



Highfields Landfill Site, Walsall Community Update February 2021

Introduction

These updates will provide residents with the latest information about our regulation of the Highfields Landfill site in Walsall.

Keeping you up to date on our progress is very important to us and we hope our updates and frequently asked questions (FAQ) document will answer many of your questions. Our FAQ document can be accessed on our Citizen Space webpage here:

https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/west-midlands/highfields-landfill-walsall/user_uploads/generic-landfill-faqs-2.pdf

Coronavirus: The Environment Agency response

We are working hard with Government and other emergency responders on protecting the public and the environment from the effects of Coronavirus. The Environment Agency remains fully operational and committed to adhering to all Government guidelines with the majority of our staff working from home. In accordance with the Government's and our own internal guidance, we continue to carry out regulatory visits to sites that could cause serious environmental harm. With regard to Highfields Landfill we have been completing odour checks and undertaking our regulation remotely.

Latest News

Odour

Over the last couple of months we have seen an increase in reports of odour. We are sorry to hear about the situation you are experiencing. Highfield's landfill site holds a permit that is issued and regulated by the Environment Agency, as such we take seriously any concerns expressed regarding the site.

We want to thank you for continuing to report odours to us and we want to reassure the local community that in response to complaints of odour we undertake odour checks in the area. This includes checks at different times of the day, for example early morning and in the evening. Recent odour checks were carried out on the 17/12/20 (evening), 14/1/21 (evening), 28/1/21 (early morning) & 3/2/21 (early morning). On the 17 December a fishy/chemical odour was detected at the junction of Boatmans Lane/ Coppice Lane and on the 28 January a landfill gas odour was detected on Boatmans Lane. No odours were detected on the 14 January or 3 February. All findings are passed to Enovert or other potential local sources of odour, as appropriate.

We will continue to complete odour checks and drive improvements on site.

Improving gas capture

We continue to press for improvements on the gas collection infrastructure, capping and engineering based on, survey and telemetry data from the gas systems. Enovert are also carrying out regular gas surveys on site to identify areas requiring repair or improvement. We also continue to have regular meetings with Enovert to ensure all measures are being taken and within appropriate timescales.



Enovert North Limited has continued to make improvements on site, 10 new deep gas extraction wells have been installed across western flanks of site, including in recently tipped areas in cell 4. These wells are now connected to the gas extraction system. Further gas extraction wells are also planned for the current tipping area. Enovert intend to install a larger gas engine which will support the extraction system in capturing more landfill gas, this means less gas is lost to atmosphere. Unfortunately making improvements like drilling wells or replacing capping can generate odours by disturbing the tipped areas but these should be relatively short lived. We continue to work with the operator on ways to ensure gas capture works efficiently to extract landfill gas.

Capping

Enovert's ongoing capping program to cap completed areas of the site is steadily progressing. The capping on site is key to future control of gas, which can sometimes be the cause of odour. In spring 2021 Enovert plan to continue with permanent capping on the Walsall Road side of site (North West corner of cell 3) and remove the area of plastic temporary capping installed in early 2020 which will be replaced with geosynthetic clay liner (GCL). These actions are all weather dependant and therefore could be delayed.



Above: Permanent capping placed with temporary plastic capping to the right of photo.

Keeping local residents updated

Please be advised that we will only update you if there are any significant changes we need to make you aware of.

Our online information page has been updated in line with this:

<https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/west-midlands/highfields-landfill-walsall/>

If you would like to provide feedback on how useful you have found this update, or would like to be added to our mailing list to receive these updates in the future, please email:

Engagement_Westmids@environmentagency.gov.uk

Environmental concerns

If you wish to report any incidents about the site (ie odour) please call our 24/7 incident hotline **0800 80 70 60** or via ics@environment-agency.gov.uk, rather than contacting individual officers or our Enquiries Team. Once reports are logged, a unique reference number is generated and a copy will then go to a regulatory officer for the site. The incident number is a national Environment Agency reporting system (across England) for all issues for example, pollution incident or flooding. The reference numbers are not unique to calls about a specific site. The difference between your own call references does not indicate the number of calls received about a particular site.

Thank you for taking the time to read this update.