

October 2009 : **Issue 2**

# BRENT E-NEWS

## Brent Decommissioning Project

Welcome to the second in the series of regular communications from the Brent Decommissioning Project Team

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Austin Hand, Project Director

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[www.shell.co.uk/brentdecomm](http://www.shell.co.uk/brentdecomm)



# BRENT STAKEHOLDER UPDATE

In this issue we focus on who our stakeholders are and why, how and when the Project engages in dialogue with this diverse and important community.

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We believe stakeholder dialogue is key to the success of the project. Although we are responsible for making the final decisions on end of field life in conjunction with our co-venturer, Esso, and in consultation with the regulator, the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC), we have learnt from our own experience and from that of other companies involved in major projects, just how important it is to engage with all interested parties widely, deeply – and early.

We believe that an open and inclusive approach from an early stage is very important. To achieve this objective, our stakeholder dialogue events are independently facilitated by The Environment Council, attended by representatives of the Independent Review Group and most importantly, strengthened by contributions from a range of diverse stakeholders. We believe this will support our aim of finding balanced solutions that are both practical, in terms of technical and financial feasibility, and acceptable in respect of their safety, health, and environmental and societal impacts.

The feedback has been very valuable so far and on page 6 we share some examples of how your feedback is helping us to shape our activities going forward.

Those of you actively involved in our dialogue process to date will be aware that the project is currently focusing on finding solutions for the decommissioning of the Brent Delta platform. As discussed in the April 2009 dialogue session, we propose to hold our next stakeholder dialogue session in 2010 to share and consult with you on the conclusions of our technical studies and the comparative assessment process. This will feed into our Brent Delta decommissioning proposals, prior to submitting a draft Brent Delta Decommissioning Programme to DECC.

In the meantime we will continue to update you regularly via Brent E-News and we welcome your feedback on the content.

**Austin Hand**  
Project Director



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## CONTACTUS

For further information on the Project, including transcript reports and presentations from all the stakeholder dialogue sessions, please visit the Stakeholder Dialogue page and/or get in touch with the team via the 'Contact Us' link at: [www.shell.co.uk/brentdecomm](http://www.shell.co.uk/brentdecomm)

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# BRENT

# Stakeholder Engagement

## Why engage?

We believe that stakeholder dialogue is essential to achieving a socially, environmentally and economically sustainable future. It is only through dialogue that different sectors and interest groups can agree the way forward, resolve the dilemmas and sometimes hard choices that will enable global society to develop in a sustainable way.

We recognise that engaging with a wide spectrum of stakeholders makes good sense. Wider consultation means a better understanding of different issues and concerns, resulting in better decisions and outcomes for all concerned. At a project level, engaging early, widely and deeply with our stakeholders ensures a full understanding of the scope and challenges of the project. This provides a platform for frank and open discussion of stakeholders' views and concerns, all of which can inform the decision-making process to make it more robust.

**Our Commitment Statement can be viewed on the Stakeholder Dialogue page at:**  
**[www.shell.co.uk/brentdecomm](http://www.shell.co.uk/brentdecomm)**

## Who do we engage with?

Every individual, group or organisation with an interest in the future of the Brent Field is welcome to participate in our ongoing stakeholder dialogue as the Brent Decommissioning Project matures. The supply chain, political and media stakeholders are already kept updated by Shell, each via existing, dedicated communication channels.

Currently, more than 130 organisations are engaged via various forms of communication including our dialogue sessions, the dedicated website and this e-newsletter. These stakeholders represent a broad spectrum of UK and other European organisations and interests, including national, international and local government bodies, academic institutions, environmental organisations, trade associations, trade unions, and marine, wildlife and heritage conservation groups.

**For the full list of stakeholders visit: [www.shell.co.uk/brentdecomm](http://www.shell.co.uk/brentdecomm). If you or your organisation are not already listed as stakeholders and would like to be included, please contact us via the Contact Us link at the above website.**

## How and when do we engage?

A dedicated Stakeholder Engagement team has been embedded within the Brent Decommissioning Project from its earliest stages, enabling stakeholder dialogue to begin well before the required statutory consultation period.

The team are available to answer your queries via the 'Contact Us' facility on [www.shell.co.uk/brentdecomm](http://www.shell.co.uk/brentdecomm) or you can contact Jim Niven, Stakeholder Manager via telephone +44 (0) 1224 882000 at any stage during the project. Our initial methods of engagement have been via our website along with stakeholder dialogue sessions held in both Aberdeen and London. To date, four events have been held in Aberdeen and London since January 2007 and comprehensive reports (produced by the facilitators) have been sent to all attendees and also, posted on the website. More recently, we hosted the first issue of this e-newsletter on our website. Further issues will be hosted on the website on a periodic basis, as the project matures.

For significant project progress milestones, such as the recent DECC agreement of the Final Field Development Plan, we send an email update directly to all stakeholders.

# BRENT

## THE STORY SO FAR

Our first dialogue sessions, in January 2007, provided an early opportunity for members of the Project to meet and engage with individuals and organisations from our stakeholder community.

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The presentations at the sessions focused on Shell's values and principles, an overview of project issues and scope, and the regulatory framework and options selection process. These were followed by a series of syndicate discussions during which the participants expressed a range of concerns and ideas, which were put on record and taken back by the team to inform their planning and decision-making going forward.

In response to stakeholder feedback, the subsequent sessions focused specifically on topics and issues of particular significance or technical challenges. These have included the Gravity Base Structure (GBS) storage cells and an introduction to cell sampling (November 2007), the Brent Delta GBS, the issues relevant to its potential removal and the proposed comparative assessment process (September 2008), and cell sampling, drill cuttings and re-use options (April 2009). On each occasion, discussions were held to solicit the stakeholders' views on the topics and issues presented.

## Evaluation

The first dialogue session was conducted by Facilitators UK and since November 2007 the events have been facilitated, evaluated and reported by The Environment Council, an independent UK charity dedicated to protecting the environment by promoting effective dialogue and a collaborative approach to problem-solving.

Lead Facilitator Suzannah Lansdell explains: "Stakeholder dialogue is about listening to your audiences, reflecting their concerns and ideas as far as you can in your decision-making, and making better decisions as a result."

"Evaluation from the dialogue events is showing that the stakeholders trust the process, and feel that Shell is listening and being open and transparent. That has very much been down to Shell's approach of engaging early and being honest about not having all the answers. The Environment Council has worked with Shell since the time of Brent Spar Dialogue and it has been very encouraging to see that the lessons learned with regard to this kind of approach have been implemented in this Project."

Suzannah adds that early engagement is not without its challenges: "Some stakeholders may choose not to participate in the dialogue sessions at this stage because they have resource-constraints in terms of whether, or how many sessions, they can attend or because their issue focus is elsewhere at this time (both climate change and the Marine Bill have been cited). That's why it's so important to ensure all stakeholders are also kept up-to-date with progress via hard copy materials, the web and the e-newsletter, and that they know they can contact the Project team at any time. Some stakeholders may feel there is opportunity further down the line to engage and it is true that there is the formal consultation of the plan – but we will really be encouraging stakeholders to attend the next session in 2010 as it is likely to be the last opportunity to give feedback on the Brent Delta studies conclusions and raise issues before the Brent Delta decommissioning plan is submitted to DECC."



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Evaluation reports on each of the sessions can be found in the main reports on the Stakeholder Dialogue page at: [www.shell.com/brentdecomm](http://www.shell.com/brentdecomm)

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## THE STORY SO FAR Continued.....

### Independent Review Group

The Independent Review Group (IRG) members also participate in the stakeholder dialogue process, as part of the groups' scientific and technical review activities, with at least one group member having attended each stakeholder meeting. IRG member and programme co-ordinator, Professor Brian Wilkinson, explains the role of the IRG:

“In reviewing the Project's comparative assessment study reports, our role is to consider the relevance and objectivity of the studies' conclusions and whether they are complete from a scientific, technical, economic, environmental and social perspective. As part of this process, we may make suggestions as to how these conclusions could be improved or expanded to take other factors into account. The stakeholder dialogue sessions can inform us as to what some of those 'other factors' are.”

Professor Wilkinson adds: “We want to ensure that all the relevant stakeholder comments have been addressed by the Project team's conclusions, and so we discuss as a group our individual experiences of the dialogue sessions and how effective we think they have been.”



In September 2009, the IRG had a meeting with the Project team and will revert shortly with their conclusions on matters discussed. We will update you on the group's feedback via this newsletter or the website.



# BRENT

## Responding to your Feedback

There are a number of ways in which your suggestions and ideas are already helping to shape our project activities.

### Communication

This e-newsletter has been produced in response to feedback from stakeholder dialogue sessions, which informed us that you would like to receive regular electronic updates, individually themed on key aspects of the project as it progresses. We also heard from you that you would like to be kept informed via our website [www.shell.co.uk/brentdecomm](http://www.shell.co.uk/brentdecomm) which, together with Brent E-News, will ensure that you receive the latest information available on the project.

The early sessions also revealed your preference for dialogue events focusing on a specific key issue. As a result, our subsequent events were tailored according to this request.

### Decision-making

At the first stakeholder dialogue sessions in 2007, we discussed with you the various factors that would be considered by the project when selecting the options for the Decommissioning Programme. In these discussions, we acknowledged that our comparative assessment process would take into account a matrix of factors spanning safety, health, technical, societal, environmental and economic aspects, and what each aspect might encompass.

### Technical Study

The issues around sediment sampling from the storage cells of the platform gravity-based structures were explored during the dialogue events in November 2007. All parties acknowledged that early sampling would be valuable in providing a full picture of the volume and composition of sediment that has built up during Brent Delta's three-decade lifespan, and as a result we carried out a number of studies to assess the feasibility of carrying out cell sampling while the platform is still in production. Our studies indicated that for various safety and technical reasons, cell sampling was not practical until after the platform has ceased production. At the April 2009 events, we shared these study and trial results with our stakeholders. This was to enable you to better understand why our conclusions from the studies led us to our proposal to defer cell sampling until after cessation of production.

Stakeholder Engagement Manager, Jim Niven comments:  
"The stakeholder dialogue process brought the issue of the benefits of early cell sampling to the fore. Equally, it has since allowed us to make all our stakeholders aware of why sampling is better attempted when the platform is not in production. It is a credit to both stakeholders and the process that this understanding and general acceptance is widely shared. That, I believe, is a very positive outcome."

