



DON'T DRILL THE HILL A Voice for Leith Hill

April/May 2018



Welcome to our fifth Newsletter full of up-to-date information about local campaigns against oil-drilling. It's information that you rarely find in mainstream media. Read on, find out more and join us.

Request your own e-mailed copy each month by contacting info@voiceforleithhill.co.uk

INDEPENDENT REPORTS HIGHLIGHT DRILLING RISKS

A Voice for Leith Hill and a local campaigner recently submitted two major new geological and hydro-geological reports to the Environment Agency (EA). They reveal significant and disturbing information:

1. Europa seem to have misunderstood the geology of the area, including the position of geological faults
2. The shallow intended path of the borehole is at the limits of current technology and therefore the risk of well integrity (breakdown) issues is increased
3. The deposits being targeted in the South East are unconventional by any scientific definition, and would require stimulation (acidisation & acid fracking) to extract them commercially
4. The suggested monitoring plan would not be enough to tell if unlicensed fracking was taking place.

This is just a selection of the serious issues raised. For more details see 'Europa's Leith Hill oil drilling plans contain "significant errors, inconsistencies and omissions" - review on news site 'Drill or Drop'. Expert geologist Professor David Smythe provided the second report. Dorking residents and campaigners packed the Friends' Meeting House to hear him speak on his findings and the dangers of oil exploitation in the Weald. www.youtube.com/watch?v=hxoBMzMUo_c&t=12s



Many, many thanks to everyone who gave so generously to our Crowdfunding appeal to cover his costs. We've now reached our target!

CONCERNED ACTORS PRESENT HUGE PETITION TO ENVIRONMENT AGENCY



Sue Jameson and James Bolam in action. The 38 degrees petition now has nearly 104,000 signatures and they're aiming for 200,000. So please get signing if you haven't already. <https://home.38degrees.org.uk/2018/02/24/fracking-leith-hill/>

EUROPA'S TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT PLAN...

HAS BEEN WITHDRAWN—FOR NOW. POSSIBLY BECAUSE OF PROBLEMS OVER FINDING A SUITABLE MARSHALLING AREA They have also withdrawn their appeal against Surrey County Council for alleged delays in approving the plans. Thanks to everyone who objected: watch this space and we'll notify you as soon as they submit their next Plan.

HIGH COURT CHALLENGE TO UKOG INJUNCTION



Human rights campaigner Bianca Jagger joined Weald-wide objectors to United Kingdom Oil & Gas's draconian injunction outside the High Court on March 19th. Members of threatened communities (Leith Hill, Broadford Bridge & Horse Hill among others) packed the hearing room. The judge decided to hold a three-day hearing in June.

Since then UKOG have removed their most contentious clauses restricting lawful action which might damage their commercial interests but the fight goes on. The Weald Action Group have launched a Crowdfunding appeal to cover the legal costs of this battle. PLEASE contribute even if only a few pounds: having lots of contributors shows the huge groundswell of support. <https://www.crowdjustice.com/case/oppressive-oil-injunction/>



Supporters from across the South East visited potential drill sites including Balcombe and Horse Hill, ending the day at Leith Hill Protection Camp

BROCKHAM: 'PRIVATE EYE' SPEAKS OUT

As Angus Energy applies for retrospective planning permission for its sidetrack drilled in January 2017, 'Old Sparky' of 'Private Eye' has something to say. He reveals that in 2014 Angus Energy commissioned a report from Prospect Ltd, a specialist consulting agency. In it they write that Angus should 'require a new planning application for any works'. Surrey County Council advised them of this twice in writing but AE went ahead anyway.

Although the official deadline for responding to the AE application passed on April 18th, SCC are generally tolerant of late responses, so IT'S NOT TOO LATE. Consult Brockham Oil Watch at <https://brockhamoilwatch.org/>

STORY OF THE FIGHT VS OIL

Back in 2008 (TEN YEARS AGO!) Europa Oil & Gas applied to carry out an exploratory drill at Bury Hill Woods on Leith Hill. Local parish and district councils, the National Trust, the local water authority and thousands of individuals objected to the proposal. Despite this and the tireless work of local lobby group **Leith Hill Action Group**, permission was granted by the Govt Planning Inspectorate in 2014.

A Voice for Leith Hill started with a picnic on the proposed well-site in 2015. It's a community group that wants to give a voice to this beautiful woodland area.

Since 2014 every word and drawing of Europa's plans has been scrutinised by LHAG, A Voice for Leith Hill and other groups. Inconsistencies and inaccuracies have been exposed. The fight goes on; more and more people are finding their voice!

EVENTS

Fri 4th May: Gig against the Rig: don't miss fantastical music group 'Life's Circus' at the Plough, Coldharbour: 8.00. Tickets £10 from Coldharbour shop.

Thurs 10th May: 7.30 for 8. FREE. Surrey premiere of 'Power Trip' about resistance to oil drilling across the UK including the Weald. Our Green MEP Keith Taylor will be there. Green Room, Dorking RH4 1SG. Q&A session afterwards. Tickets via eventbrite.co.uk/e/film-screening-of-power-trip-fracking-in-the-uk-qa-tickets-45471095270

Thurs 10th May. 'The Lark Descending' an art exhibition by Ackroyd & Harvey at St Martin's Walk RH4 1UX. Free with associated talks and events www.surreyunearted.org until Sun 27 May. Just walk in and enjoy. 11am-5pm daily.

Sun 20th May. Candlelit Vigil at Leith Hill Protection Camp. The camp also holds regular workshops and events, see www.leithhillprotectioncamp.co.uk for details.

Sat 23rd June: Cycle the Weald sites with Tour de Frack. Watch this space!

WEALD WIDE WATCH

Billingshurst (Broadford Bridge): UKOG have stopped work at the site and announced plans for 2 more sites nearby.

Horse Hill (Horley): UKOG are preparing for more flow testing.
Markwells Wood (South Downs): UKOG withdrew a previous application; South Down National Park has told them to restore the wellsite to its original state but they tell shareholders a different story.

Balcombe (Sussex): Angus Energy have bought the production licence to drill for oil.

Lidsey (nr Bognor): AE are producing c80 barrels a day.

Don't forget Albury, Godstone, Godley Bridge & Baxter's Copse (W. Sussex) & Isle of Wight. See website 'Drill or Drop'.

HOW YOU CAN HELP:

Share your skills / run a stall / write emails & letters / knock on doors / hand out leaflets and newsletters / help run events / talk to people / share things. Get in touch!

FREE Legal Observer training coming up in May. LOs are an essential support for activists at demos, etc. Contact Jacquetta at info@voiceforleithhill.co.uk.

AND: Please display our poster anywhere people can see it Ask us for free car stickers.

IT'S AMAZING WHEN WE SEE OUR
PUBLICITY ON WINDOWS AND CARS : ADD TO THE BUZZ!

Website: www.voiceforleithhill.co.uk / Email: info@voiceforleithhill.co.uk / FB: A Voice for Leith Hill

LEITH HILL NO DRILL



More info: leithhillnodrill.com / voiceforleithhill.co.uk