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Press Release

Ed Davey's Statement on Shale Gas

Energy Secretary Ed Davey today suggested that Shale Gas should be viewed as a bridge fuel to a green economy, which would benefit the UK by increasing energy security and providing more jobs and tax revenues as long as the rigorous regulation which the government is putting in place is followed. He also made it clear that he did not agree with the government's constant repetition of the myth that "fracking has real potential to drive energy bills down".

Defend Lytham believe that, In the absence of any existing technology at commercial scale to enable Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS), shale gas is a bridge to nowhere and that the government should concentrate on formulating a proper strategic energy policy, which encourages the development of renewable energy to replace fossil fuels.

Defend Lytham note that almost every politician prefaces their statements supporting shale gas with words like "*with the right regulation in place*". Our own MP, Mark Menzies talks about "*a gold standard of regulation*". The problem is that nobody seems to know what that means, and there is certainly no evidence of it being introduced.

Far from putting "rigorous regulation" in place the government has been steadily dismantling and "streamlining" the already inadequate regulation which we had before.

Cuadrilla's continued and unpunished breaches of regulation show us exactly how much protection we can look forward to from this so-called "rigorous regulation".

The suggestion that "it would benefit the UK - increasing energy security, providing more jobs and tax revenues" is equally insubstantial. Defend Lytham believes that these subjects are a distraction from the more important questions which centre on safety, health issues and regulation.

Defend Lytham are pleased to see that the government is finally admitting that fracking does not have "real potential to drive energy bills down". Clearly it won't reduce energy prices, as even Cuadrilla themselves have admitted, unless it manages to reach a huge scale across all of Europe. This is an extremely unlikely scenario.

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