[Green councillor found guilty of obstruction after fracking protest](#)

17 November 2017

Green Party councillor Gina Dowding and 11 others have been found guilty of wilful obstruction today following a lock-on at Cuadrilla's Preston New Road fracking site in July [1].

The protesters were found guilty of wilful obstruction of the highway but other charges relating to the Trade Union Act and Labour (Consolidation) Act were dismissed.

Each defendant was each given a 12-month conditional discharge and ordered to pay court costs and victim surcharge totalling £270. There were no fines issued.

Dowding sits on Lancashire County Council. The 12 protesters also included two other independent councillors, Fylde borough councillor Julie Brickles and Kirkham town councillor Miranda Cox.

Dowding said:

"My fellow councillors and I have a mandate to represent the views of our constituents and now we've been criminalised for taking part in a peaceful protest against fracking, which residents are overwhelmingly opposed to. Shale gas is neither needed nor wanted in Lancashire.

"If anyone should have been on trial today it's the Government, for trampling over local democracy and allowing the shale gas industry to impose fracking on our communities.

"In a show of staggering hypocrisy, just this week UK representatives were in Bonn promising to meet our international obligations to prevent climate change, but at the same time offering carte blanche and financial support to the shale gas industry.

"Allowing Cuadrilla to start fracking in Lancashire is opening up a whole new fossil fuel industry when we should be keeping fossil fuels where they belong — in the ground. Fracking is dirty, dangerous and unnecessary and we should never have been dragged through the courts for taking direct action against such a reckless and harmful industry."

Notes:

1. https://reclaimthepower.org.uk/press-releases/release-lancashire-councillors-and-residents-lock-down-fracking-site/

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