

## Walleys Quarry Landfill Site

30 April 2021

We recognise the ongoing difficulties that odour has caused in Silverdale, Newcastle under Lyme and surrounding areas, and remain concerned about the impact it is having on people's lives.

We're committed to doing everything we can to hold Red Industries to account for their operations at Walleys Quarry landfill.

We continue to regularly visit the area to monitor for odour and to carry out both announced and unannounced visits to the landfill site to assess the operations and progress with the actions we've instructed Red Industries to take.

### LATEST INFORMATION

- We have now published our air quality monitoring report for March and the data that supports it. Public Health England's health risk assessment report is also now published for March. This assessment is their analysis of the data collected in March from the Mobile Monitoring Facilities (also known as Air Quality Monitoring Units) The Environment Agency [report](#) and data are available on the webpage and you can see the PHE report [here](#).
- Environment Agency Chief Executive, Sir James Bevan met with Aaron Bell MP and reassured Mr Bell on the Environment Agency's continued commitment to reducing the odour.
- This week officers have completed four visits to Walleys Quarry and wider area. In these visits we monitored the odour levels, in varying locations and at different times of the day, and assessed the progress Red Industries is making on the works we've required them to carry out.
- Red Industries are expected to complete the capping works, as required by the enforcement notice we issued the company on Friday 26 March. We will start to assess whether the work is completed appropriately over the weekend.
- All four air quality monitoring units are now actively collecting data. They will remain in place until at least the end of August.
- Please continue to report by email any problems with odour to [ics@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:ics@environment-agency.gov.uk) or click the 'contact us' link on this webpage.
- See [Staffordshire County Council website](#) for the latest on public health impacts of odours in the Silverdale and wider Newcastle under Lyme area.
- We are updating the information on this webpage every week. To receive notifications when these updates happen email your contact details to: [Engagement.WestMids@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:Engagement.WestMids@environment-agency.gov.uk) and we will add you to our mailing list.

## Air quality monitoring data

On Thursday we published our air quality monitoring data for March. Our report, which you can access and download via the link above, explains what we monitored and what was recorded throughout the month. Public Health England's health risk assessment report is also available for March. PHE has collated, assessed and interpreted the data so that everyone can understand any potential health impacts from the emissions.

The data were collected from mobile monitoring facilities at Galingale View and Silverdale Road.

This is vital information that agencies including the Environment Agency, Public Health England, Staffordshire County Council and Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council will use to tackle the issues of odour coming from the operations of Walleys Quarry Landfill, Silverdale.

After a peak in the recorded levels of hydrogen sulphide on the 7 and 8 March, levels have remained below the World Health Organisation's (WHO) *health* based guidance level for the rest of the month. The report also shows that for 38% of the time at the Galingale View station, odour levels are above the WHO's *annoyance* guidance level, and for 22% of the time at Silverdale Road station, which means complaints about odour annoyance can be expected.

Public Health England's summary of the monitoring data explains that any risk to long-term health is likely to be small, although some risk to health from pollutants in the area cannot be completely excluded. PHE also acknowledges that odorous substances in the gas may well be a nuisance or annoyance to people at concentrations below those that represent a risk to physical health.

Indicative data for April, continues to show hydrogen sulphide levels below the WHO health guidance level, but above the WHO annoyance guidance level. The WHO states that "in order to avoid substantial complaints about odour annoyance among the exposed population, hydrogen sulphide concentrations should not be allowed to exceed 7 µg/m<sup>3</sup>, with a 30-minute averaging period".

Odour is composed of a complex mixture of gases, some at very low concentrations. We monitor for methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) and hydrogen sulphide (H<sub>2</sub>S) as surrogates of odour. The units also have a weather station which records wind speed, direction, temperature and pressure. We are also monitoring for particulates (PM<sub>10</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub> and TSP) and oxides of nitrogen (NO<sub>x</sub>).

We have been using the data we have collected to assess the type, time and nature of the emissions from the site. We have also shared this information with Public Health England, Staffordshire County Council and Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council.

## Air Quality in the last week

We are committed to sharing with you the outcome of our monthly monitoring. However, we realise local people want to see more frequent information about recorded hydrogen sulphide levels compared to the World Health Organisation's 24-hour health-based guidance level. We will seek to bring you this information every week in this update.

We are also able to share with you hydrogen sulphide levels compared to the World Health Organisation’s annoyance guidance level, which WHO says above which there is likely to be complaints about odour annoyance.

*Please note that this weekly data is based on raw data that has not yet been subjected to quality assurance checking or calibration. As a result this data may change once the quality assurance check and calibration has been carried out.*

For the week 19 April to 25 April, hydrogen sulphide levels were well below the WHO guideline level for impact on health, but were above the annoyance guideline level for between 8% and 21% of the week.

Data from our monitoring stations for the percentage of the week odours were about annoyance thresholds:

Silverdale Road 8%  
 Galingale View 21%  
 Silverdale Cemetery 18%  
 Newcastle-under-Lyme Community Fire Station – less than one week’s data available so will be included next week

This is consistent with complaints received.

### **Air quality monitoring units**

As we announced last week, we now have four air quality monitoring units, which will be in place until 31 August 2021.

To provide all multi-agency partners with robust data about air quality to inform their response to odours, Staffordshire County Council, Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council along with the Environment Agency have jointly funded two additional air quality monitoring units, adding to the two we’ve already put in place.

The locations of the air quality monitoring units (known formally as Mobile Monitoring Facilities, you’ll see them referred to MMF in the air quality monitoring reports):

<b>Location</b>	<b>MMF Number</b>	<b>Start Date</b>
<b>Silverdale Road</b>	MMF 2	March
<b>Galingale View</b>	MMF 9	March
<b>Silverdale Cemetery</b>	MMF 1	April
<b>Newcastle-under-Lyme Community Fire Station</b>	MMF 6	April

### **Red Industries capping work**

We have regularly been checking Red Industries’ progress of the capping work required for the enforcement notice we issued on 26 March 2021. It is expected this work will be completed by the deadline. We will assess the site to confirm work has been completed.

Once the work has been completed, in the coming week there will be a ‘surface emissions survey’. This survey will help test the effectiveness of the capping work and whether further actions are needed. If the survey indicates that gas emissions from the site are still occurring, we will take further steps to make sure Red Industries take action to reduce them.

We remain committed to holding Red Industries to account for the operations at Walleys

Quarry Landfill. We will continue to regulate and work to make sure Red Industries effectively manage odour from the site.

Aside from the products and waste needed to complete the capping work, Red Industries voluntarily ceased taking waste onto the site to allow them to focus on the capping work. Red Industries has voluntarily agreed to suspend taking waste onto the site for a further week. We will be regularly auditing the company's waste acceptance procedure relating to inputs to the site.

### **Groundwater and leaking pipe samples**

We have worked with the Coal Authority, Severn Trent Water and Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council to investigate Red Industries' statement of 25 March about hydrogen sulphide odour coming from other sources.

We are awaiting feedback from the Coal Authority on their assessments.

We will publish the findings as soon as they are available.

### **Site visits**

We regularly visit the site and carry out amenity check of the surrounding area, the other days, last week we visited the area four times in total. This doesn't include the meetings we hold with the company remotely.

Monitoring is an important part of our regulation: monitoring and odour checks led to us to issue Red Industries with an enforcement notice requiring them to put solutions in place to minimise odour from the landfill, and is an essential part of our evidence based approach to regulation.

### **Number of complaints**

The number of reports of odour in the Newcastle under Lyme area for week from 20 April to 26 April is 987.

### **Multi-agency roles and responsibilities**

- The Environment Agency regulates the two environmental permits held by Red Industries RM Limited ('the operator') for the landfill. The permit covers on-site activities with the aim of minimising the impact on the local environment in terms of air quality, noise, odour, dust, leachate and impacts to groundwater. We enforce that permit through monitoring and undertaking site visits (both announced and unannounced) and where needed we take enforcement action to address compliance issues.
- Staffordshire County Council is responsible for determining planning permission across the area. The Environment Agency comments on planning applications. The Council also has responsibilities for traffic movement. This is part of planning permission for the site and is not included in the Environment Agency permit conditions.
- Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council is responsible for regularly monitoring air quality across the area, to ensure that it does not impact human health.

- Public Health England is an executive agency of the Department of Health and Social Care, and a distinct organisation with operational autonomy. They provide government, local government, the NHS, Parliament, industry and the public with evidence-based professional, scientific expertise and support. They have no statutory powers in relation to odorous sites and therefore work with multi-agency partners to ensure public health is protected.

Where possible, we ask residents to report odours in the local area surrounding Walleys Quarry via email. To report an odour issue related to Walleys Quarry, please [Click Here](#). This will open a template email for you to complete and send to our Incident Communications Service (ICS).

Our incident hotline is primarily there to help people report new things about which we do not know and are not yet acting on. The volume of calls we are receiving on this issue is leading to a very real risk that we will miss a call on a different, new and urgent issue. We understand the odour issues that are being experienced at Walleys Quarry and that the ability to report them to us is important. We are taking this very seriously and reporting via email will ensure that we continue to capture and log all submitted odour reports.