

The Rt Hon Elizabeth Truss MP,
Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs
Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office
King Charles Street
London
SW1A 2AH

The Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP
House of Commons
London
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Dear Elizabeth Truss and Rishi Sunak,

We are writing to ask you to honour the Conservative Party manifesto commitment and retain the government's moratorium on fracking. It is vital that the next Prime Minister of the United Kingdom acts with integrity by upholding the manifesto pledge on fracking.

In November 2019, the government announced a moratorium on fracking, after reviewing a report by the Oil and Gas Authority, which confirmed that a series of earthquakes in Lancashire was caused by fracking operations. It found that any future fracking operations could cause even larger earthquakes and unacceptable levels of damage and disturbance¹.

The Conservative Party manifesto published later that month, reaffirmed the moratorium on fracking, and made a promise to the British people that "we will not support fracking unless the science shows categorically that it can be done safely"².

Fracking is deeply unpopular with the public, and has been strongly opposed by local communities everywhere it has been proposed because of concerns about earthquakes, climate change and the industrialisation of the countryside. According to the most recent government survey, in Autumn 2021, 17% of people supported fracking and 45% said they opposed it³. With over 60 marginal seats in over 140 English parliamentary constituencies affected by exploration licenses, lifting the moratorium on fracking would have major repercussions for the next general election.

Record-breaking temperatures are a reminder of the urgency of addressing the climate crisis. Lord Deben, the Chair of the Climate Change Committee recently warned of the risk of investing in fracking as the UK must rapidly reduce its consumption of gas to reach Net Zero⁴.

Fracking would not have a meaningful impact on the UK's energy security or our energy bills. In the 10 years before the fracking moratorium was imposed in 2019, the industry only managed to frack two sites, and work at both of them was aborted due to earth tremors. Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng recently acknowledged that fracking "won't materially affect the wholesale market price...UK producers won't sell shale gas to UK consumers below the market price. They're not charities"⁵.

¹ <https://www.nstauthority.co.uk/media/6149/summary-of-pnr1z-interim-reports.pdf>

² <https://www.conservatives.com/our-plan/conservative-party-manifesto-2019>

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/beis-public-attitudes-tracker-autumn-2021>

⁴ <https://drillordrop.com/2022/06/29/ccc-warns-of-climate-risk-to-investment-in-fracking>

⁵ <https://twitter.com/kwasikwarteng/status/1498197281144725505>

We already have the solutions at our disposal to secure access to clean, affordable energy. The next Prime Minister must address the cost of living crisis by insulating the UK's housing stock, and accelerating the production of homegrown renewable energy, such as onshore wind and solar, which are now four times cheaper than gas⁶.

We therefore urge you to uphold the environmental legacy of the 2019 Conservative Party manifesto and retain the moratorium on fracking.

Signed by...

Rt Hon Professor Charles Hendry CBE, Former Minister of Energy & Climate Change
Tom Fyans, Deputy CEO, CPRE The Countryside Charity
Matt Browne, Head of Policy & Advocacy, Wildlife & Countryside Link
Dustin Benton, Policy Director, Green Alliance
Abi Bunker, Director of Conservation and External Affairs, Woodland Trust
Kate Norgrove, Executive Director of Advocacy and Campaigns, WWF
Katie-Jo Luxton, Executive Director, Global Conservation, RSPB
Hugh Knowles and Miriam Turner, Co-Executive Directors, Friends of the Earth, England, Wales & NI
Ross Matthewman, Head of Policy and Campaigns, Chartered Institute of Environmental Health
Dr Stuart Parkinson, Executive Director, Scientists for Global Responsibility
Ruth Bradshaw, Policy and Research Manager, Campaign for National Parks
Professor Jeremy Biggs, CEO, Freshwater Habitats Trust
Stuart Singleton-White, Head of Campaigns, Angling Trust
Gill Perkins, CEO, Bumblebee Conservation Trust
Martin Sims, Director of Investigations, League Against Cruel Sports
Dr Miatta Fahnbulleh, Chief Executive, New Economics Foundation
Simon Francis, Coordinator, End Fuel Poverty Coalition
Matthew Lay, National Officer for Energy, UNISON
John Moloney, Assistant General Secretary, PCS
Bronwen Smith-Thomas, Head of Campaigns and Politics, The Climate Coalition
Tommy Vickerstaff, UK Lead, 350.org
Steve Trent, CEO / Founder, Environmental Justice Foundation
Suzanne Jeffery, Chair, Campaign against Climate Change
Beth Thoren, Environmental Action and Initiatives Director, EMEA, Patagonia
Gabriel Davalos, Head of Campaigns and Communications, Uplift
Max Wakefield, Director of Campaigns, Possible
Shanon Shah, Director, Faith for the Climate
Andy Lester, Head of Conservation, A Rocha UK
Steve Shaw, Director, Power for People
Rob Abrams, Climate Lead, Medact
Charlotte Howell-Jones, Parents For Future UK
Jemima Hartshorn, Founder, Mums for Lungs
Oliver Sidorczuk, Campaign Manager, Zero Hour
Megan Bentall, Head of Campaigns, 38 Degrees
Sondhya Gupta, UK Lead, SumOfUs

Steve Mason, Campaign Director, Frack Free United
Joe Corré, Founder, Talk Fracking
Dame Vivienne Westwood
Andrew Pendleton, Acting CEO, Global Action Plan
Susan Holliday, Preston New Road Action Group
Tina Rothery, Frack Free Nanas
Bob Dennett, Co-Founder, Frack Free Lancashire
John Hobson, Defend Lytham
Jean Hesketh, Co-ordinator, Frack Free Dudleston
Maureen Mills, Moss Alliance
Barbara Richardson, Roseacre Awareness Group
Jo White, Frack Free Ryedale
James Cameron, Frack Free Upton
Dr Jill Sutcliffe, Chair, Keep Kirdford and Wisborough Green
Caroline Haywood, Frack Free Selby
Jean Hesketh, Co-ordinator, Frack Free Dudleston
Rosie Stokes, Secretary, Sherwood Forest FoE Climate Action Group
Adrian Palmer, Frack Free York & Villages.
Ellie Wyatt, Frack Free Sussex and Weald Action Group
Ann Stewart, Weald Action Group
Ginnie Shaw, Frack Free Osbaldwick, Derwent and Heworth Without
Ben McCallan, Chair, Zero Carbon Guildford
Andy and Louise, Frack Free Somerset
Carol Hutchinson, Chair, Derbyshire Communities Mineral Plan Action Group
Sheelagh Handy, Frack Free Misson
Sylvia May MBE, Lead Community Liaison, Frack Free Isle of Wight
Sue Gough, Frack Free Ryedale and Frack Free Kirby Misperton
Kevin Ogilvie-White, Chairman, Frack Free EQS (Exmoor Quantocks Sedgemore)
Paul Bradshaw, Frack Free Southport
Bob Street, Co-Ordinator, Coal Aston & Dronfield Against Fracking
Barry Cartwright, Woodsetts Against Fracking
Lisa Hopkinson, Derbyshire Climate Coalition
Jennie Dixon, Frack Free East Yorkshire
Simon Eardley, Conservative Councillor, Saughall and Mollington Ward, Cheshire West and Chester Council
Timothy Huxtable, Conservative Councillor, Hall Green South Ward, Birmingham City Council
Tim Hall, Conservative County Councillor, Leatherhead and Fetcham East
Jill Houlbrook, Conservative Upton Ward Councillor, Cheshire West and Cheshire
Peter Strachan, Professor of Energy Policy, Robert Gordon University
Dr Simon Sweeney, University of York
Dr Paul Dorfman, Associate Fellow, Science Policy Research Unit, University of Sussex
Dr Stephen Connelly, University of Sheffield
Professor Emeritus Nick Cowern, Newcastle University
Dr Keith Baker FRSA, Research Fellow in Fuel Poverty and Energy Policy
Nick Howard, Castle Howard
Dr Tim Thornton, (Retired) GP
Pamela Michelle Hudson, Property owner and Bed & Breakfast business at Old Wells