

## Walleys Quarry weekly update – 31 March 2022

The Environment Agency has prepared this weekly update to help the community of Newcastle-under-Lyme and the wider area keep informed about developments concerning its regulation of Walleys Quarry Landfill.

Walleys Quarry Ltd is the operator of the landfill site and it alone is responsible for the hydrogen sulphide emissions escaping from the site.

The Environment Agency is the environmental regulator. We require Walleys Quarry Ltd to meet its environmental obligations and resolve the ongoing odour issues at the landfill as quickly as possible.

### News in brief – 31 March 2022

#### Operational update

We know that you are continuing to experience odour from the site, and hydrogen sulphide and methane levels are also being recorded at our air quality mobile monitoring facilities (MMFs). This week we met representatives from Walleys Quarry Ltd and its gas contractor to discuss increasing gas capture at the site. We have also carried out an off-site odour assessment.

We are reviewing gas capture levels following the recent increases in fugitive gas emissions from the site detected by our MMFs. This work will explore the relationship between our air quality monitoring data, weather data, and our observations of activities on site to further our understanding of the causes of the current situation.

We continue to press the operator to resolve any gas capture issues, and to ensure that it has all necessary measures in place to reduce the emissions of landfill gases to the atmosphere whilst operational works are carried out over the coming weeks.

#### Capping preparation work begins

Walleys Quarry Ltd has recently confirmed that capping will commence in April and has issued its own press release in relation to this: [Read more here](#)

As part of this work a geotextile membrane has been delivered to the site. The membrane forms part of the permanent capping system for phase 1 of the landfill. Walleys Quarry Limited has also arranged for a borehole drilling rig to install additional gas extraction wells. It is anticipated that up to 18 additional wells will be installed during April. The drilling rig to be deployed also includes local exhaust ventilation, which should reduce excessive escape of landfill gas during the drilling operations.

These developments should lead to greater containment and capture of landfill gas emissions, before transfer to the gas utilisation plant where the gas is destroyed, rather than escape into the atmosphere. These works are happening on the largest open phase of the landfill, so once completed the largest mass of waste at the site will be permanently capped. Subsequent planned phases are much smaller in volume and will be completed more quickly, reducing their potential to cause odour nuisance.

#### Pre-election period 14 April – 5 May

There are local elections in Newcastle-under-Lyme on 5 May. In the pre-election period public bodies must limit engagement activities. This period will run from 14 April until shortly after 5 May.

More information about these restrictions can be found [here](#). This may impact some of our engagement activities, such as the kind of things we share on our new Facebook page.

### Facebook Group

Following feedback from residents during our doorstep conversations about how they prefer to access information, we expect our Facebook group to go live on Thursday 7 April 2022. This will be a new way of finding information about the regulatory work we are doing at Walleys Quarry. We will be holding some Q&A sessions after the local elections in May. We'll include a link in our weekly update once the group is live.

### Reporting odour

It is important you continue to report odour to us. Reports from local people, along with our regulatory visits and monitoring from our mobile monitoring facilities help to create a picture which informs our enforcement and regulatory approach.

The easiest and quickest way to make a report is via GOV.UK at: <https://report-walleys-quarry-smell.service.gov.uk/>

If you do report odour to us via our incident hotline, please be courteous to our staff. They are working to deal with your reports as efficiently as possible.

### UKHSA Health Risk assessment report

The Health Risk Assessment of air quality monitoring results from March 2021 to February 2022 is now available [here](#)

### Latest hydrogen sulphide levels

Our Ambient Air Monitoring Team continues to check air quality around Walleys Quarry landfill. It does this through a network of mobile monitoring stations (MMFs) that are positioned in communities around the site. These check for levels of hydrogen sulphide and methane, which are indicators of odour pollution.

The chart below contains a summary of the raw data collected from our ambient air mobile monitoring facilities (MMFs) in the period 21-27 March 2022.

Levels of hydrogen sulphide during this week remained below the World Health Organisation's 24-hour average health guideline level (150µg/m<sup>3</sup> or 107ppb) to protect against short-term health effects.

Levels rose above the World Health Organisation's 30-minute average odour annoyance guideline level (7µg/m<sup>3</sup> or 5ppb) at all 4 locations during this week and were higher than the previous week at all 4 locations.

MMF ID & Location	% of time the monitoring location recorded H <sub>2</sub> S above the WHO annoyance guideline level	Change
MMF1 Silverdale Cemetery	6.8	▲ on previous week
MMF2 Silverdale PS	10.1	▲ on previous week
MMF6 Fire Station	21.1	▲ on previous week
MMF9 Galingale View	43.2	▲ on previous week

*It is important to note that this is raw data and may change slightly as results are verified.*

We do expect to see short term fluctuations in the concentrations of hydrogen sulphide leaving the site. The causes can include factors such as the temporary impact of improvement works being carried out on site and changes in the weather.

Odours associated with landfill gas emissions will increase during colder weather and still wind conditions. With less ability to disperse, the potential for causing odour nuisance is greater.

By contrast, in warmer weather the gases are naturally more diluted due to higher temperatures and rising air. This means improvements from measures implemented at Walleys Quarry Landfill to reduce odour could be less noticeable around this time of year. However, it is important to note that despite short term spikes, the overall trend in the levels of hydrogen sulphide concentrations in the ambient air continues to reduce.

### Odour Reporting

In the week 21 to 27 March 2022, the Environment Agency received a total of 1,848 odour reports from local people. This is an increase compared to the previous week. The peak day we saw reports was on 23 March 2022 where we received 606 reports.



Hydrogen Sulphide Level. 24 hour World Health Organisation guideline to protect against short term health effects



Hydrogen Sulphide 30 minute average odour annoyance: % of time above WHO guideline level w/c 21 March 2022



Odour Reports/complaints w/c 21 March 2022

### Correspondence

We are not able to answer questions fully on social media, so if you have a question, please [email](#) us so we can answer fully.

### Other sources of information

UK Health Security Agency public health messages and advice about the effects of odours from Walleys Quarry landfill are available online via Staffordshire County Council's website: [Frequently asked questions about the health effects of odours and emissions from Walleys Quarry: - Staffordshire County Council](#)

Walleys Quarry Ltd website: <https://walleysquarry.co.uk>