (and bats are protected)
- Birds in the area include kingfishers which are already rare in Britain and would be disturbed by this activity

Traffic

- The road taking the trucks to and from the motorway is the B2036 and its surface is not suited to large numbers of heavy trucks
- Traffic has been routed pass the village school
- Last year Cuadrilla breached their planning conditions and took their trucks pass the school during pick up and drop off times

Village Life

- Cuadrilla obtained planning permission in 2010 without the knowledge of the village. This expired in 2013 and Cuadrilla are now seeking new permission to return. This time the views of the village must be listened to.
- Cuadrilla have caused social disruption and division in the community
- The recent Balcombe Parish Council showed that the majority of the villagers do not want Cuadrilla (or any other oil/gas company in their village). They have no social license to be here.

Parish Council Meetings

At the Parish council meeting last Wednesday I witnessed the bizarre incident of two unelected parish councillors, Alan Dearden and Mike Talman asking for Botts, one of the only two elected parish councillors, to resign from Balcombe Parish Council. This was greeted by staged clapping and vocal support from some members of the audience lead by Rodney Jago. The Chairman, Alison Stevenson made no attempt to control the councillors or the audience.

Botts was elected with 320 votes. He stood for all of us on an anti-fracking platform. He has worked hard for the village and maintained his dignity throughout the meeting and I know we all value what he is doing for Balcombe. **But silently being grateful is not enough.**

I am asking all decent minded villagers, regardless of their views of the oil and gas industry, to attend future Parish Council Meeting in order to ensure that parish council meetings are properly run and respect all village viewpoints.

The next parish council meeting will be Saturday 8 March (an extraordinary one called to announce the results of the poll) followed by the regular one on Wednesday 19 March.

In May 2015 you will be able to vote for your choice of councillors and will no longer have to endure non-elected councillors being in the majority on the BPC. Between now and May 2015 please attend and support the two elected parish councillors who are doing their best to represent all of us. These meetings are not irrelevant and must be closely watched until they are democratic.

Sue Taylor

THE CHINA PAGE

Balcombe: Fuel for Britain or Beijing?

Until now the push to exploit our Unconventional Oil & Gas reserves in Britain has appeared to be coming from Westminster, not least from Lord Browne, lead non-executive director in the Cabinet. He recently stated the controversial process of extracting gas from shale rock to be 'in the national interest'. Along with his government advisor post, Lord Browne is the Chairman of Cuadrilla, the company at the forefront of shale prospecting in the UK. The idea that extracting these deeply held reserves of gas and oil would be in the national interest to ensure our energy security has been echoed in many quarters, not least by a small 'pro-fracking' lobby in Balcombe itself.

Last week in the village, whilst residents are being polled by the Parish Council for their opinions, and Cuadrilla's latest planning application is being considered by WSCC, each household received an anonymous leaflet urging them to "VOTE: SUPPORT" It talks passionately of honour, "Balcombe for Britain" and "contributing to the nation's energy reserves" and of course "British energy security". The simple green leaflet thus links the support for Cuadrilla's latest plans - to 'acid wash' fossil fuel out of Balcombe - with national duty. Our Parish Council Chairman, Alison Stevenson, will be speaking at the 2014 UK Shale Gas World Conference in Manchester, perhaps a clear demonstration that she is prepared to 'do her bit'. But does the 'National Interest' and Energy Security claim hold water?

This month two new board members joined Lord Browne at Cuadrilla; Ivan Orchard and P J Arnall. Both work for a little heard of private equity company, the Hong Kong based, Kerogen. Ivan Orchard is the founder. He was also JP Morgan's Asian Energy director, during which time he developed links with CNOOC (China National Offshore Oil Corporation).

It seems a far cry from the protests at Balcombe over risk to local water supply to imagine that Beijing has not only its eye, but also its money on Balcombe, but the evidence is there. The Chinese State owned CNOOC know China is burning too much coal. They need to source gas/oil and they have been looking around the world for it. Enter CNOOC Ltd, trading from Hong Kong. It is clear from the 2014 Business Strategy document of CNOOC Ltd that they are 'strengthening exploration and development activities'. Where? Canada, the North Sea, and now, through Cuadrilla, Balcombe. Why us?

CNOOC Ltd are the cornerstone investor and strategic partner in Kerogen Capital who raised approx. \$1bn at their launch. Equipped with funds from China, Kerogen have since made only 3 investments, one being to purchase 49% of A J Lucas, who in turn own 44% of Cuadrilla – and to protect that investment, Ivan Orchard and his

Kerogen colleague Mr Arnall, joined the board of Cuadrilla Resources which has Cuadrilla Balcombe Limited as a wholly owned subsidiary.

CNOOC Ltd, with a poor human rights and environmental record caused a stir with the contentious \$15bn takeover of Canadian oil and gas company Nexen. It was the single largest foreign takeover by a Chinese company and underwent a long review by Canada's federal government before being given the green light. Following that, CNOOC announced its plans to build a massive LNG export terminal on the West Coast of Canada at Grassy Point, BC, to handle 3bn cubic ft of gas/day for 25 years. The plans to take Canadian Unconventional O&G production home to China are underway.

The links from West Coast Canada to Asia are perhaps obvious, but Chinese takeovers and importing of UK oil and gas? Isn't that a bridge too far? In CNOOC's 2014 business strategy they also mention the 'Golden Eagle Project' in our own North Sea - of which they now hold a 36.5% share, and 'act as the operator'.

When CNOOC bought Nexen, they also became the largest shareholder of iGas.

Would any government seriously intent on UK energy security be hoping for this Chinese investment in the UK?

Last September the Chinese overtook the USA to become the world's largest importer of oil.

So what of Cuadrilla and their increasing control by Kerogen? Is it really possible that Sussex and other parts of the UK could be industrialised to feed the near insatiable energy appetite of China?

On 7 December 2013, at the private and well-connected 'Balcombe Breakfast Club' Lord Malloch Brown, the Labour peer, relied on his international knowledge of politics and Middle East instability to give discourse to the 50 or so attendees in the Victory Hall. As his mother and uncle live in Balcombe, one could be forgiven for thinking a fund-raising talk for the church and a trip to see family was the only reason he returned to this once quiet village – especially as in the peer's talk he only made a passing jovial reference to being connected to the oil industry.

However, Lord Malloch Brown sits on the Executive Board of Kerogen with Ivor Orchard, something he neglected to share with the Balcombe Breakfast Club. And although residents of Balcombe would no doubt have been interested, Malloch Brown also neglected to direct them to his presentation that can be found on Youtube (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xW1aaRn0Mhc>) where he talks knowledgeably about the Chinese appetite for risky investment. In this presentation he sits next to his fellow board member, Ivor, who explains the Chinese need for foreign energy resources.

Is the UK's difficult-to-extract and environmentally damaging so-called 'bridge fuel' planned as a bridge for Beijing to help them reduce their dependence on coal?

It is impossible to imagine either Lord Malloch Brown or Lord John Browne are unaware of China's plans to import ever more oil/gas and Cuadrilla's connection to that. In talk of honour and 'doing the right thing for our country', the increasing Chinese 'buy in' to our reserves of unconventional oil and gas goes unmentioned – except when George Osborne talks in Hong Kong far from the ears of the British public. Will the public, who have been led to believe the controversial processes of unconventional oil and gas extraction is necessary for *British* energy security be happy when they discover that is a myth?

It is equally hard to imagine either Peer - or the government they work so closely with - believe that landowners would accept the removal of UK property rights and trespass law (which would take away the right to refuse extraction of oil/gas from one's own land) - as being in the national interest if they knew that the gas were then exported to China. Perhaps that is the reason both Lords have remained so quiet regards Cuadrilla's Chinese backing.

CNOOC's Link to Barton Moss and IGas

CNOOC (China National Offshore Oil Corporation) has bought Nexen. Through Nexen, the Chinese are now the largest shareholder in IGas. IGas is currently drilling for coal bed methane at Barton Moss just outside Manchester. Nexen own 19.4% of IGas.

<http://www.igasplc.com/investors/shareholder-information/major-shareholders>

George Osborne's Visit to Hong Kong last week

Still keen to cheerlead for Chinese investment in fracking in this country, George Osborne in the Intercontinental Hotel in Hong Kong last week told local business leaders

"Far from shying away from difficult issues like Nuclear energy and fracking – my government is leading the way in Europe. And we are attracting more investment from China than any other European economy"

Does he really think that selling our oil and gas reserves to the Chinese will lead to national fuel security for Britain?

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/chancellors-economy-speech-in-hong-kong>

Back In Balcombe

Cuadrilla's Planning Application is Live

The new application from Cuadrilla is now live and can be found on

<http://buildings.westsussex.gov.uk/ePlanningOPS/loadFullDetails.do?apllid=1634>

The public consultation period is until 13 March 2014.

Their application is described as being for “temporary permission for exploration and appraisal comprising the flow testing and monitoring of the existing hydrocarbon lateral borehole along with site security fencing, the provision of an enclosed testing flare and site restoration”.

FFBRA Cuppa and a Catch Up at the Half Moon Pub, Balcombe

Thursday 27 February, 10.30 am at the Half Moon Pub. We have decided to make these a regular event. They will happen every Thursday morning from now on. A chance to share ideas and meet like-minded individuals. Enjoy a delicious coffee (or tea) in relaxing surroundings.

FFBRA Information Day, Bramble Hall, Saturday 1 March

Saturday 1st March from 11am to 1pm at Bramble Hall. Come along and have a cup of coffee (or tea), a chat, and sample our delicious home-made cakes and other goodies. There'll be lots of useful information, help with the forthcoming Cuadrilla planning application, and a play area for children with toys. We're very friendly, and welcome all Balcombe residents. To find out more, contact us by emailing members@frackfreebalcombe.co.uk or telephoning 01444 819 329.

Extraordinary Balcombe Parish Council Meeting 8 March 11 am

Next meeting will be held in Bramble Hall, Bramble Hill, Balcombe, RH17 6HR. Balcombe Parish Council will announce how they will respond to Cuadrilla's application at this meeting.

Beyond Balcombe

Great Expectations, 27, 28 February and 1 March

Michael Hall School Theatre, Kidbrook Park, Forest Row, East Sussex, RH18 5JA (01342 8922275)

Nothing to do with Fracking but one of our younger members is starring in the dramatisation of this famous novel by Charles Dickens so please support.

Thursday 27th February/ 7.30pm Friday 28th February 7.30pm/ Saturday 1st March 2.30pm & 7.30pm

Tickets £7 & £4 students £18 for family of four

Car sharing from Balcombe can be arranged by telephoning 01444 811 845

Shale Gas World 13 to 14 May 2014

The UK's number one shale gas conference and exhibition. Good news – this has moved from Manchester to Birmingham. The Pavillion, The NEC, Birmingham £1,450 if booked before 4 April.

Speakers include

- **Alison Stevenson, Chairman Balcombe Parish Council**
- Andrew Austin, CEO IGas
- Francis Egan, CEO Cuadrilla Resources

- Dan Byles, MP and Chair of the Unconventionals APPG British Parliament
- Duarte Figueira, Head of Office of Unconventional Oil and Gas, DECC
- Angela Knight, CEO UK Energy

The main sponsor for this event (gold sponsor) is Halliburton.

More information can be found at: <http://www.terrapinn.com/conference/shale-gas-uk/index.stm>

Balcombe Village Diary

A number of members have asked for a complete Balcombe diary so we can avoid clashes with our events and others village events. Here is a starter, please send any contributions to suetaylorbalcombe@gmail.com.

26 Weds	2.15 pm	61 Club 53 rd Birthday Party	Parish Room
26 Weds	11 am	Conservatives Bridge Fund Raiser	Victory Hall
26 Weds	8.00 pm	History Society	Victory Hall
27 Thurs	10.30	FFBRA Cuppa and a Chat	Half Moon
28 Fri	7.30 pm	Flower Club	Parish Room
1 Mar Sat	10-12	Mother's Union Coffee Morning	Parish Room
1 Mar Sat	11-1	FFBRA Information Day	Bramble Hall
3 Mar Mon	7 pm	Youth Club	Bramble Hall
4 Mar Tues	10 am	Mobile Library	Outside V Hall
5 Mar Weds	7.30 pm	WI	Victory Hall
6 Mar Thurs	10.30 am	FFBRA Cuppa and a Chat	Half Moon
8 Mar Sat	10-11	BPC Surgery	Bramble Hall
8 Mar Sat	11-12	BPC Extra Ordinary Meeting	Bramble Hall
11 Mar Tues	10 am	Mobile Library	Outside V Hall
12 Mar Weds	pm	Film Night	Victory Hall
13 Mar Thurs	10.30	FFBRA Cuppa and a Chat	Half Moon
15 Mar Sat	pm	Los Pacaminos (Social Club)	Victory Hall
19 Mar Weds	8.00 pm	BPC Meeting	Bramble Hall
22 Mar Sat	am	Annual Church and Churchyard Clean	St Mary's
23 Mar Sun	am	Bull Run (cross country run)	Balcombe
25 Mar Tues	10 am	Coach trip Seven Sisters SheepCentre Book in advance 01444 400 212	Balcombe pick up
27 Mar Thurs	10.30 am	FFBRA Cuppa and a Chat	Half Moon
28 Mar Fri	7.30 pm	Flower Club	Victory Hall
23 Apr Weds	8.00 am	BPC Meeting	Bramble Hall
25 Apr Fri	pm	Wine and Cheese Evening	Victory Hall
26 Apr Sat	am	Craft Fair	Victory Hall
29 Apr Tues	10 am	Coach trip Wembley Stadium Guided Tour Book in advance 01444 400 212	Balcombe pick up

Date of Publication of FFBRA Newsletter Nineteen: Monday 25 February 2014