

Scientific review of shale gas launched

The government has today (Tuesday 5 April 2022) commissioned the British Geological Survey to advise on the latest scientific evidence around shale gas extraction.

Ministers have always been clear that the exploration of shale gas reserves in England could only proceed if the science shows that it is safe, sustainable and of minimal disturbance to those living and working nearby.

In November 2019, ministers announced a pause on activity in England after a report by the North Sea Transition Authority found it was not possible to accurately predict the probability or magnitude of earthquakes linked to hydraulic fracturing operations.

At the time, ministers confirmed the pause would remain in place unless and until further evidence is provided that shale gas extraction can be carried out safely. Any exploration or development of shale gas would need to meet rigorous safety and environmental protections both above ground and sub-surface.

While shale gas extraction is not the solution to near-term price issues, it is right that all possible energy generation and production methods are kept on the table following the unprovoked invasion of Ukraine by President Putin's regime.

Today's request has been made to assess if any progress has been made in the scientific understanding which underpins government policy, and to allow ministers to consider next steps. A report is expected before the end of June 2022.

Business and Energy Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng said:

We have always been, and always will be, guided by the science on shale gas.

It remains the case that fracking in England would take years of exploration and development before commercial quantities of gas could be produced for the market, and would certainly have no effect on prices in the near term.

However, there will continue to be an ongoing demand for oil and gas over the coming decades as we transition to cheap renewable energy and new nuclear power. In light of Putin's criminal invasion of Ukraine, it is absolutely right that we explore all possible domestic energy sources.

However, unless the latest scientific evidence demonstrates that

shale gas extraction is safe, sustainable and of minimal disturbance to those living and working nearby, the pause in England will remain in place.

The British Geological Survey has been asked to investigate:

- whether there have been new developments in the science of hydraulic fracturing – in particular, whether there are new techniques in use which could reduce the risk and magnitude of seismic events
- if there are new techniques, whether scientists are confident that they would be suitable for use in fracturing in the UK, with its specific geology and high population density
- given any new developments in these technologies, how the seismicity caused by fracturing compares to other forms of underground energy production, such as geothermal, coal mining, or surface activities such as construction, and the evidence on the different ‘safe’ thresholds for activity, whether they remain the correct ones, and whether differences between them remain justified
- how the modelling of geologies such as shale has improved in the period since the pause of fracturing was implemented in 2019 and whether that means ministers could be completely confident about the modelling of seismic events and their predictability
- whether there are other sites, outside of Lancashire, which might be at a lower risk of seismic activity and what level of confidence government would have in the assessment of seismic activity in these areas

In commissioning this work, the government is clear that this should be a desk-based exercise by the British Geological Survey, and so no drilling of any further test wells or seismic monitoring will take place.

- The British Geological Survey (BGS) advises the UK government on all aspects of geoscience, as well as providing impartial advice on geological matters to the public, academics and industry. BGS is a component body of UK Research and Innovation
- the Business and Energy Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng [has written to the British Geological Survey](#) setting out the terms of reference for their work. A report is expected before the end of June 2022
- in November 2019 ministers [announced a pause on hydraulic fracturing](#)

[Welsh Secretary Visits USA to Boost Trade and Investment](#)

News story

Secretary of State for Wales Simon Hart's itinerary includes meeting business representatives, political figures and a visit to a nuclear power plant.



USA flag

Welsh Secretary Simon Hart is this week (5-9 April) travelling to the United States on a mission to boost trade and investment in Wales.

With Welsh exports to the US worth almost £1.8bn a year, there are significant economic links between the two countries and there is huge further potential for Welsh business.

Following January's lifting of restrictions of imports of British lamb to the US market after more than two decades, Mr Hart will meet officials from the US Department for Agriculture and the Meat Importers Council to discuss the involvement of Welsh exporters when trade in lamb resumes. Potential investment in nuclear energy in Wales is also central to the Welsh Secretary's itinerary with talks planned with key figures in the sector.

Mr Hart's programme includes:

- Meeting key business representatives – including from the manufacturing and energy sectors.
- Holding talks with US political figures.
- Visiting Plant Vogtle, Georgia to see the construction of Westinghouse's AP-1000 reactor and meet senior representatives of Westinghouse, Southern Nuclear and engineering firm Bechtel.

Speaking ahead of his visit, Welsh Secretary Simon Hart said:

With the backdrop of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the relationship between the United Kingdom and the United States has never been more important.

There are strong and important economic and cultural ties between Wales and our American friends and it is fantastic to be able to promote these and help strengthen them further.

Over the last two years we have seen significant developments in our relationship that have been extremely beneficial to Wales, from

the lifting of steel tariffs to the new exporting opportunities for Welsh lamb.

I want to build on this progress and will be discussing further opportunities for investment in Wales with nuclear energy at the heart of those discussions.

The Welsh Secretary's itinerary also includes:

- Talks with the US Department for Agriculture and the Meat Importers Council about future imports to the US of Welsh lamb.
- An event with the British American Business Association to promote Wales.
- Meeting senior figures from energy company Valero – already a major investor in Wales.
- Talks with politicians of the Friends of Wales caucus in the US Congress.

Mr Hart travels to Washington DC on Tuesday, 5 April and then on to Georgia on Thursday 7 April with his visit supported by the British Embassy, part of the UK's extensive world-wide diplomatic network.

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OSCE calls a Special Council meeting on Russian atrocities in Irpin and Bucha: UK statement, 5 April 2022

Thank you Mr Chair. Each occasion we have met in Special Permanent Council has marked a further appalling development as President Putin pursues his brutal war of choice in Ukraine. But today we reflect on a new and deeply disturbing low – apparent executions in cold blood on a shocking scale.

As Russian troops have been forced into retreat, we are seeing increasing evidence of appalling acts perpetrated by those invading forces in towns such as Irpin and Bucha. Hundreds of bodies have been discovered as towns have been liberated.

We have watched in horror as reports have emerged of men, women and children – and children – killed and mutilated. Of mass graves. And of footage showing people shot at close range, with their hands and feet bound and their bodies left to lie in the street. What further horrors await discovery? This is a great moral stain upon the Russian army, and one which will never be

forgotten.

The perpetrators of these appalling acts must be held to account. Deliberate killings of civilians during Russia's illegal and unjustifiable invasion of Ukraine must be investigated as war crimes. We will not allow Russia to cover up their involvement in these atrocities through cynical disinformation, and we will ensure that the reality of Russia's actions are brought to light. We will not rest until those responsible for atrocities, including military commanders and individuals in the Russian Government have faced justice. [The United Kingdom has been at the forefront of supporting the International Criminal Court's investigation into the situation in Ukraine.](#) We led the largest State referral to the ICC in its history. [The OSCE's Moscow Mechanism has an important role to play in contributing to this process,](#) and it will continue to have the United Kingdom's full support. Nothing is forgotten, and nobody will be forgotten.

Mr Chair, in this room Russian colleagues have told us they had no intention of invading Ukraine – a lie. They told us Ukraine was bombing their own schools and hospitals – a lie. Now they tell us Ukraine is executing their own civilian population. Have they no shame? There is no flag large enough to cover the shame of killing innocent people.

Mr Chair, the Russian government still has the chance to stop this senseless war. But while Russia continues instead with its senseless barbarity, it is essential that the international community continues to provide Ukraine with the humanitarian and military support it so dearly needs, and that we step up sanctions to cut off funding for President Putin's war machine at source. The world is watching, and we will not forget.

I kindly ask that you attach this statement to the journal of the day. Thank you Mr Chair.

[11-year disqualification for rental property investment con director](#)

Sam Eustace, 36, from Sutton in south London has been disqualified as a director for 11 years.

He was director of Kingsman Property Ltd, which promised landlords guaranteed rent all year around as well as offering investors the opportunity to receive annual returns of 30% by investing money into the rental house for multiple occupancy (HMO) sector.

The company, set up in October 2015 originally as Samuel James Ltd, changed its name to Kingsman Property Ltd in May 2017. The business took at least £6.7 million from would-be investors before it went into liquidation in

August 2019.

The subsequent Insolvency Service investigation found that between October 2016 and March 2019, Kingsman Property paid out over £3 million to investors, but that this was funded by money received from new investors rather than any actual return on investment, similar to a ponzi scheme.

Kingsman Property states on its Facebook page that it is “led by a successful entrepreneur who combines his love of property with financial acumen...who is honest and trustworthy.”

The company accounts showed the business was in fact insolvent as early as June 2017, with debts totalling nearly £700,000. Its deficit grew exponentially, and it owed nearly £5 million when it eventually went into liquidation.

Despite this, Sam Eustace paid himself dividends from the company between November 2017 and June 2019 amounting to nearly £400,000.

The Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy accepted a disqualification undertaking from Sam Eustace after he admitted causing Kingsman Property to trade with a lack of commercial probity, including offering false representations as to returns on investments. His ban runs from 24 March 2022 and lasts for 11 years.

The disqualification undertaking prevents him from directly, or indirectly, becoming involved in the promotion, formation or management of a company, without the permission of the court.

Martin Gitner, Chief Investigator at The Insolvency Service said:

Sam Eustace knew he was taking people’s hard-earned savings as part of a scam and has left countless people out of pocket.

The Insolvency Service will not hesitate to investigate and use its powers against those engage in this kind of fraud.

Notes to editors

Sam Eustace, also known as Samuel Jaz Eustace, is of Sutton and his date of birth is October 1985.

Kingsman Property Ltd (Company Reg no. 09822551).

A disqualification order has the effect that without specific permission of a court, a person with a disqualification cannot:

- act as a director of a company
- take part, directly or indirectly, in the promotion, formation or management of a company or limited liability partnership
- be a receiver of a company’s property

Disqualification undertakings are the administrative equivalent of a disqualification order but do not involve court proceedings.

Persons subject to a disqualification order are bound by a [range of other restrictions](#).

[Information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct.](#)

Contact Press Office

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

[Reappointment of Youth Justice Board Member](#)

News story

The Secretary of State for Justice has announced the reappointment of Brian Tytherleigh as a member of the Youth Justice Board.



The Secretary of State has reappointed Mr Brian Tytherleigh as a member of the Youth Justice Board (YJB) for 3 years from 1 April 2022.

YJB is a non-departmental public body, responsible for overseeing the youth justice system in England and Wales. As a non-departmental public body, its primary function is to monitor the operation of the youth justice system and the provision of youth justice services.

Reappointments to the YJB are made by the Secretary of State for Justice and are regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments. This reappointment has been made in line with the Governance Code on Public Appointments.

Brian Tytherleigh Biography

Mr Tytherleigh has focused on transformational change in non-governmental public bodies and departmental agencies. He was also instrumental in moving the Children's Workforce Development Council into the Teaching Agency and overseeing its subsequent merger with National College of School Leadership to create the National College of Teaching and Leadership. Mr Tytherleigh is currently retired but holds the position of member of the Audit and Risk Committee at The Children's Commissioner's Office.

This prior experience makes him well suited to this role at YJB, both in terms of his experience in education and his expertise in children's services, which will help contribute to the Board's objectives and ambitions for reform of the youth justice system.

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