

# BLACKPOOL AND FYLDE GREEN PARTY

## GREEN VIEW - AUGUST 2018

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### Green Mondays Anniversary Edition

This month marks the anniversary of the first Green Monday at Preston New Road, demonstrating the ongoing Green Party involvement in the fight against fracking. We have an extended newsletter this month in celebration of the anniversary, and a varied range of articles on other subjects.

Continuing too are White Wednesdays, a women's Call for Calm, including a regular peace walk to the PNR site and a silent vigil. This is facilitated by the police, making it a safe and comfortable action for newcomers.

[Women's Peace Walk Every Wednesday](#)

And, of course, every Saturday is a Solidarity Saturday at Maple Farm, on Preston New Road, and there are other weekend events at the Community Hub.

Check Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/blackpoolfyldegreenparty/>

or Maple Farm Community Hub

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/210710602798416/>

for details of any special events coming up.

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# GREEN MONDAYS

## Wise Minds in Disturbed Places

For over a year now, 'Green Mondays' has proved one of the most effective and well-attended events on the A583 Preston New Road; not the most stunning of venues admittedly for the likes of George Monbiot, Dames Jenny Jones and Emma Thompson, or famed authors, academics, politicians and others, but certainly an important one as it's the location of the growing gasfield being developed by Cuadrilla to produce shale gas. As a Party we are of course opposed to yet another fossil fuel being championed by this Conservative government.

As Caroline Lucas points out -

*"This Government's disdain for science and blatant attempts to mislead the public on issues affecting their health is frightening. The British people don't want fracking and ministers must accept that."*

This time, though, for us on the Fylde it's up close and deeply personal; this particular method of fossil fuel extraction brings with it localised risks like increased air pollution, traffic, noise, light, industrialisation and risks of accidents with an additional 15-50 vehicle movements per day during the fracking stage.

There has been daily campaigning at the fracking site since 4<sup>th</sup> January 2017; that's nearly 20 months of actions to raise awareness and cause delay and a whole host of approaches have been taken during that time. On 13th August 2018 'Green Mondays at PNR' that marked 52 continuous weeks of bringing 'Greens' of all sorts to the roadside including members of the Green Party, Labour and Liberal Democrats and NGOs like Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace members with a focus on getting rid of planet-damning industries.

Monday action starts in the morning and goes on through till mid-afternoon with academics, journalists, authors and experts coming to the roadside to offer talks, workshops and insights; turning 'Green Mondays' into an educational as well as effective non-violent direct action against this dangerous industry. We've all learned so much and want to honour this milestone by thanking each and every one who turned up, showed support or shared the event, it's been invaluable and very much appreciated.



## Our particular thanks are due to the speakers who brought their wisdom, including:

Caroline Lucas (Green Party)  
George Monbiot (Journalist/Author)  
Jonathan Bartley (Green Party)  
Nick Deardan (Global Justice Now)  
Magid Magid (Green Party)  
Stephen Hall (Trades Unions)  
Alasdair Roxburgh (Friends of the Earth)  
John Ashton (Former Labour Diplomat)  
Tim Farron (Liberal Democrats)  
Sian Berry (Green Party)  
Amelia Womack (Green Party)  
Asad Rehman (War on Want)  
Dr. Julia Steinberger (Leeds University)  
Jamie Bartlett (Author)  
Jamie Peters (Friends of the Earth)  
Natalie Bennett (Green Party)  
Kate Raworth (Author)  
Dame Jenny Jones (Green Party)  
Simon Pickering (Ecotricity)  
Gina Dowding (Green Party)  
Andrew Cooper (Green Party)



*Ed: Not to mention Tina-Louise, who penned this article, and her sister Julie Daniels, who have worked constantly at PNR to plan, engage, and bring us video and other reports.*

# Women in White

And family safety concerns



Women in White were in the news on August 9th, highlighting the lack of planning for major accidents at Preston New Road. As usual, (although White Wednesdays are of course not GP events), Green Party members were there and featured prominently in the event and the Blackpool Gazette report.

*'Women in white' were out in force yesterday at the fracking site on Preston New Road to protest what they say is a lack of clear safety measures in place should something go wrong at the site. Among them was Lancashire County councillor Gina Dowding, who said: "It is very concerning given that they have now been given the definitive go ahead with fracking by the government. It has made all our worries that much more immediate. "It's important here that the local community know that if something went wrong on-site here, that there is plan and they would be protected."*

*Anti-fracker Julie Daniels, from South Shore, added: "We are not saying that something is going to go wrong. But people need to be aware of the possible dangers that come with this industry."*

*Protesters said clear safety measures need to be put in place for the public in case a leak occurs at the site in the future. However, Cuadrilla said that any risks at the fracking site could be adequately dealt with by the emergency services' existing capabilities. A Cuadrilla spokesman said: "The risk of an incident requiring implementation of an emergency plan has been fully assessed as part of our environmental permit applications and any risk of harm to the workers on site or to the public outside of the site is very low. "Furthermore the emergency services have visited the site as required. ADVERTISING "Cuadrilla does have an incident management plan which details how Cuadrilla and the emergency services will respond if there was an incident at the site. All personnel and visitors to the site are made fully aware of emergency procedures."*



## The 100 Women March is heading for London's Parliament Square on September 12<sup>th</sup>

In Lancashire, the people and the local Lancashire County Council voted NO TO FRACKING but parliament overturned this decision and decided to frack us anyway... the mothers and grandmothers of Lancashire now ask "What point the vote, if there is no true democracy in which to be heard?"

People from across the world have contributed knitted lengths of wool... to show just how far the 800 metres of horizontal frack pipe runs under our homes - it will be unfurled about Parliament Square.

We'll mostly be dressed in white, with sashes and hats to pay homage to the Suffragettes so will be easy to find... we'd love it if you could join us to amplify our reminder to parliament about fracking: "WE SAID NO!"

A coach will be leaving super early before 6am from the Preston New Road Rolling Roadside Protest base at Maple Farm community hub and we aim to be in London by 11am until around 4pm... further coaches may be travelling - watch this space or arrange your own and give us the details here -

<https://www.facebook.com/events/291674021415445/permalink/291674061415441/>



# NO BALACLAVA REQUIRED

*The recent debacle when anti-fracking activism was totally wrongly accused of involvement of “grooming” potential terrorists has highlighted the extreme misconceptions some organisations and institutions have about Green activists.*

*Here [Tina-Louise Rothery](#) adds an (unrelated) comment to the discussion of what activism involves.*

Identifying with any label is a risky business because the interpretation of that label is not the same for everyone. ‘Activist’ is a tough sell as far as labels go – but the act of becoming an informed and active citizen has never been more necessary. Defined by dictionaries as:

[ACTIVIST Noun: *A person who campaigns to bring about political or social change.*]

The definition is entirely apt and relatable to Activists but for many, there is an unavoidable stereotype associated with the term; formed from negative media and experience of inconvenience or fear. A study in 2013 prompted headlines to read

*“Everyone Hates Environmentalists and Feminists”*

The research from Canada, found:

*[...strongly negative stereotypes about these types of activists, and those feelings reduced their willingness to adopt the behaviors that these activities promoted.]*

Leading the research was University of Toronto psychologist Nadia Bashir:

*[“The most frequently mentioned traits describing “typical feminists” included “man-hating” and “unhygienic;” for “typical environmentalists,” they included “tree-hugger” and “hippie.”]*

Making ‘activism’ accessible or even palatable has emerged as a major part of the challenge for any campaign group and one I personally recognise within the anti-fracking movement here in Blackpool & Fylde in particular. Our community catchment area embraces a huge diversity of types from low-pay workers in our Blackpool tourism industry, to better-off retirees in Lytham and yet fracking will impact us all without bias. Ensuring communities are informed and involved in the serious decisions by government that affect us directly, requires action and action by citizens IS ‘Activism’ and therein lies the problem... not everyone wants to BE an Activist, even if they do want to act to stop fracking or save a hospital from closure.

Perhaps it’s the word itself that comes with too much baggage? ‘Active Citizens’ is a more apt description for those across the country who are alert to the potential impact of a whole range of issues from cuts to public services and local issues, to arms sales, nuclear development, status with the EU and of course fracking.

Since 4th January 2017 this subject has been evident here at the developing fracking site on the A583 Preston New Road; residents and campaigners have come together daily in protest. Defined collectively as Activists in the media, I have encountered retired midwives, choir masters, monks, priests, pacifists, anarchists and all the other ‘ists’ who would not naturally land in one place together, let alone share a label.

It’s not been easy and remains a fine line between acting together because there is no choice when we are each defending our young - and avoiding all those other subjects and opinions that would otherwise divide fragile unity. After 20 months though, our actions have prevented site completion and fracking (so far), set the company many months behind schedule and raised national awareness massively; Activism works even if the label doesn’t do so well for us.

Trying to call ourselves 'Active Citizens' or something less sharp like being 'Activey' or more neutral like 'Campaigners' is just not practical or likely to bring much needed success but we do need more involvement and less fear of the consequences of the label – consequences that are nothing compared to what happens if we do nothing in the current climate. The research above suggests that it's how accessible and inclusive we make the 'acts' of Activism, that could be key:

*[...the very nature of activism leads to negative stereotyping. Participants were less interested in befriending activists who participated in stereotypical behavior (such as staging protest rallies), but could easily envision hanging out with those who use "nonabrasive and mainstream methods" such as raising money or organizing social events. By aggressively promoting change and advocating unconventional practices, activists become associated with hostile militancy and unconventionality or eccentricity. Furthermore, this tendency to associate activists with negative stereotypes and perceive them as people with whom it would be unpleasant to affiliate reduces individuals' motivation to adopt the pro-change behaviors that activists advocate.]*

So becoming people who are more pleasant to be with because we offer more ways to be an Activist is the answer and one we've quite-by-chance been doing over this past 20 months. We've brought diversity to our days and actions that offers an in-door to many more than any rally would.

'Green Mondays' each week brings respected academics, politicians, authors, celebrities, environmentalists and others to the roadside to host workshops and give talks; on Wednesdays there's a women-led 'Call for Calm' that revolves around a 15 minute silence in which the women call for calm amidst the protest and go on to dance, sing, speak their reasons for attending and bring shared food to raise the mood in an otherwise distressing place and on the last Friday of each month, faith groups of all denominations come together to hold prayers, silences and rituals; these events open a space in which 'non-typical Activists' or at least 'non-identifying' ones, can find a reason to relate to what's going on and particularly in the case of the very structured Wednesdays, a safer space in which to arrive and participate.

No Balaclavas Required... just each of us who give a damn, pay attention, recognise a wrong and ACT because morally we must – that's being an Activist. Please join us at the roadside or host a cake sale, organise a talk, attend a film showing, chat with friends, join a group, lobby your MP, share research or do whatever it is that you devise as your personal Activism.

## Tina Rothery – BFGP

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\*Our Facebook Page is ['Green Party Against Fracking'](#) and is a great place to start getting involved. BFGP's Garry Richardson updates events, speakers and research that matters. We look forward to any suggestions or input that could work to engage more people to this 'Activey' stuff ;)



# BREXIT

## Another fine mess

<b>Referendum on the United Kingdom's membership of the European Union</b>	
Vote only once by putting a cross <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in the box next to your choice	
Should the United Kingdom remain a member of the European Union or leave the European Union?	
Remain a member of the European Union	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leave the European Union	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comment by editor Alan Tootill on Brexit and the problems we face, and a review of our Green Party position before and now.

Looking again at the ballot paper for the European Union referendum, it all looks so simple, doesn't it? An easy choice, stay or leave, with the implication that it would be a doddle to implement a decision either way.

Of course now, over two years later, we know the truth is, and always was, very different. It is tempting to say practically no progress has been made by the government in resolving the issues of Brexit, and that at the moment there seems no way that they will be resolved even by the end of March next year. Indeed it is hard to imagine a time when there has been so much confusion in political life, with a hamstrung government and an opposition equally riven, equally torn by strife over its leadership, and incapable of taking the country out of the mess by ringing down a Tory party moving us slowly but surely towards becoming a totalitarian state.

Let me run my personal flag up the mast at this point. I always believed the future of this country is within Europe. I feel comfortable and happy to have European Union citizenship, and would feel a sad loss if it were taken away from me. I have recognised the positive influence the EU has had over our UK policies towards social justice and our environmental responsibility, and where our governments have shown negative attitudes I have welcomed the restraints under EU law. Our MEPs give us a voice within Europe – and incidentally the European elections have given us our first taste of proportional representation, so not only has the UK a voice in Europe, but we have had Green MEPs representing us and liaising with our European Greens.

For me, to undermine our economy and disrupt our system of law and the stability of relations with our European friends, established over some forty years, was a supreme act of folly. Those of a Green or left persuasion who voted Brexit as a slap in the face for a less than perfect capitalist system as they saw it were extremely short-sighted and we are now starting to understand how much harm it is doing. It has jump-shifted the country's political sentiment to the right, and we are now at serious risk of growth in racism and far-right-wing intolerance. It has put our political system in crisis, with all attention shifted to the Brexit problem meaning no action on what really matters - positive advances in the social structure of our country – and, worse, the government feeling able to slip past without proper scrutiny outrageous attacks on democracy and the environment as exemplified by their fracking policy.

If Brexit is as messy and costly as many fear, this neglect of the real issues will continue, perhaps for decades, afterwards. This, and the loss of goodwill from our European partners which is already evident, will be incredibly damaging.

Enough of my views, you might say, what is more important is what is Green Party policy and can it help move us forward out of this.



Before the Brexit vote the Green Party recognised that as a nation we sometimes fell behind some of our European partners. The 2015 election manifesto quoted examples ranging from prices of rail transport, European Robin Hood taxation of financial transactions, and progress made by other countries in renewable energy production. And regarding inequality and corporate power in the UK -

*“Private interests have ruled the roost for far too long. The result is a society scarred by inequalities of power and wealth, and a planet plundered of resources and damaged by pollution. All in it together? We don’t think so. Those with power and wealth have done very well out of austerity: the UK’s wealthiest 1% grab more than anywhere else in Europe.”*

It is not surprising that the Green Party campaigned strongly for us to remain in Europe in 2016. Concerns about environmental protection and human rights, particularly working rights, were central to the launch of the referendum manifesto.

Caroline Lucas told the Guardian -

*“We won’t sit idly by when our environmental protections and our rights at work are threatened by Brexit. Our campaign for British membership of the EU will be loud and it will be proud.*

*“In a fast-changing world we need international rules to control big business and finance, and to ensure that people’s rights are protected – at work and as consumers. The EU has also given us the freedom to live, study, work and retire across an entire continent.*

*“The EU helps us look after our environment, too. It’s only by working with our European neighbours that we can tackle climate change, protect wildlife and reduce pollution. Thanks to EU rules, our beaches are cleaner and our dirtiest power stations are being shut down.”*

Caroline’s concern about lack of Labour action was prophetic, she warned -

*“the UK was in danger of “sleepwalking” out of the EU without more vocal and active support from the Labour leadership.”*

That leadership failed to materialise, despite the majority of Labour MPs arguing against Brexit.

After the Brexit election result, the immediate reaction, apart from disappointment, was that the result indicated a disenchantment with, and alienation from, mainstream politics. The Party promised -

*“We’re going to continue to fight for the Britain we believe in.*

*“In the years ahead, we’ll be pushing back on the Government’s plans for an extreme Brexit, and we’ll be campaigning for progressive social, economic and environmental outcomes across three priority areas.*

*“We will also be calling for a vote on the terms of the deal, as we believe that the EU referendum of 2016 should be seen as the start of a democratic process, not the end of it.”*

Priorities were further expressed by the following snippets -

*“Some of our strongest environmental protections came from European legislation, and we need to ensure that these are protected and extended in the years to come.*

*“We will resist any attempt to turn the UK into a tax haven, ensuring that everyone makes a fair contribution to British society.*

*“Our lives are enriched when we share them with people from other countries, and our horizons are broadened when we travel, work and study across the EU. We will continue to speak up for the principle of free movement, and we will stand with migrants in the face of rising xenophobia and racism.”*



Almost a year later, before the 2017 general election, in May the Green Party became the only party to make an official and unambiguous pledge to include the option of remaining in the EU on the ballot paper of a ratification referendum. As Caroline Lucas put it - *“Whoever wins this election has a mandate to negotiate on behalf of the British people – but that does not mean that they have a right to impose a final deal.”*

Another year on, and the ratification referendum remains as a Green Party priority policy, alongside commitments to free movement and environmental protection.

It seems almost impossible to predict what will happen between now and 29<sup>th</sup> March 2019. Whether this date will be set back, whether there will be a disastrous “no deal” Brexit, whether a deal can be cobbled together by Theresa May or whether she will be toppled by the extreme right wing of her party. Whether there will be a snap general election, and if so whether Labour’s crippled and divided party could win the day.

What is sure is that we should be ready for a general election, whenever it comes. I am hoping our local party will have preparations made, and prospective candidates selected, within the near future, and that we will make a good showing, despite our handicap of having three constituencies covering our area.

In this context it is worth looking again at the issue of a ratification referendum.

This has difficulties, not the least of which is the timescale before the expiry of the Article 50 deadline. More significant, perhaps, is the negative attitude of both Theresa May and Jeremy Corbyn, who despite the adulation of the left, appears weak and indecisive as a leader, in my view.

Immediately following the June 2016 referendum I was firmly of the view that a second referendum was needed on the terms of exit from the EU. Now I am less convinced.

To see why there is a strong argument for a ratification referendum we have to remind ourselves of that original ballot paper. The electors were asked only about leaving the EU. They were NOT asked about membership of the EEA (European Economic Area) in order to preserve our trade agreements with EU member countries and continue free movement. Nor, of course, about the Irish border problem, or other issues such as EU citizenship rights. Yet it is on the first two major issues that the future of Brexit hangs in the balance.

Yet the Prime Minister is adamant that Brexit means Brexit. As are the hardline right, and their lunatic fringe of Nigel Farage. But neither of them accept the truth. That the electors did NOT vote for EITHER of their solutions. They simply were not asked.

What the electorate would decide now, if asked about trade and freedom of movement, or about cancelling Brexit altogether and draw a line under one of this country’s least edifying episodes, I have no idea.

Nor do I have any idea whether the government would be capable of explaining the issues involved in clear and unbiased terms to enable the electorate to make a fair decision. I suspect not, and we for sure don’t need another battle of lies and distortions which characterised Brexit referendum number one.

Another major problem, it seems to me then, is that unless a deal is formulated and agreed by government, or more properly Parliament as a whole, no question can be put to the electors. And there is no sign of any deal being agreed, either by Westminster, nor, were it so agreed, by the EU. So we are back at square one. The only real question is - in or out?

But for May to press on bull-headedly on her version of Brexit as it stands is not only doomed to failure, but anti-democratic. The referendum result was narrow, with only a relatively small proportion of the population voting to leave, and - as we have since found - a legally contestable result because of unlawful campaign expenditure and totally misleading claims by the Leave faction. Moreover, not only did the voters did not choose or approve May's plan, but if we believe the recent polls, many people's opinions have changed on Brexit. The mood now is Remain. Although given the likely accuracy of polls, frankly I am sceptical. I suggest that a majority of people in this country neither know what's going on, nor care at the end of the day. They just want an end to this farce.



Of course a hard Brexit will cause many problems. Most of all, financially, it will affect the most disadvantaged. For example, around half of our food is imported. Given concerns about energy imports of gas it is surprising that it has taken the impending Brexit to bring this security of supply issue to many people's attention. Around a third of our food comes from Europe. It is inescapable that the fall of the pound against the euro (also against the dollar, of course) has pushed and will continue to push prices up. Some benefit for exporting industry matters nothing if this benefit does not trickle down to those who find supermarket prices rising, or have their energy bills hiked because of the combination of Brexit and the pursuit of shale gas, imported or otherwise, rather than developing cheap renewable energy.



[\(click for video\)](#)

I just hope the Green Party can speak with one loud and clear voice at the next election. If electors are turned off by mainstream two-party politics, we are here to provide a distinct and fresh alternative.

# Litter Pickin' Good

**Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> July** saw Green Party members out on Queensway filling sacks with litter accumulating along the roadside.

Co-chair Duncan Royle reports –

*"I was amazed at the things that people must throw from cars - Stella is the most popular beer with litter louts! As a few passers-by piped their horns in approval I thought maybe the habit of litter bugging is on the wane. However the very next day I was driving behind a car and the driver threw out a plastic bag in front of me. I flashed my lights in disapproval (and shock - it could have been something heavier that might have hit my windscreen), only for them to throw out something else!!! What will it take to make this socially unacceptable to all people? Councils can impose fines (up to £1,000 for litter offences, but £75 is the norm Fixed penalty in Fylde) but it is hard to present evidence - only 2 fines were levied by FBC last year!"*



## New Community Hub Opens its Doors



At the beginning of July a new community hub in Blackpool threw open its doors to give local residents a chance to get involved with its projects.

The Space and The Studio, on Cookson Street, Blackpool, held its first open day, featuring talks, demonstrations and vegan food. The venue was founded by local artist Ruby Coupe, who aims to spread knowledge on how to help the environment with gardening skills, healthy and cruelty-free vegan food, recycling, up cycling, and a regular repair café.

Singer, actor and script writer Linda Hampton, who attended the event, said:

"Some wonderful new connections were made with other groups and individuals who are making a change already in the community and the world.

"In addition, it was an opportunity to find out what The Space and The Studio is all about, how people can get involved, how the venue is already making a difference, and its future plans."

On the collective action day there was a timetable of tasters and workshops for anyone to try including yoga by [Phil Armstrong](#) of Moon Hare Yoga and a fun dance workshop by Sam Jayne Simpson, talks by Greenpeace, Hare Krishna, Journal and Claremont Community Centre. Upstairs in The Studio, Sweet Jam Photography, based at the Studio, offered pet photography sessions which drew many four legged friends to the venue along with their faithful owners.

Those who stayed for the latter part of the day shared in a Jacob's join of vegan food in the Space downstairs, followed by a song and mantra chanting session to uplift and heal, upstairs in the beautiful community room in the studio led by Jayne Love.

The Space has a programme of activities, including yoga, art classes, conscious dance classes, up cycling lampshades sessions, and Mint and Mamma sewing repair café sessions. There is also a Friday drop-in session from 10am until 4pm for a chat and a brew.

# GETTING RID OF PLASTICS

is the latest media green bandwagon, at least until the end of the summer silly season with the return of Parliament focusing once again on our Brexit problems. We should of course welcome this and join in. Here is a kitchen tip or two recommended by Garry.

And while we're on the subject, why not try FoE's plastic quiz? Can you spot the hidden plastics?

<https://act.friendsoftheearth.uk/act/hidden-plastics-quiz?>



# Fracking News Roundup

## Fylde and Preston New Road

Despite Cuadrilla having obtained an ongoing injunction intended to prevent obstruction to their work at Preston New Road, daily action continues, now into its 20<sup>th</sup> month.

Campaigners were concerned about the lack of planning for any major emergencies resulting from fracking at PNR. Despite calls for a delay in granting final fracking consent, until this was resolved, minister Greg Clark was unmoved. In joining calls for a delay, Jonathan Bartley said "The fact that local residents don't even know if there's even a proper plan in place for emergencies – let alone evacuation – is deeply concerning." Caroline asked a question in Parliament on the issue, but Claire Perry, speaking for the Secretary of State, provided the expected bland answer evading the detail of the concerns.

Cuadrilla stated they had now completed drilling the second horizontal well at PNR.

The timing of the response to Cuadrilla's fracking consent was clearly nothing to do with ensuring that the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) had completed its checks to ensure that the Secretary of State was (as Claire Perry claimed in Parliament) satisfied that legislative conditions were met, and was "otherwise satisfied that it was appropriate". The timing had everything to do with the break-up for the summer recess of Parliament, with which the news that Cuadrilla now had the final permission. In this way MPs were prevented from questioning ministers, and debate was stifled. As Caroline Lucas tweeted – it was "Disgraceful that the Govt has quietly signed off fracking on a busy last day before recess." "They've ignored local people, overruled local councillors and torn up our commitments to tackle climate change."

Worse was to come. Three days after the announcement that Cuadrilla had the go-ahead, a buried government report slipped quietly into the public domain. The report, by the government's Air Quality Expert Group (AQEG), was given to ministers in 2015, but was published quietly on 27 July. In a nutshell, the report concluded that shale gas extraction increases air pollution. As expected, this led to new claims of government skulduggery, complaints that there was now clear evidence the residents of PNR were being used in a scientific experiment, and further demands for new health impact assessments to be carried out by PHE, which the government refused.

Further breaches of Cuadrilla's permit and planning conditions came under fire. The company delivered its drilling rig in the early hours of the morning, against planning rules and accompanied by about 50 police officers. This led to accusations that the police were both colluding with Cuadrilla, and using "aggressive and inconsistent tactics" against campaigners at anti-fracking protests at the site.

A further revelation came when it was discovered that the Environmental Agency had found Cuadrilla breaching the waste management requirements at the site in a number of ways. The fact that the breaches were confirmed by the EA months before the government's granting of planning consent gave further grounds for concern about that decision. Key issues in the breaches included:

- Drill cuttings not separated from drilling mud, in breach of the Waste Management Plan
- Waste space fluid and suspension brine not collected separately, in breach of WMP
- Waste stored on at least 22 occasions at an unpermitted site longer than was acceptable
- Waste transported by an unlicensed sub-contractor
- Waste not accurately described
- Information on paperwork confused, missing or invalidated
- No explanation in consignment and waste transfer notes of unexpectedly high water level in extractive waste.

## Other fracking news –

The government forged ahead with plans to make exploration for shale gas permitted development, taking decision-making out of the hands of local government and denying public comment or objection. A second proposal is to make production a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP), so that applications will be decided centrally, once again denying local democracy. The proposals are open to consultation – see below – and deserve the strongest opposition.

Geologists raised concerns that fracking should not take place near faults, and specifically not in areas which had previously experienced coal mining.

It was announced that the Royal Society and Royal Academy of Engineering would start an updated review of their 2012 report, which was justification for the government claiming fracking was safe, despite not having implemented the report's recommendations. Health professionals raised new concerns about risks to residents living near fracking pads, and calls were made for Public Health England similarly to review the host of new data available from the US since their own 2014 report, which again was used to whitewash the industry.

Jonathan Bartley and Amelia Womack joined six women challenging an injunction by UKOG against protest, describing UKOG's action as "sinister and very dangerous".

A series of earthquakes in Surrey raised concerns that these – in an area previously earthquake-free – were related to oil and gas exploration or production. Geologists questioned UKOG's assertions that the 'quakes could not possibly be related to their activities, which they claimed not to include fracking, and UKOG were forced to revise some detail of their denials.

Ineos got the go-ahead for the first shale gas exploration in Derbyshire. Once more this was planning permission granted by national planning inspectors, against local wishes and the view of the local Minerals Planning Authority – Derbyshire County Council.

Two new legal challenges against the government are underway in the courts, one challenging government policy in general and a second specifically contesting the right to take decision-making out of local control.

When the government's latest quarterly "Wave" report – this tracks public opinion on energy matters - came out, it emerged that the government has dropped sampling public attitudes to fracking. As previous trends had shown the more the public became aware of fracking and its consequences the more they opposed it, this is just one more display of the government's disgraceful history on fracking policy.

## Have your say on fast track bid for fracking

### The two consultations -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/permitted-development-for-shale-gas-exploration>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/inclusion-of-shale-gas-production-projects-in-the-nationally-significant-infrastructure-project-nsip-regime>

## Both consultations close at 11.45pm on 25 October 2018

For other possible things you can do see

<https://www.frackfreeunited.co.uk/permitted-development-and-nsip/>

Fracking News - Back in June, co-leader Jonathan Bartley flagged up the lack of emergency planning, during a visit to PNR.



# Why I Want Greens to Win

## Philip Mitchell

Some of my most memorable times as a child growing up in Blackpool were in the town's open spaces. Running across my road to play football on the field opposite, collecting wood for, and the bonfire party on Guy Fawkes night, watching the wildlife in the local ponds and streams.

Later, as an adult working in North London, when I saw injustice at work I decided to become a union rep. and launched a campaign to double local pay, which succeeded, although it took five years.

As a result of my membership of the union I was active in the Labour Party. But I soon became aware that many of Labour's policies didn't make sense, and its leaders were too often undemocratic, for example, declaring war on Iraq.

Labour's policies just didn't keep up with the modern world, such as the growing threat of climate change. It was clear to me that there was so much more than Labour's obsession with economic growth, so I looked at the different parties and found that the Green Party fitted the bill.

When I returned to live in Blackpool, I decided to set up a local Green Party, and became the party's first Co-ordinator. Soon afterwards, having set up a stall in Blackpool, someone made a passing comment, "They're drilling for gas in Singleton". My first thought was, "I wonder what the implications are for local people?". When I found out I started what was probably the first public campaign against fracking in Britain.

Recently, we've seen most Labour MPs vote for, or abstain on, airport expansion which in line with the government's official advisors, the Green Party has been warning that the vote "puts a wrecking ball through Britain's climate policies".

Labour's dilemma was summed up by Labour MP and chair of the parliamentary environmental audit committee, Mary Creagh, who tweeted, "The economic arguments for Heathrow [Airport expansion] are inarguable. But the environmental case (climate change, air pollution) is unconscionable."

Blackpool's Labour Council just doesn't get the challenges of the modern world either. In the most urbanised town outside London, it is allowing more house building than the government's "soft" targets. Many of those places of my childhood have now been built on, to the detriment of local people, and yet a recently re-purchased homeless hostel lies empty, and won't be used for its original purpose.

The Green Party is the guardian of the Paris climate change treaty. If we fail, and the evidence grows that we could, then the consequences include mass migrations, as parts of

the Earth become increasingly uninhabitable, not to mention more and more breaches of sea defences and flooding across the flat Fylde coastline.

To prevent such a world, scientists say in a recent report, we need a fundamental re-adjustment of our relationship with the planet. A total re-orientation of human values, equity, behaviour and technologies.

This is what the Green Party is also saying and I am convinced that it means it.

Let's start today.

**Editor's Note.**

*As Philip modestly implies, he was a leader of opposition to fracking in the days when most, including those in other political parties, were totally unaware. In addition to starting a local campaign, he helped the anti-fracking movement go national and featured regularly in national media reports including from the Independent, Guardian, FT, Telegraph, BBC, ITN and Channel 4, especially after the 2011 earthquakes, although his opposition to fracking was well-founded on other issues, including Climate Change. He spoke at a significant Campaign Against Climate Change meeting in London in 2011 alongside Caroline Lucas and other national figures. At the Green Party's Spring 2011 conference Philip introduced an emergency motion, which was passed, calling for a fracking ban. At September 2011 conference he launched the party's national campaign against fracking. After an absence, he has now moved back into our area and rejoined our numbers.*



Philip on Channel 4 News 2011

# FLEETWOOD GREENS CYCLE FOR CHARITY

Fleetwood couple's bike ride boosts Macmillan cancer charity - Fleetwood Today, 2nd August 2018



A husband and wife team from Fleetwood have raised an impressive £1,180 for the Macmillan cancer charity after completing a charity bicycle ride.

Green Party member Mike Pickton, 38, manages the Blackpool branch and wife Jess, 34, is the manager of the Cleveleys outlet.

Over three days, from July 21, the pair cycled around 80 miles, pedalling from Penrith Boots opticians to the Cleveleys branch, stopping overnight at Kendal and Lancaster, and popping into the Blackpool branch on the final day.

Mike, of Kent Street, Fleetwood: "We hadn't cycled that far before so we were really happy to finish. The hardest part was near Kendal, where we didn't realise there was a huge hill to climb that felt like a mountain! We raised £180 from our Justgiving page, £480 from an old fashioned sponsor form and then Boots match-funded us to the value of £500. We never expected to raise anything like that so we are delighted."

Mike added that the charity was close to his heart, as Macmillan nurses had cared for his father when he was ill. It isn't the first time Mike has raised money for charity. Last year he tackled the Total Warrior event in Leeds for the Royal National Institute of Blind People.

# The NHS – A Letter from Natalie Bennett

Printed in the Blackpool Gazette  
July 26<sup>th</sup> 2018

As we celebrate the 70th birthday of Britain's most popular institution, the NHS, it is important that we focus on its achievements, and learn from them. What our health service has given us over those many decades is security – freedom from fear that we might not be able to afford the treatment we need. That deep and pressing anxiety is at the heart of the American system, a system that far too many MPs from all the larger parties have wanted to copy. We should learn from and copy the security the NHS has given us, and extend it to housing and income.

Houses should be regarded not primarily as financial assets but stable, affordable places for people to make their homes. And we need to bring in a universal basic income, to take away that fear that zero-hours contracts, insecure employment, low wages and swingeing benefit sanctions have inflicted on many households in this country.

Natalie Bennett, Former Green Party leader



# Members' Letters in the Press

Lytham St Annes Express Thursday August 9<sup>th</sup> 2018

Christine Tootill continues our campaign for better public transport in the Fylde

## Express Yourself

### TRANSPORT

#### We need better links to station

A survey of residents of Lytham St Annes carried out recently by the Green Party revealed that more than half of the people questioned use their cars to travel to Preston Station, in spite of the high parking charges at the station.

The reason given in almost every case was the lack of suitable public transport.

Trains on the Blackpool South line run only once an hour, and the 68 bus takes one hour from St Annes and arrives at the bus station in Preston leaving passengers with nearly 15 minutes' walk to the railway station.

Since there is no prospect of an increase in frequency of trains on the Blackpool South line, an easy and effective way to fill the gap would be to provide an express bus service between St Annes and Preston railway station, taking the direct route along Clifton Drive, Lytham Green, through Warton and along the Freckleton by-pass, then direct to Preston railway station.

With a minimum number of stops (St Annes, Ansdell, Lytham, Warton, Freckleton by-pass) this journey would not take more than 35 minutes. Running twice an hour, this would provide a welcome addition to the South Blackpool train service and solve the problem of long waits and connection times.

We have contacted the local bus companies with this suggestion but the response has not been positive.

But such a service need not require a big increase in resources.



Do you leave your car at Preston Station because public transport links to the station are unreliable? See letter from Christine Tootill

If the Stagecoach route 68 and the Blackpool Transport route 11 were to share their current provision between Blackpool and Lytham, instead of duplicating this route, some resources could be diverted to contribute to a new service. We don't need up to eight buses per hour running between Blackpool and Lytham, but we do need a good service to Preston railway station.

**Christine Tootill**

*Blackpool & Fylde Green Party*

### RESPONSE

#### Trust should buy historic buildings

It was interesting to read Mr Gill's reply to the letter from Brian Turner quoting the constitution of the Town Trust (Express Yourself, July 26).

Their primary objective he quoted is "the full restoration of

Lytham Hall", which sadly does not feature in the constitution of the Trust.

This is what their constitution states on their six-year-old, out-of-date webpage: "Firstly to preserve for the benefit of the inhabitants of Lytham in the County of Lancashire and of the nation at large, whatever of the English historical, architectural and constructional heritage may exist in and around Lytham aforesaid in the form of buildings (including any building as defined in Section 290 (1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1971) of particular beauty or historical, architectural or constructional interest.

"Secondly provide recreational facilities, community centres and other amenities of a similar character for the benefit of the community residing in Lytham in the County of Lancashire in the interests of social welfare and with the object of advancing education, furthering health,

relieving poverty, distress or sickness or in pursuing any objects which now are or hereafter may be deemed in law to be charitable by improving the conditions of life of the persons residing within Lytham."

Is it now about time the Town Trust did what it says it should do and buy the police station, which has been an eyesore for the last five years, and also buy the Institute, for the reasons the Trust was founded as they seem to be buildings of particular beauty etc.

**Name and address supplied**

### FRACKING

#### Minister video betrayed Fylde

Claire Perry recently visited both Glasgow and Newcastle, praising the soaring success of the renewables industries there, and she is due to give the keynote speech at a Business Green conference, with emphasis on "What can the UK do to lead the pack in pursuit of a sustainable future?"

Which all makes sense given that she is the Minister of State for Energy and Clean Growth.

However, wearing another hat, she has now given permission for hydraulic fracturing to take place at Preston New Road, and this does not sit comfortably with the Clean Growth part of her ministerial brief.

An explanation seems to be found in her evidence to a Select Committee in late May. She said "You watch a time-lapse build-up of a well and then it goes away again...it is a temporary structure. It is simply drilling a single well to establish the presence and flow rate potential of the gas, and then it can move away again and there



## **Blackpool & Fylde Green Party – Equality & Diversity Policy**

### Introduction

The Blackpool & Fylde Green Party recognises the importance of diversity and inclusion and is committed to providing equality of opportunity in all aspects of our work. Our aim is to create an inclusive, welcoming environment where everyone is treated fairly and with respect regardless of difference.

Our vision is that the Blackpool & Fylde Green Party's member base and elected officials will be representative of all sections of society and we will be continually working towards this in so far as we are able.

The Blackpool & Fylde Green Party aims to ensure that no members, staff or elected representatives of the Party are discriminated against or unfairly treated on the grounds of:

- Age
- Disability (including mental health)
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins
- Religion and beliefs
- Sex and Sex orientation
- Caring responsibilities
- Social class, income level or geographical area

The Blackpool & Fylde Green Party therefore aims to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Actively challenge inequality within our organisation, policies and practices
- Ensure that we treat all individuals fairly, with dignity and respect
- Promote equality of opportunity
- Promote equality of access
- Provide a safe, supportive and welcoming environment for all
- Facilitate Equality and Diversity training and support to members
- Ensure that the Blackpool & Fylde Green Party has a named contact for Equality and Diversity

This policy is non-contractual as regards staff employed by Green Party. It applies to all Blackpool & Fylde Green Party members and activities and will be subject to amendment and review as legislation and practice codes are introduced and updated.

## **Legislation & Related Policies**

The Blackpool and Fylde Green Party is committed to complying with all current and future anti-discrimination legislation and associated codes of practice, including the Equality Act 2010.

This policy is intended to support and not conflict with national Green Party policies and procedures around harassment, bullying, discrimination, whistle blowing, employment, discipline and grievances.

Cases of unfair treatment or discrimination should be referred and dealt with in line with national level policies and guidelines as appropriate.

The relevant national policies and procedures related to disciplinary, complaints and grievances procedures will normally be found on the Green Party members website. The North West Green Party Wellbeing Champion will be available to provide guidance and support on these internal policies and procedures where appropriate.

## **Discrimination**

The Blackpool & Fylde Green Party will work to recognise and challenge discrimination on all levels. This can take many forms:

- Direct discrimination involves the more or less favourable treatment of a person over another in the same or similar circumstances based purely on the grounds of their gender, disability, sexuality etc.
- Indirect discrimination occurs where a policy or practice puts people with a particular characteristic at a disadvantage, without that policy or practice being objectively justifiable.
- Abuse / Harassment involves unwanted behaviour towards a person or persons which can be physical, verbal or can be communicated via non-verbal gestures or via written communications. Such behaviour is often linked to a certain characteristic and violates someone's dignity or creates a humiliating, hostile or offensive environment.
- Discrimination by association occurs where a victim of discrimination does not have a certain characteristic but is discriminated against because of their association with someone who does e.g. the parent of a disabled child.
- Discrimination by perception occurs when there is discrimination against someone because of a belief that they have a certain characteristic, whether they have it or not. Victimisation involves treating someone less favourably because they have complained about discrimination or harassment, or given evidence or information when someone else has complained about discrimination or harassment.
- Discrimination in any of the forms stated above is unacceptable, regardless of whether there was any intention to discriminate or not.

## Implementation

In order to cultivate and promote a culture of inclusivity, Blackpool & Fylde Green Party which fall under the umbrella of the North West Green Party, as well as the North West Green Party itself, will be expected to make reasonable arrangements to ensure equality of opportunity and access to their members and also to members of the public attending events.

This may include, but is certainly not limited to the following examples:

- Promoting a culture of inclusion by placing a generalised by-line in all communications prompting members to let the local party, event organiser or other appropriate person know if they have any specific access requirements and following up with that member if and how these can be met.
- Consider using where appropriate and practical, equality monitoring data on a local party level to:
  - keep an accurate snapshot of the Party's make up.
  - monitor applications for official positions within the Party.
  - actively formulate strategies to encourage underrepresented or marginalised groups to become active in the Party.
- Making reasonable adjustments to procedures should a member require these – for example provision of documents in large print, available and accessible spaces for wheelchair users or ensuring that catering is suitable for any specific cultural or dietary requirements.
- Ensuring that all spaces booked for meetings and events are as practically accessible as possible, and, where appropriate, include specific details of access arrangements in communications.

The North West Green Party's Equalities Officer will be available to provide guidance and support where appropriate.

## Monitoring

The Blackpool & Fylde Green Party will review this Policy, at least annually, to ensure it is appropriate and responsive to relevant legislation. Amendments to the Policy will be made, where appropriate, in the light of experience or changes in legislation.

July 2018