READ\_ME

We interviewed 31 local community members from in and around the Fylde region of Lancashire, UK. The Fylde is an area that has experienced shale gas exploration activity by the company Cuadrilla since it acquired a license in the area in 2008.

We recruited participants through purposive and snowball sampling. We intentionally sought participants who had been visibly active on the issue locally, and also sought a good balance of both views on the matter and geographical spread of participants within the region. Once initial participants had been recruited, we used the snowballing technique to identify further possible participants. This approach resulted in a sample of 31 interviewees from three geographical areas in the region (rural Fylde, coastal Fylde, and the wider region); of whom 19 were anti-fracking, 6 were pro-fracking and 6 were ambivalent (see Tables 1 and 2).

The rural Fylde area covers the more rural inland part of the Fylde, including the area around the Preston New Road site and in and around the village of Roseacre. Coastal Fylde refers to the more urban and populous coast, including the towns of Lytham, Lytham St Annes and Blackpool. Wider region refers to the wider region in and around Cuadrilla’s license area (PEDL 165), and includes the city of Preston.

*Table 1: summary of sample*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Pro | Ambivalent | Anti |  |
| Rural Fylde (RF) | 0 | 3 | 8 | 11 |
| Coastal Fylde (CF) | 4 | 0 | 6 | 10 |
| Wider Region (WR) | 2 | 3 | 5 | 10 |
|  | 6 | 6 | 19 | 31 |

*Table 2: the geographical area and attitude of each participant*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Participant | Geographical area and attitude to shale development |
| 1 | CF, anti |
| 2 | CF, anti |
| 3 | RF, anti |
| 4 | RF, anti |
| 5 | RF, anti |
| 6 | CF, anti |
| 7 | CF, anti |
| 8 | CF, anti |
| 9 | RF, anti |
| 10 | RF, anti |
| 11 | RF, anti |
| 12 | CF, anti |
| 13 | CF, pro |
| 14 | WR, pro |
| 15 | CF, pro |
| 16 | WR, pro |
| 17 | RF, amb (group interview 1) |
| 18 | RF, amb (group interview 1) |
| 19 | RF, antI |
| 20 | CF, pro |
| 21 | WR, anti |
| 22 | WR, anti |
| 23 | WR, anti |
| 24 | CF, pro |
| 25 | WR, anti |
| 26 | RF, amb |
| 27 | RF, anti |
| 28 | WR, mixed – 1 anti and 3 amb (group interview 2) |
| 29 | WR, mixed - 1 anti and 3 amb (group interview 2) |
| 30 | WR, mixed – 1 anti and 3 amb (group interview 2) |
| 31 | WR, mixed – 1 anti and 3 amb (group interview 2) |

The interviews were conducted between April and June 2019. The interviews were audio-recorded with participant consent. The recordings were then selectively transcribed by the researchers. During selective transcription, passages of an interviewee's response were typed up if they were felt to be potentially significant in relation to the research questions of the project. The transcripts were anonymized through the removal of direct and indirect personal identifiers. Where passages have been removed or words changed to preserve anonymity this is indicated by the use of {} brackets in the transcripts.

The interviews lasted between 30mins and 2hrs. 30 of the interviews were conducted face-to-face and 1 of the interviews was conducted by phone.

The interviews were semi-structured, and the interview protocol (and follow up questions) can be seen in the transcript files. Our semi-structured interview protocol included questions about attitudes to and general perceptions of shale development; beliefs about impacts (local, national and global; actual and potential); views on governance, regulation and energy policy; reactions to archetypal positions put forward in the shale development policy debate; and experiences, expectations and perceptions of participatory opportunities.

The third section of the interviews involved participants looking at and responding to prompts. These prompts were designed to represent an archetypal perspective on the fracking issue. There were nine prompts, 4 pro-shale development and 5 anti-shale development (although there was often not time to go through each prompt). The prompts were initially designed with real quotes and various images. These initial prompts were used in the first 9 interviews. The prompts were then redesigned to comprise a single made-up quote to make them easier for participants to quickly digest. These made-up quotes were designed to encapsulate each of the 9 perspectives. The revised prompts were used for respondent 10 onwards. We are publishing the revised prompts along with the transcripts; however, we are unfortunately unable to publish the original prompts due to copyright issues.

Participants were given information sheets and informed consent was secured for the use of anonymised quotes in publications stemming from the research and for anonymised transcripts to be published as open data in the UK Data Service’s repository. We are publishing the participant information sheet and (blank) consent form alongside the transcripts.