

Support for fracking drops for third time in a row with Conservatives most in favour

May 21 2014, by Charlotte Anscombe



In an ongoing survey carried out by The University of Nottingham, researchers have seen support for fracking fall to 49.7 per cent compared with a high of 58.2 per cent in July 2013.

The May survey from the University shows that the turn against shale gas in the UK has deepened, with -16.6 per cent of people still concerned about the prospect of the contamination of drinking water, which increased after the Balcombe protest.

However, a growing number of people are now aware of the issue—up 8 per cent to just under 74 per cent.

The number of respondents who see shale gas as a 'clean' form of energy, with the negative score for shale gas now standing at -17.8 per cent, significantly higher than the -3 per cent difference seen in July

2013.

Although the public still believe shale gas is a 'cheap' form of fuel, the trend has also moved away from shale on this indicator and in May 2014 stands at +22 per cent down from +34 per cent in July 2013.

Professor Sarah O'Hara from the School of Geography said: "These trends suggest that the turn against [fracking](#) following the Balcombe protests is not a blip and is representative of an increasing sense of unease of the environmental implications of fracking amongst the UK public."

The political breakdown

Labour have gone from a high of 52.5 per cent to 41 per cent in favour. Conservative support is consistently high and is currently at 67.7 per cent up from 61.3 per cent when the question was first asked. UKIP are much the same as the conservatives. The Liberal Democrats are slightly more in favour but support is dropping.

Professor O'Hara said: "While there is political support by all the main parties for shale gas extraction, it is clear voters have a very different view. Individuals aligned to the Conservatives and UKIP are overwhelming in support of fracking for shale gas, while Labour voters are equally divided."

Labour

There has been a marked increase in the number of Labour supporters who are against fracking.

Those who considered themselves aligned with the Labour Party were less likely to be in favour of shale gas extraction. Between June 2012 and

May 2014 the percentage in favour fell from 47.7 per cent to 41 per cent. The number has risen from 29.1 per cent to 40.5 per cent over the same period. This suggests Labour supporters are evenly split on the subject. Labour is now at 41 per cent. Differential is 0 per cent.

Conservatives

Those who identify with the Conservative Party are most in favour of shale gas extraction.

Between June 2012 and May 2014 the percentage of Conservatives in favour rose from 61.3 per cent to 67.7 per cent. The number against fell from 20.5 per cent to 15.6 per cent over the same period. The positive rating is 52 per cent—those that say it should be allowed stands at 68 per cent with 15.6 per cent against.

UKIP

The data for UKIP is very similar.

Lib dems

Those who considered themselves aligned with the Liberal Democrat Party are slightly more in favour of [shale gas](#) extraction.

Latest figures show there are 45.9 per cent in favour compared with 36.1 per cent against. That's a positive rating of just under 10 per cent—with 46 per cent in favour 36 per cent against.

More information: The report, "Public perceptions of shale gas in the UK," is available online: www.scribd.com/doc/131787519/p...-the-UK-May-2014-pdf

Provided by University of Nottingham

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