



Report to

Frack Free Frodsham & Helsby

Survey Analysis and Report

of

Residents' Attitudes Towards

Shale Gas Fracking in Helsby Parish Council

Area

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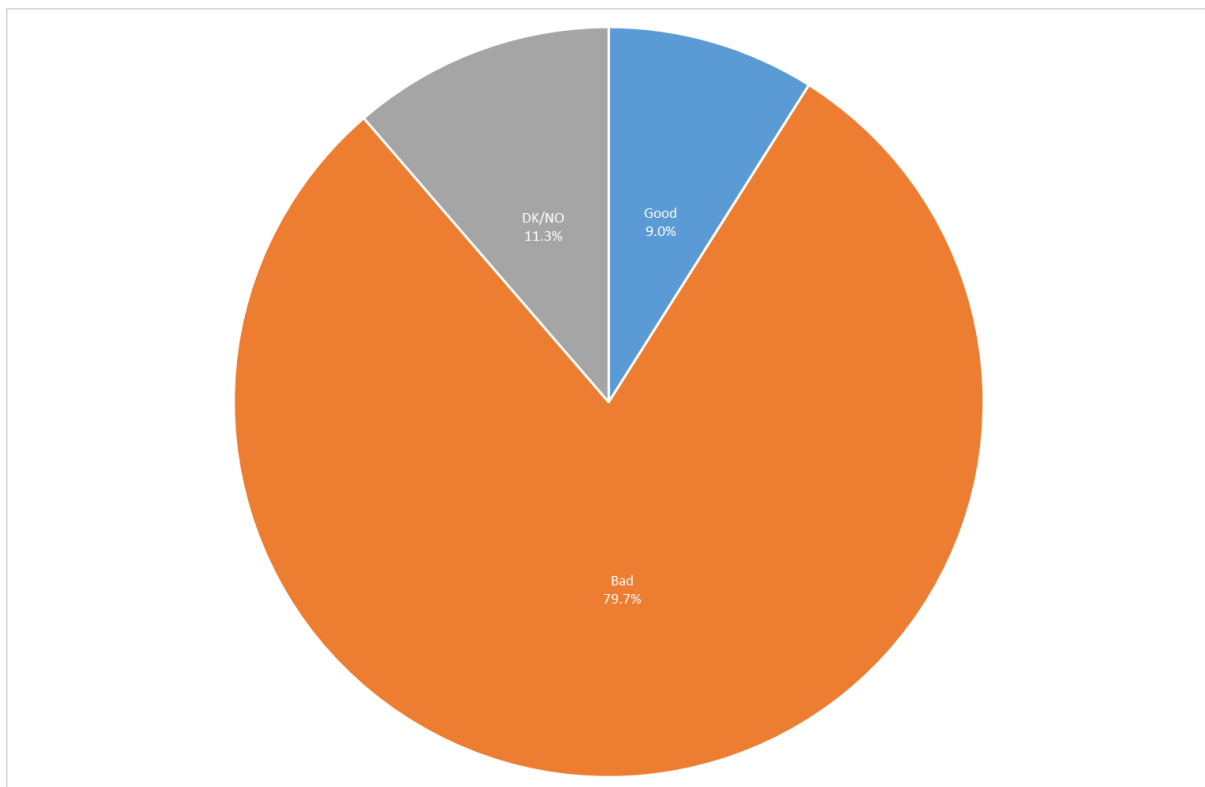
Executive Summary

This report has been produced in response to a survey carried out by Frack Free Frodsham and Helsby to determine residents' attitudes towards shale gas fracking within the Helsby Parish Council area.

While the survey covered both Helsby and Frodsham, this report only covers the survey within the Helsby Parish Council boundary. Frodsham Town Council results have been reported separately.

Key findings of the raw survey:

- 57.3% of sampled households responded to the survey.
- 9.0% of raw valid respondents believed fracking would be a good thing for the area.
- 79.7% of raw valid respondents believed fracking would be a bad thing for the area.
- 11.3% of raw valid respondents don't know or had no opinion on whether fracking would be good or bad for the area.
- Females tend to be slightly more opposed to fracking (82.1% of raw valid respondents) compared with 78.1% for males.
- The age distribution showed considerable variation with those in younger age groups more opposed than older groups, while higher proportions of 75+ age group indicated don't know/no opinion.



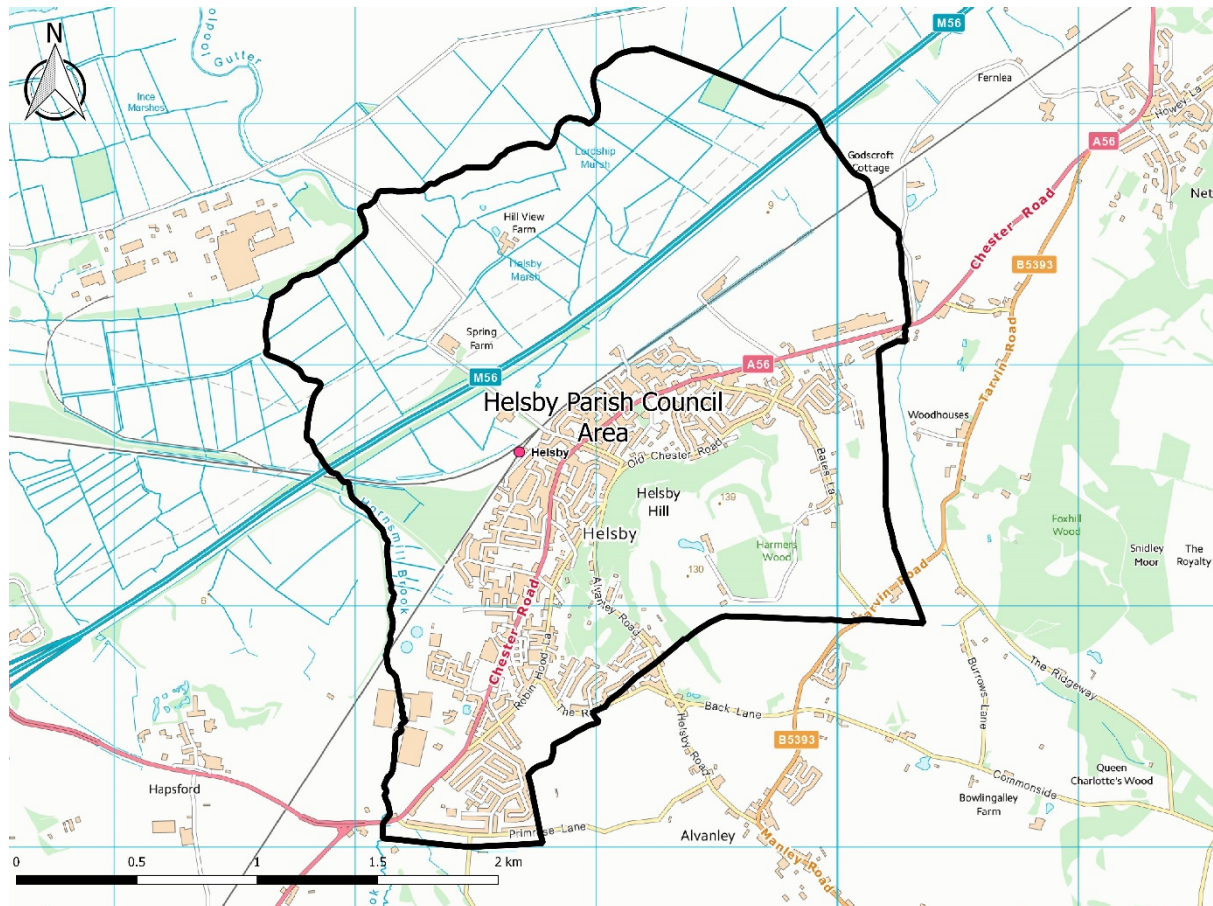
Unweighted raw survey findings (% of valid responses)

The survey was checked for demographic representation by comparing the breakdown of age band by gender, where given, with ONS 2014 figures. From this a weighting table was produced and applied to the data.

The weighted results difference was very small when rounded to integers.

Background to Survey

The area surveyed was a sample of 1,200 households in Helsby Parish Council area within the boundary shown in the map below. The sample was selected at random, across the whole area, using ONS and Ordnance Survey data following CIPR/MRS/RSS sampling guidelines:



Helsby Parish Council Boundary – Source: Ordnance Survey © Crown Copyright 2016

The survey was conducted by Frack Free Frodsham and Helsby.

The questionnaire was accompanied by a letter putting forward a balanced statement based on one used by YouGov in local surveys on fracking related issues:

As you may be aware, last year seismic surveys were undertaken in Helsby and parts of Frodsham by TESLA, acting on behalf of IGas. These surveys are intended to help determine the viability of Unconventional Gas Extraction, including Shale Gas “Fracking”. The rest of Frodsham is likely to be surveyed soon on behalf of INEOS.

In March 2016, IGas signed a £30 million deal with INEOS, in a tie-up designed to expand IGas’s exploration efforts. In April 2016, INEOS launched a series of private meetings with parish and town councils, to promote its view of the benefits of shale gas. Members of both Frodsham Town and Helsby Parish Councils attended one of these meetings in May 2016.

Some people think that fracking for shale gas would be good for an area as it would provide jobs and investment. Other people think it would be bad for an area as it would pollute the local environment and reduce house values.

The reason for this survey is so that we can better understand the views of local residents, and bring these views to the attention of relevant authorities, such as the Frodsham Town, Helsby Parish and Cheshire West and Chester Borough Councils.

We assure you that we will faithfully report ALL views expressed, in a summary results form.

Responses are only for the survey, and you won't be contacted in respect of your response.

We urge all residents to complete the attached questionnaire, which is being distributed to a representative number of households selected at random from across the entire parish area. Although logistics prevent every household being asked, please be assured that the sample has been taken in conjunction with best practice guidelines. The sample will be checked against data held by the Office for National Statistics after completion to ensure that it represents the demographic profile of the parishes as a whole.

Please take a moment to complete the questionnaire on the reverse of this form.

When completed your household questionnaire will be collected from you by local residents within the next 7 – 14 days.

The survey asked each household resident, aged 18 or over, to indicate their view by ticking a box in response to the following question:

Do you think it would be a good thing or a bad thing if Shale Gas "Fracking" takes place in Frodsham and Helsby?

The following additional information was added:

The survey is taking place in both Frodsham and Helsby and the survey itself is supported by Frodsham Town Council. Neither Frodsham Town or Helsby Parish Council is involved in the survey, which is being carried out by members of Frack Free Frodsham and Helsby, a local residents group.

The survey is being conducted in accordance with the CIPR/MRS/RSS best practice guidelines and all individual responses will be kept confidential.

You have the option of providing your postcode and details of occupiers.

Choices of response were:

- Good thing
- Bad thing
- Don't know/No Opinion

Respondents were also asked, optionally, to provide their name, gender and age band. This is to allow the findings to be checked for representation against Office of National Statistics demographic data.

The survey was conducted according to the guidelines in the 'Best practice guide for using statistics in communications' published jointly by the Chartered Institute for Public Relations (CIPR), Market Research Society (MRS) and Royal Statistical Society (RSS).

In addition, the following additional guidelines were agreed:

- No canvassing or expression of opinion would take place at the time of distribution or collection of the complete questionnaires.
- Completed questionnaires would be sealed in envelopes and bundled by areas collected.

IGas leafleted local households around 12 months ago, and local anti-fracking campaigners have more recently leafleted properties in the area putting forward arguments for and against. Public meetings have also been held.

The questionnaires were distributed, door to door, by local residents and collected over the following 3 weeks. A minimum of three collection attempts were made.

The Count

The count was conducted by local residents at the offices of Frodsham Town Council in Castle Park House on the morning of Saturday 22nd October and was supervised by myself with Councillor Andrew Dawson, Councillor Lynn Riley and local residents observing.

- All questionnaires remained sealed in envelopes until the count commenced and were opened in front of all present.
- The count for the Helsby area survey was conducted on 3 tables (we had six tables in total at the count).
- Each questionnaire was verified by at least 2 people, prior to entering the responses into a spreadsheet.
- After the questionnaire responses had been captured, they were archived in batches by area collected for future verification if required.

Two copies of the database were made, one to be retained by the group to be stored securely and one provided to myself to perform the analysis. The latter will be retained for a period of 90 days after completion of this report, in case any queries are raised, and then destroyed.

Response Rate

The responses were as follows:

- 1,200 questionnaires were distributed.
- 687 completed questionnaires were received (57.3%)
- Of those, 11 questionnaires were returned blank, spoiled or ambiguous, leaving a valid total of 676 questionnaires (56.3%)
- The 676 valid questionnaires indicated the views of 1,227 local adult residents.

According to the Office of National Statistics (ONS), the 2014 mid-year population estimate of persons 18 and over for Helsby Parish Council area, on the current boundary, is 4,059.

Detailed tables may be found in the fieldwork appendix.

Methodology

The demographics were used to weight the survey against the ONS population proportions for age band and gender as per the CIPR/MRS/RSS best practice guidelines. Details of the weightings and tables showing a breakdown of the results may be found in the fieldwork appendix.

Summary of Findings

The raw survey findings are as follows:

Count	Good	Bad	DK/NO	Good %	Bad %	DK/NO %
1227	110	978	139	9.0%	79.7%	11.3%

The demographically re-weighted survey findings are as follows:

Count	Good	Bad	DK/NO	Good %	Bad %	DK/NO %
1,227	108	980	139	8.8%	79.9%	11.3%

Detailed tables are provided in the fieldwork appendix.

Appendix – Fieldwork

Raw results breakdown by Gender:

Gender	Count	Good	Bad	DK/NO	Good %	Bad %	DK/NO %
Not given	62	11	43	8	17.7%	69.4%	12.9%
Female	613	37	503	73	6.0%	82.1%	11.9%
Male	552	62	432	58	11.2%	78.3%	10.5%
Total	1,227	110	978	139	9.0%	79.7%	11.3%

Raw results breakdown by Age Band:

Age	Count	Good	Bad	DK/NO	Good %	Bad %	DK/NO %
Not given	25	4	17	4	16.0%	68.0%	16.0%
18-24	98	6	81	11	6.1%	82.7%	11.2%
25-34	117	6	102	9	5.1%	87.2%	7.7%
35-44	155	8	128	19	5.2%	82.6%	12.3%
45-54	241	16	209	16	6.6%	86.7%	6.6%
55-64	208	11	176	21	5.3%	84.6%	10.1%
65-74	211	27	157	27	12.8%	74.4%	12.8%
75+	172	32	108	32	18.6%	62.8%	18.6%
Total	1,227	110	978	139	9.0%	79.7%	11.3%

Breakdown of residents per household in raw responses:

Residents	Households	% Hholds
1	251	36.6%
2	343	50.0%
3	74	10.8%
4	17	2.5%
5	1	0.1%
6	1	0.1%

Office of National Statistics (ONS) 2014 population estimates, for Helsby Parish Council Area, by age band and gender

Age	All	All %	Male	Male %	Female	Female %
18-24	327	8.1%	167	8.6%	160	7.5%
25-34	492	12.1%	234	12.1%	258	12.2%
35-44	629	15.5%	319	16.5%	310	14.6%
45-54	866	21.3%	421	21.7%	445	21.0%
55-64	579	14.3%	276	14.2%	303	14.3%
65-74	574	14.1%	285	14.7%	289	13.6%
75+	592	14.6%	236	12.2%	356	16.8%
Total	4,059	100.0%	1,938	100.0%	2,121	100.0%

Note: The 2014 data is reported at Census Output Area and has been aggregated and adjusted to the current Parish boundary as shown in the map. Adjustments for overlapping output areas were made using the proportions given in ONS postcode level population estimates.

Responses, where both age and gender given, by age band and gender:

Age	All	All %	Male	Male%	Female	Female%
18-24	96	8.3%	43	7.8%	53	8.7%
25-34	116	10.0%	58	10.6%	58	9.5%
35-44	147	12.7%	71	13.0%	76	12.5%
45-54	232	20.1%	106	19.3%	126	20.7%
55-64	198	17.1%	96	17.5%	102	16.7%
65-74	206	17.8%	99	18.1%	107	17.6%
75+	162	14.0%	75	13.7%	87	14.3%
Total	1,157	100.0%	548	100.0%	609	100.0%

Weighting Matrix with percentages expressed as proportion of all respondents with demographics and all population:

Age	Pop M %	Pop F %	Resp M %	Resp F %	Male Wt	Fem Wt
18-24	4.1%	3.9%	3.7%	4.6%	1.11	0.86
25-34	5.8%	6.4%	5.0%	5.0%	1.15	1.27
35-44	7.9%	7.6%	6.1%	6.6%	1.28	1.16
45-54	10.4%	11.0%	9.2%	10.9%	1.13	1.01
55-64	6.8%	7.5%	8.3%	8.8%	0.82	0.85
65-74	7.0%	7.1%	8.6%	9.2%	0.82	0.77
75+	5.8%	8.8%	6.5%	7.5%	0.90	1.17

Note: The small number of responses with unknown demographics were weighted 1.

Re-weighted results estimated margins of error (at 95% confidence level) based on 1,227 **weighted** responses out of 4,059 estimated adult population:

Group	Size	Percentage	Error +/-
Good thing	108	8.8%	1.32%
Bad Thing	980	79.9%	1.87%
Don't Know	139	11.3%	1.48%

Note: *Small rounding adjustments may occur as a result of applying weights*

Legal

Ordnance Survey data sources used and licenced under Open Government Licence:

- OS VectorMap District Raster (background map)
- OS Boundary Line (parish boundary)

Office of National Statistics data sources used and licenced under Open Government Licence:

- Census Output Area Estimates in the North West region of England Mid-2014

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