

# THE CAMPAIGN TO BAN FRACKING IN IRELAND

Led by activist group Love Leitrim



## UNDERSTANDING THE ISSUE

- in 2011 exploratory fracking licenses granted to fossil fuel company Tamboran in Leitrim.
- Local community work to seeks to understand fracking. Hold screenings of the film Gasland, invited film's producer, community members and elected representatives
- This fostered connections between Leitrim and communities in USA where fracking was already established

## ESTABLISHING A CAMPAIGN GROUP

- Love Leitrim is established as local anti-fracking activist group
- 20 groups established across North-West and Co. Clare
- Love Leitrim mobilised based on conversations, relationship building creativity and solidarity with other communities - this built a strong campaign base



## SHAPING THE DEBATE

- Addressing fracking at a policy level became a key part of Love Leitrim's campaign.
- Love Leitrim shaped the terms of the debate by engaging with politicians as **electors** in a democracy rather than **non-experts**
- This strategy enabled campaigners to centre their position in the democratic process over input of regulators
- When engaging with decision makers and media, Love Leitrim centred public health in the fracking debate

## ENGAGEMENT AT POLICY LEVEL

- Engaged at local and national level- using public accountability
- Cross-party advocacy engaging politicians across the political spectrum
- Supported by a robust direct action campaign involving public meetings, protests, a cross-country march, photo shoots and solidarity actions with other communities

# LOVE LEITRIM'S IMPACT AT POLICY LEVEL

## PUBLIC HEALTH

- With public health as a main campaign issue, Love Leitrim secured a **moratorium on fracking** in 2013 while the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) undertook a review
- In a draft of the review, public health was not mentioned, Love Leitrim organised public meetings to facilitate members of the community to be part of consultation - **1356 submissions were sent to EPA** referencing public health as an issue
- The EPA recognised this and agreed to include public health as part of the review
- Campaigners drew on research from USA to support an anti-fracking ban on public health grounds
- Love Leitrim were vital in the est. of the **Concerned Health Professionals of Ireland (CHPI)** who highlighted public health issue at national level

## APPLICATION NOT TO FRACK

- in 2013 Tamboran apply for an extension of their license to frack
- Love Leitrim submit a counter application "License not to Frack"
- This reclaimed the political policy arena into the hands of community-centred democratic engagement. calls to account the structures of representative democracy
- The application was based in a human rights framework and requested a ban on fracking on the basis of the **right to have unpolluted water, right to live in a rural area, right to safeguard indigenous industry** and the **right to health**
- On the day the license to frack applications were due, Love Leitrim went to the Dail and submitted their License not to Frack.
- They also released a press statement stating the importance of the government hearing the people who elected them

## A NATIONWIDE BAN ON FRACKING

- Love Leitrim built relationships with politicians across all parties and used these relationships to demand local politicians support a consensus ban on fracking
- This resulted in a **ban on fracking in the 2014 Leitrim County Development plan**
- Love Leitrim supported the **"Vote Frack Free" initiatives of the Frack free Network** in local, general and European elections in 2014 and 2016 - this turned the private act of voting into an act of public and collective tactic
- After the 2016 general election **36 elected members of the Dail had pledged support for a fracking ban**
- Campaign pressure continued and in **2016 a bill proposing a ban began to be debated**
- Love Leitrim approached Dail members across parties to **submit parliamentary questions to the minister, use their party's time to to address fracking and raise the issue at parliamentary debates**
- In July 2017 the **Prohibition of Onshore Hydraulic Fracturing Act** was signed into law