

Transcript of Facebook Live event 29/06/2022

PRES: Presenter

MJ: Mike Jenkins

PRES: Thank you very much indeed for joining us on the Environment Agency Facebook Group. I'm Neil, I am a communications manager here in the Midlands with me here today is Mike Jenkins. Mike is a Project Executive on the Walley's Quarry Environment Agency regulation. Now, we have a different way of doing things this month as you would probably have noticed this month due to illness of the team. So first of all, thank you for your understanding. Things will work a little bit different there will be a series of videos following this one. This is the one and within each one the videos we will be answering a block of questions so if you do not see your question answered within the next few minutes don't worry it may ever there may be in a future videos. As ever there may be some we cannot answer for legal reasons or some we have grouped together in terms for easy to answer them better for you. There may also be some questions that don't fall under our remit as the Environment Agency.

So enough from me without further a do Mike Jenkins is with me and we will begin this particular question segment with one on the subject on FOI's that is Freedom of Information request any member of the public is able to request information the EA holds citing the Freedom of Information Act of 2000. Also, the Environmental Information Regulations of 2004.

So, two people both asking the same question Michael and Richard; why were permit breaches announced openly and clearly in 2021 but is has been incumbent on the community they say in 2022 to discover breaches through Freedom of Information request?

PRES: Let's go to Mike for an answer to that.

MJ: Thanks Neil and thanks for Michael and Richard for the question. So, following an inspection an Environment Officer an Environment Agency Officer records any permit breaches they identify in what we call a Compliance Assessment Report or a CAR. Those CAR forms should be shared with the operator within 14 days of the inspection and any operator is able to challenge the CAR within 28 days of its receipt. Until we resolve a CAR challenge it is not placed on the public register so the Environment Agency should only comment on a CAR once it has been published in other words at the end of the period in which the EA has responded to the operator's challenge. Any member of the public is entitled to see a copy of the CAR once it has been placed on the public register. Consequently, the EA does not always make public statement about permit breaches.

PRES: Ok, Mike thank you

PRES: A follow up question on the same subject to Richard. Let's see what Richard has to say. Richard writes I have sent two separate FOI requests for a copy of the latest version of your risk assessment used for inspection of Walley's Quarry landfill. On each occasion you sent me the January 2021 version what is the reason you will not make public your 2022 version? Thank you, and he goes on to say can you please provide me with the latest version of your task specific risk assessment for your staff when inspecting Walley's Quarry and he specifies the 2022 version not the 2021. Mike Jenkins your response please.

MJ: So, we respond to any requests for information with what we held at the time of that request and whilst there may be periodical reviews of a document in this case at the time of the request of

24th February 2022 the version provided was that correct sorry that current or latest one. We are not required to proactively provide revisions in response to a previous Freedom of Information request but what we will do is be in touch offline and to just have a conversation about what we can do to support on this one.

PRES: Ok, thank you Mike. Let's move on to a different subject this month and that off capping. We go to the first question to Abby this is quite lengthy but obviously important that we get all the details in from Abby. There is also a follow up question as well. So, Abby writes first of all, can you please provide a sample map of the site and its surrounding landmark for orientation purposes that clearly indicates the various phases? Abby says if I'm correct Phase 1 close to Garners Garden Centre is being permanently capped. Whilst Phase 2 close to the Galingale Estate is only being temporarily capped if this is correct, please also provide an explanation as to why Phase 2 is only having temporary capping considering you've reported as it having reached its full height and it is the closest pollution site to homes? Abby goes on to say why have to approved waste acceptance into Phase 3 at the same time that you have requested an improved waste acceptance process from Walley's Quarry Limited? If you have potential concerns over waste, wouldn't it have been better to wait for the improve process before allowing more deliveries on site and she finishes off by saying this decision is extremely perplexing and only adds to the community's anxiety and anger over the management of this sites and its permit. Thanks in advance.

And I mentioned just we go to Mike for a response that there was a follow up question from Nigel and Nigel says following up from our previous questions about phases can you please confirm what plans in place for the area immediately opposite Gadwall Croft and Barnacle Place on the Galingale Estate and he says those living here not only get regular Hydrogen Sulphide pollution but also have to put up with industrial level noise, dust and the regular stench of bins and worse during the hours of 7am to 5pm 5 days a week with the frequent bonus of Saturday mornings too. He finishes off saying there is no let up from the multi sensorial distress that Walleys Quarry Limited repeatedly inflicts on this community. We cannot relax in our gardens, and we cannot open windows because of the noise and smell. When will activity finish and move on from this edge specific area please?

PRES: Right a lot in there let's go to Mike Jenkins for the Environment Agency response please?

MJ: Thank you. So Walley's Quarry Limited has indicated that permanent capping work in Phase 1 will completed in early August 2022. Temporary capping is being installed in Phase 2 to allow time for settlement of the waste in that cell prior to installation of the final gas infrastructure and the final profiling. The current tipping phase is much smaller than Phases 1 and 2 and Walley's Quarry Limited has agreed it will install gas collection infrastructure as waste is deposited. The current phasing and capping plan which we agreed on the 23rd of February 2022 includes drawings that show the phases at the site. It is a public registered document and so anyone is able to inspect it. However, we will consider whether it useful to share a copy on the Citizen Space webpage, so it is more easily accessible. I have been talking to the team today to make sure that happens. We can only require Walley's Quarry Limited to stop accepting waste if we serve a suspension notice and they have been working with us to make improvements to its waste acceptance procedures. Thank you.

PRES: Ok, thank you so much indeed Mike and I hope that answers your question. Within this particular video as I say there are other videos to follow because we are doing things a little differently this month this is the final question within this video.

So, this is about reporting and is a question from Annie and its quite a lengthy question and we will of course include it in full. So please bear with me while I read it out. Annie wants to know, why do you still want us to keep reporting it? What purpose does it serve So many people have given up doing so and seeing you report the numbers of complaints is folly to me? The emissions should be the tool you use to make judgements on how of a nuisance this is to people's lives. This landfill has taken up so much headspace for everyone that people are so fed up of reporting it for no reward and by no reward I mean it stinks. So please tell me why you would expect us to report it every day sometimes several times a day the stinks just blows across what purpose does it serve? Annie goes on to write, I would also like to this question answered, she says of the people I know I'd say 20 to 30% are still reporting either because they have given up altogether and don't see the point or because mentally, they've had to let it go. So, she is making the point people aren't reporting anymore I think is the gist of the last bit.

PRES: Lets go Mike Jenkins Project Executive for the Environment Agency who has responsibility for Walley's Quarry for an answer.

MJ: Thanks Neil and again Annie thank you for the question. I have to just reiterate it's really important for people to keep reporting to us and what it does it gives us real-time information of any issues that goes on around the site and what we do know is that when emissions picked up by our monitoring units around the site when emissions are high we see high number of reports and so it gives us that real time intelligence to the fact there is an issue at the site. So, I just really really encourage people to keep reporting it to us. It also helps us to shows there is an impact on the community from any emissions from the site. We have made changes to make it easier for people to report to us whether that is through the online reporting tool that we've got we did obviously set up the email that people could use. But again, I would encourage people to use the online form as to oppose to the email and obviously there is the phone line for people to use as well. So just what it does is it give us that impact that is on the community for us to understand that and it gives us the real time information so I would just really encourage people to keep on reporting issues to us. Thank you.

PRES: Ok Mike, thanks very much indeed. Mike Jenkins Project Executive for the Environment Agency talking all about the regulations of Walley's Quarry landfill site.

** END OF Q&A, Presenter wraps up asking for feedback and advises Questions Thread open below.

This particular video is the first in a series this month as I explained at the beginning because of illness we have had to do things a little bit differently, but we didn't want to let you down and keep you waiting too long for responses to your questions. So don't worry if your question hasn't been answered within this particular video there are more on the way. As ever the Environment Agency is keen to hear your thoughts you can comment in the thread below but for now from myself and from Mike Jenkins thank you for watching.

MJ: Thank you