

# WALLEYS QUARRY

## PRESS INFORMATION

Date: 18.05.2021

Title: **“Your voices will not go unheard”**

By Nigel Bowen, CEO of Walleys Quarry Ltd

It is clear that the situation surrounding Walleys Quarry Landfill is challenging and distressing for our community, staff and local campaigners. We understand that, as a business, we haven't engaged or communicated enough with you. All residents have the right to expect the highest environmental standards. Rightly, local campaigners, including Member of Parliament Aaron Bell and Leader of Newcastle Council Simon Tagg, have called us out on this. Your voices will not go unheard.

Over the years we have sought to build a viable local business at Walley Quarry Landfill site in Newcastle Under Lyme. We are proud to have done so, employing many people within the community and beyond, and contributing to the local economy and good causes.

However, we have clearly failed to bring the local community with us. I hold my hands up on this. Regrettably, the result has seen an unsatisfactory situation arise in recent months where residents are understandably feeling that their worries and concerns about their health and safety have not be listened to.

We do not think the reality of the situation is fully understood, but we are as desperate as you are to identify the cause, alleviate concerns and, ultimately, stop the smell.

We are committed to doing more and doing it better. That starts from today.

We have appointed a well-known local figure, Nicky Birks, as our new Community Engagement Director. As a new senior member of our management team, Nicky's job will be to ensure the community is listened to, engaged with and that we can, where viable, adapt operations to take into account significant concerns.

Nicky's first task will be to co-create a 'Community Charter' for our business with those raising concerns. We hope MP Aaron Bell and others will liaise with Nicky to allow us to deliver a commitment that ensures their voices are heard. Nicky has already begun reaching out to arrange meetings on this.

We understand that our actions will speak louder than anything we say at this point, but we are making our commitment to the community in good faith. We intend to track views amongst local residents to help us better understand any correlation between concerns and our operations.

We need to ensure our business can operate viably, over the longer-term. But we will do that in a more, open and transparent manner to ensure local residents have a full picture of what is happening and know how to raise concerns when appropriate.

This only works if it is a two-way process. We know we cannot achieve success unless we fully engage in the proper way and we hope that those within the community who have voiced concerns will feel the same. We want to build bridges to ensure a proper discussion and outcomes that are fair for all. We have listened and are fully committed to improving the situation for everyone.