

The Rt. Hon Grant Shapps MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Telephone: 020 7219 8497

[grant@shapps.com](mailto:grant@shapps.com)

To: Conservative MPs in England

27 October 2022

Dear Fellow Member,

### **Shale Gas Extraction – Reinstating the moratorium**

As you will know, on Wednesday 26 October, our new Prime Minister set out that the Conservative Government supports the core ambitions set out in our 2019 manifesto. The Government will therefore revert to a precautionary approach regarding shale gas exploration in England.

The Government will only support shale gas exploration if it can be done in a way that is sustainable and protects local communities. We will be led by the evidence on whether this form of exploration can be done in a way which acceptably manages the risk to local communities.

In the November 2019 manifesto, the Government confirmed a moratorium on shale gas exploration in England with immediate effect. Having listened to local communities and assessed the state of the science we ruled out changes to the planning system. As set out in the manifesto, we will not support shale gas extraction unless the science shows categorically that it can be done safely.

In line with the British Geological Survey report on the scientific advances in hydraulic fracturing since 2019, forecasting the occurrence of large earthquakes and their expected magnitude owing to shale gas extraction remains a challenge with significant uncertainty.

I am very much aware that the Government's policy regarding shale gas extraction was rigorously debated and voted on in the House on 19 October, and was subject to a Conservative whip. Publicly and privately, colleagues have made clear the views of your constituents, and the new Administration has listened and taken these points on board.

In that light, as was the case in the 2019 manifesto, we will again be taking a presumption against issuing any further hydraulic fracturing consents. This



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position will be maintained until compelling new evidence is provided which addresses the concerns around the prediction and management of induced seismicity.

The Government is issuing a Written Ministerial Statement today, publicly setting out this position, in line with the commitment made in the 2019 manifesto.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Grant Shapps".

Grant Shapps MP



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