

ENDS Special Reports

Shale Gas and the Environment 2015

ENDS proposes to publish this special report on *TBC*

Advertising booking deadline *TBC*

Advertising copy deadline *TBC*

For information about advertising contact Neil.johnston@haymarket.com, tel: +44 20 8267 4232

This editorial synopsis must not be amended by anyone other than the Editor.

The following feature articles are planned (this list is provisional):

1) Introduction – two steps forward, one back

Wise heads forecast that shale gas would face much more serious obstacles in the UK than in America, and so it has proved. Environmental issues are central to the debate, ranging from the global - the claim that shale gas is “unburnable carbon” - to the intensely local.

2) The climate elephant

The climate implications of shale gas are shaping up to be a key battleground. Some argue that it is a bridge to a greener energy system. Others that its exploitation is utterly incompatible with UK greenhouse gas reduction commitments. There is truth to both sides in what is a complex debate.

3) Well integrity and groundwater

Of the potential environmental impacts of shale gas extraction, the risks of groundwater and aquifer contamination due to wellhead failures are exciting the most discussion. Minimum depth for fracking to isolate it from sub-surface waters is another key point of contention.

4) The Scottish exception

Opinion polls show the Scottish public to be significantly more anti-fracking than the rest of the UK population. This is driving a unique Scottish political discussion and some distinct regulatory developments. Scottish would-be shale gas entrepreneurs are responding with distinct community offers.

5) Regulations update

The UK environmental, health & safety and planning system has been a hive of activity, developing law, codes of practice and conventions for the limited fracking activity undertaken so far and in anticipation of more in the future.

6) Exclusion zones

Potential shale gas reservoirs underlie a good portion of the UK. But various exclusions have been proposed, ranging from total for the complete opponents to national parks, areas of outstanding natural beauty and aquifers. Through maps we show where fracking might go ahead depending on what exclusions are laid down.