

At London Local Energy we think an informed gas consumer will be our best customer. One way of doing this is explaining as simply as we can where gas comes from today and our alternative. Naturally, we'd like to hear from anyone else's alternatives, but we must all start with today's reality.

Today's reality, or to be exact the one from this Saturday, July 8, means that London is going to be using shale gas. Not our shale gas, shale gas from the US. The following figures are approximate, depending on both some unknowns and our wish to make it as simple as possible, but if they're aren't 100% correct, the point remains broadly accurate.

A large part of the UK gas supply mix is not from around the corner nearby the Ikea on the North Circular Road, but from more exotic places across oceans and continents transported via a very long, and thus very carbon intense chain. One is LNG, Liquefied Natural Gas. We won't bore you with the details, but they are here if you want them in a post at MyGridGB called [the demonstrably perverse outcome of environmental opposition to shale gas](#).

This Saturday, the very first LNG tanker carrying US shale gas arrives at the LNG terminal at Isle of Grain, about 25 miles east of London. The tanker, the [Maran Gas Mystras](#) has travelled [4900 miles](#). As anyone who goes to Waitrose is constantly told, local is good. Which means five thousand miles away is not so good.

The ship has a cargo capacity of 159,800 tons of LNG. Some of that will burn off naturally, some will fuel the vessel, and no tanker is 100% full. It's reasonable to assume 145,000 tons, 91% of capacity. Once the gas is landed, which should only take a day or less, the gas is reheated, put into the National Grid and will be equal to roughly 200 million cubic metres of gas, or 78.4 million therms or 2.30 billion kilowatt hours. Sorry to use big numbers, but bear with us. The average consumption of a London area gas customer from July to the end of September will be about 800 kWhs (a kWh is the unit used on your bill). We don't use much this time of year but hot water and cooking gas is still needed. And of course, it does get chilly sometimes towards the end of September.

2.30 billion kWh divided by 800 means that the gas from this one tanker could supply three months of gas to [every domestic user in London](#) from Saturday to September 30. Every single one of us. For three months Remember that next time you're in the shower. Unless you want a really cold one, every day, you're using shale gas. Just not shale gas that has any benefit to Londoners or the planet.

One of the reasons people propose against UK and London shale gas is that it's bad for the climate. Transporting shale gas 5000 miles is far, far worse for climate. We estimate that the [CO2 content](#) of this cargo means, conservatively, that it will put 200,000 tonnes of extra CO2 into the atmosphere compared to the nearest, and thus lowest carbon natural gas we would like permission to look for under London. That's a lot of CO2. A home solar panel saves one tonne per year for example

But it gets worse. If the same amount of gas was produced under our feet, it would have a monetary value the same as the LNG cargo, about 38 pence per therm at summer prices or roughly £30 million pounds. The total tax tax due to the UK and London governments would be about half.

£15 million pounds is a lot of money. But every single penny of the value of the LNG cargo goes to the seller in Texas, the shipowner and the traders. Not a penny stays here. Why? In a large part, because the UK government doesn't want to look for gas under London. They think it's not worth it politically - that too many people want the simple answer of just leave it in the ground. Which is fair enough, But as we constantly point out, it's your gas. It should be a matter for the many who own the resource. Let the few who object convince the many.

Alternately, there is another solution. Let's stop using gas in London for the next three months. If we don't want it from under our ground or from under any other's ground, it's consistent to keep it out of the water heater. And don't eat anything cooked. Some people might think that idea stinks. But they may be on the Underground next to someone who thinks that's a good idea. And stinks too.

London Local Energy: **We Want What You Want.**