

carbon electricity supply provided concerns about safety, disposal of waste and cost are adequately addressed and without public subsidy for new build.

- ♦ Use biomass primarily for heating and small-scale power generation, act to encourage the wider use of biogas and argue for the reform of EU policies on biofuels and biomass which help drive deforestation, including ending all support for food-crop-based biofuels after 2020.
- ♦ Continue to back new entrants to the energy market, smart meters and faster switching to promote proper competition, aiming for at least 30% of the household market to be supplied by competitors to the 'Big 6' by 2020.

The UK has significant stores of unconventional gas, which could be accessed through the process known as fracking. It is vital that efforts to access this gas be properly regulated to protect our natural environment. Liberal Democrats in government have introduced the world's most robust regulatory regime for unconventional gas, including banning drilling in National Parks, and will take two further steps to ensure any shale gas contributes to a faster transition to a low-carbon economy.

We will:

- ♦ Establish a Low-carbon Transition Fund using 50% of any tax revenues from shale gas to fund energy efficiency, community energy, low-carbon innovation and renewable heat.
- ♦ Require that once a shale gas well is finished, it must be offered at no cost to geothermal heat developers, to enable faster expansion of this renewable technology.

2.7 An open, trading nation

As a major global economy, we must promote open markets and free trade, both within the European Union and beyond. Only as a full member of a reformed European Union can we be certain Britain's businesses will have access to markets in Europe and beyond.

Liberal Democrats believe we should welcome talented people from abroad, encourage visitors and tourists who contribute enormously to our economic growth, and give sanctuary to refugees fleeing persecution. Immigration procedures must be robust and fair, and the UK must remain open to visitors who boost our economy, and migrant workers who play a vital role in business and public services.