

## Alok Sharma, MP for Reading West

1<sup>st</sup> March 2019

Dear Constituents,

Thank you for contacting me about fracking.

I believe that we need a diverse energy mix, and that shale gas can play a part in that. The safe development of shale gas will be good for jobs, good for our energy security, and help the UK to decarbonise its economy.

I understand that there is a very low risk that shale gas extraction could cause any noticeable tremor at the surface. Operators must now use all available geological information to assess the location of faults before wells are drilled and monitor seismic activity before during and after operations.

The Oil & Gas Authority regulates on-site micro seismicity using a traffic light system. If activity passes a very low, precautionary threshold, it is immediately paused. This threshold, a 'red light' in the traffic light system, is set at 0.5 on the Richter scale, equivalent to less ground movement than you would feel from a passing car. For context, according to the British Geological Survey, we have on average 166 naturally occurring events of magnitude 2.9 or below each year in the UK, most of which go unnoticed.

The UK has world leading environmental regulations and with these safeguards in place, I think it is right that we explore and make use of shale gas and oil. The opportunity to extract this energy, as well as to secure jobs and investment, cannot be ignored.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



**Alok Sharma MP**

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