



Guide for Petition Hand-ins

Introduction

Over 300,000 of us have signed petitions by Friends of the Earth, CPRE, 38 Degrees and SumofUs, against the government's plans to fast-track fracking.

Now you can ratchet up the pressure on your MP by showing how much opposition there is in your area. We've calculated the number of petition signatures in every constituency.

The government is considering its decision now so it's urgent that MPs speak out on our behalf.

What can you do?

We've come up with a step-by-step guide to hand in the petition to your MP. Feel free to use your own ideas too!

1) Find out the number of petition signatures in your constituency

Email danny.gross@foe.co.uk to find out the total number of people who have signed petitions against fast-tracking fracking in your area.

2) Drafting a letter to your MP

We've created a template letter to MPs ([see page 2](#)), which you can fill-in with information about your constituency. The more you can personalise it, the better.

3) Delivering the letter

Consider delivering the letter in person to your MP's constituency office, preferably on a day your MP is there. It'd be great to take a photo outside the office to share on social media and send to your local newspaper. You could also invite a sympathetic local councillor to join you.

If it's not possible to deliver it in person, you could always send it by post. And make sure to email a copy of the letter to your MP too.

4) Issuing a press release

We've created a template press release ([see page 3](#)), which you can fill in and send to your local newspaper. This will help spread the word about the campaign in your area.

Template Letter to MPs

- Edit the template by filling in the blanks and adding local information. For example, you could mention any councils in your area that have opposed the government's proposals.
- If possible, try to get a few people to sign it (even if it's just family or friends). And make sure to include your addresses so that the MP knows you're in the right constituency.
- Email danny.gross@foe.co.uk if you'd like any advice or support.

Dear [NAME] MP,

Many of us in [CONSTITUENCY] are deeply concerned about the government's proposals to fast-track fracking. We ask that you write to James Brokenshire MP (Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government) and Greg Clark MP (Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy) to oppose the plans.

The government has just completed a consultation on whether to class exploratory drilling for shale gas as permitted development, removing the requirement on fracking companies to apply for planning permission with the local authority. It has also proposed to include shale production projects in the National Significant Infrastructure Projects regime. These plans would fast-track fracking, putting large swathes of England, which are licensed for potential fracking, at risk.

Over [NUMBER] of people in [CONSTITUENCY] have signed petitions by Campaign to Protect Rural England, Friends of the Earth, 38 Degrees and SumofUs, opposing the plans.

We believe the proposals would undermine local democracy and side-line the views of local people like us. They also threaten to industrialise the English countryside and exacerbate climate change.

As our MP, we ask that you speak out on our behalf. The government is considering its decision, so it is urgent that you voice our concerns now. Please write to James Brokenshire and Greg Clark to oppose the government's proposals.

Kind regards,

[NAMES & ADDRESSES OF ALL LETTER SIGNATORIES]

Template Local Press Release

- Edit the template by filling in the blanks and adding local information. The more relevant you can make it to your area, the better. For example, you could include a quote from a local councillor.
- It would be great to provide a photo along with the press release.
- When sending the release to local press, copy+paste the press release into the email body, rather than sending as an attachment.
- Email danny.gross@foe.co.uk if you'd like any advice or support.

Press release

Issued by: [GROUP NAME]

For immediate release, [DATE]

Contact: [NAME, EMAIL, PHONE NUMBER]

Heading option 1: [YOUR AREA] Residents tell MP about opposition to government's fracking plans

Local MP [NAME] was today warned by residents about the scale of local opposition to the government's proposals to fast-track fracking.

Over [NUMBER] people in [CONSTITUENCY NAME] have signed petitions by Friends of the Earth, Campaign to Protect Rural England, 38 Degrees and SumofUs, opposing the government's fracking plans.

The government has proposed to classify exploratory shale drilling as "permitted development", a planning category originally designed for sheds and minor home improvements. If changes went ahead, fracking companies could start drilling across large parts of England without the requirement to apply for planning permission.

[SPOKESPERSON NAME] from [GROUP NAME] said:

"We've seen a groundswell of local opposition to the government's reckless plans to fast-track fracking.

If the government gets its way, fracking companies could drill at will – without even needing to apply to the council for planning permission. This would trample over our local democracy and threatens to industrialise the English countryside."

The government's plans have encountered widespread cross-party opposition. Many local councils have passed motions against the proposals [2], and at least 20 Conservative MPs have threatened to rebel if the government tries to push them through parliament.

[SPOKESPERSON NAME] from [GROUP NAME] said:

“We're facing a climate emergency. Instead of making it easier for fracking companies to drill in search of fossil fuels, we need to invest in renewable energy. This would help the climate, promote energy security and create more jobs.”

Fracking is a way of extracting gas or oil that is trapped inside rocks. A mixture of water, sand and chemicals is pumped down a well at very high pressure to shatter the rocks and force out fossil fuels.

Fracking has already been stopped in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland – as well as Ireland, France and the Netherlands.

NOTES:

1. Friends of the Earth petition: <https://act.friendsoftheearth.uk/act/stop-government-forcing-fracking-communities>
CPRE/38 Degrees petition: <https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/don-t-fast-track-fracking>
SumofUs petition: <https://actions.sumofus.org/a/greg-clark-mp-don-t-make-fracking-easier-uk>
 2. See coverage in Drill or Drop: <https://drillordrop.com/2018/09/20/whos-saying-what-on-government-plans-to-fast-track-fracking/>
-

Get in touch

All of the guidance in this action guide is intended to support you. Take what is useful, leave the rest. Whatever you can do will be a fantastic contribution!

Please get in touch at danny.gross@foe.co.uk. We're here to offer support and answer any questions.