

**Chipping Sodbury Quarry
Community Liaison Group Meeting**
27th February 2025
Meeting Room at Chipping Sodbury quarry

DRAFT MINUTES

ATTENDEES:

John Ford (JF)	Yate Town Council
Fergal Cummins (FC)	Chipping Sodbury Town Council
Richard Ashton (RA)	SGC Community Spaces Improvements Team Manager
Gary Meyers (GA)	SGC Partnership and delivery officer
Alistair Gregson (AG)	Chipping Sodbury Town Council
Julie Reed (JR)	Yate Rocks residents' representative
James Henniker-Heaton (JHH)	Yate Rocks residents' representative
James Brown (JB)	Heidelberg Materials UK, Chipping Sodbury Quarry Unit Manager
Chris Connell (CC)	Autumn Book Management Company
Kirsty Crouch (KC)	Autumn Book Management Company
Sarah Sinstead (SS)	Autumn Brook Management Company
Alexandra Hemming (AH)	Heidelberg Materials UK, Senior Landscape Architect
Michelle Beasley (MMB)	Heidelberg Materials UK secretariat
Samantha Stagg (SSJR)	James Reed PR

APOLOGIES AND MEMBERS ABSENT:

Rob Sims (RS)	Barnhill residents' representative	
Neil Higgs (NH)	SGC Environmental Health Officer (EHO)	
Gareth Fielding (GF)	Wickwar Parish Council	
Ben Nutland (BN)	SGC Councillor for Yate North ward	
John Davis (JD)	SGC Councillor for Yate Central ward	
Louise Buckle (LB)	Yate Rocks residents' representative	
Adrian Rush (AR)	SGC Councillor for Chipping Sodbury and Cotswold Edge	Ward
Karen Hayes (KH)	South Gloucestershire Council (SGC) Public Rights of Way (PROW)	
Emma Warlock (EW)	The Friends of Ridge Wood	
Bob Evans (BE)	The Friends of Ridge Wood	
Dean French (DF)	Yate Rocks residents' representative	
Mike Brown (MB)	Heidelberg Materials UK, Southwest Area Operations Manager	
Trystan Mabbitt (TM)	Heidelberg Materials UK Consenting & Development Manager	
Andy Duncan (AD)	Heidelberg Materials UK Principal Landscape Manager	

Agenda

1. Welcome and introduction – Chair James Brown (JB)
 - Review of minutes from the last meeting
 - Matters arising from the last minutes
 - Review of aims and membership of the group
2. Chipping Sodbury Operational Update – James Brown (JB)
 - Operations and logistics (incl. blasting)
 - Feedback
 - Traffic Management
 - Community Support
3. Environmental, landscape and biodiversity update – Alex Hemming (AH)
4. Land and Mineral Planning update – James Brown (JB)
5. Community Update – James Brown (JB)
6. AOBs
7. Date for future meetings

MEETING MINUTES

1. **Welcome and Chair introduction** – James Brown (JB)

- JB introduced himself as the new Unit Manager for Chipping Sodbury quarry and gave the group some background information about his career with Heidelberg Materials.
- JB asked all the attendees to introduce themselves and set out which organisations/groups they were representing.
- JB asked if the group was happy with the content of the draft minutes from the previous meeting. All members said they were happy with the content.
- JB went through the actions from the last meeting.
 - ❖ AH to get in touch with KC reference biodiversity and planting trees. **All planting now complete.**
 - ❖ TM to add details of noise permission to the minutes and on the website. **Complete**
 - ❖ SS to write to members to ask if there is a preferred time, they could attend this meeting. **SS said she had contacted most members, and feedback was to keep the start time of the meeting at 17:00pm.**
 - ❖ FC to pass on details of person registered to blasting notification who has not received notification. **Complete and confirmed now receiving notifications.**
 - ❖ TM to contact the land agent of the farmer on behalf of DF to advise about water running off from his field. **Complete but not had a response.**
 - ❖ JE to organise cutting back and tidying the verge at Southfields on Peg Hill. **JF said not done. JB to organise.**
 - ❖ MMB to email group details of community web page. **Complete.**
 - ❖ MB to ask AH to check the formal public right of ways for Ridgewood and see if unofficial footpaths can be blocked by felled tree trunks. **Complete will update in meeting.**

2. **Chipping Sodbury Quarry Operational Update** – James Brown (JB)

- JB advised the group of production volumes and targets for 2025.
- JB advised that sinking into level 4 in Brinsham East had been successful.
- JB said Hampstead was currently not being worked due to it being under water.
- JB said Hampstead tip ramp was 50% complete, releasing additional reserve for 2025.

- JB said there had been investment in a new frontline 95 tonne excavator which is now on site which had the capability of “smart quarry” technology. FH said he would share more information on smart quarry technology.
- JB said there was a major plant upgrade March 2025 – May 2025 which would see it move from an old push button system to fully computerised controlling the load out. It would mean loading lorries direct from the plant.
- JB said Barnhill stock yard had been completely emptied of all stock stockpiles and were currently in the process of removing the redundant equipment.
- JHH said now Barnhill was complete, was there a potential to turn off the traffic lights as they operate all the time.
- AH said they are the responsibility of highways.
- FC said JE had contacted them but had not received a reply. JB said he would follow up on this.
- JB said the site experience cable theft in December 2024 and were liaising with the Police.
- JHH said with the cable theft, the pumps go off meaning the stream runs dry.
- AG said in his line of work he has experienced cable theft in the past and a solution that worked in preventing theft was to put excrement over the cable.
- JB said the site is looking at taking steps to prevent any further thefts, but this will require a significant investment.

Blasting

- JB advised there had been 4 blasts this year to date.
- JB told the group that the quarry’s planning permission states that 95% of blasts must have a vibration level (recorded as Peak Particle Velocity (PPV) below 6mm/s PPV. All blasts have been well within this level on this logarithmic scale.



- SS the blasting notification service is great and has been well received.
- SSJR said not many people had signed up for the notification service at Chipping Sodbury quarry compared to other quarries using the same service. She said to set up the notification service please email chippingsodburyquarry@uk.heidelbergmaterials.com.
- JB said since the last meeting he had received 2 concerns about tree felling and 2 concerns about the road closures.

Tree felling

- AH said one of the concerns about the tree felling was where the brash was stacked adjacent to properties, and that it could cause a fire risk. AH said that the brash was stacked temporarily out of the way waiting for the contractors to return and remove them to a safe place as dead wood habitat.
- AH said the other general concern was about the number of trees being felled and what would be planted in their place. AH stressed that we are only felling those trees that pose a threat to peoples H&S and that 350 trees had been planted with winter with more to be planted next winter, following ecology surveys and an update to the management plan being carried out by SGC.
- JHH said the road closed signs were in the wrong place on the first day and were feeding traffic into Yate Rocks, but the signs got moved around and the second day was much better. He said there were just two people trying to manage it.
- JB said the traffic management company were given details of where the signs should go,
- JHH said he spoke to the staff working on it and they told him the CAD drawings were wrong.
- JR said by the Sunday it was much better.
- JHH said traffic had churned up some verges making the road quite mucky.
- JB said he would see if he could get a road sweeper.

Community

- JB said planning had started of a quarry open day on 14th June 2025 to coincide with Chipping Sodbury Festival.
- KC asked what the plan for the day was.
- JB said the early plan is to use the carpark and offices at the Ridge where there would be refreshments and information stands. He said we would provide minibuses to get people down to the quarry for a tour and they'd be able to get out and look at the machinery.
- SS asked to be kept in the loop so it could be advertised in the Autumn Brook newsletter.

- AH said AD had been to the Royal Agricultural University to speak about career opportunities in the quarrying industry.
- JB said interviews are currently ongoing for a higher apprentice to start in September 2025. More information on the link below.
www.careers.heidelbergmaterials.co.uk/en/apprenticeships/higher-apprenticeships
- AH said that a graduate Landscape Architect was also being recruited for either the North or South region.
- JB said school visits to the quarry was planned for the end of March.
- JB said recently requests had been made for financial and material donations and they would all be discussed at the next communications meeting.
- Applications for community support can be made using the following link:
www.communities.heidelbergmaterials.co.uk/en/sites/chipping-sodbury-community-page/supporting-the-community.
- JB said Brinsham Stream flow management was under control.

3. Environmental, landscape and biodiversity update – Alexandra Hemming (AH)

- AH said hazardous tree surveys had been carried out on all of the woodlands across out landholding at Chipping Sodbury, including Ridge Wood, which identified that many ash trees are affected with ash dieback with the potential to cause harm.
- AH said a tree felling licence had to be gained, and applications for road closures. She said we've also had to employ ecologists to check for bat potential and a bat licence had been granted to fell some of the trees.
- AH said SGC have planted 350 trees and are looking at more planting next year as well as using natural regeneration to re-stock the woods.
- AH explained the process of leaving some cordwood and the brash as deadwood habitat for invertebrates and fungi.
- AH said closing pathways for a month had not been well received but explained the work has to be done where the trees have become a danger.
- AH said there will be another letter drop in a few weeks.
- FC asked if the letter drop was concerning more felling.
- AH said yes. Its because some trees were restrained by ecology but now bat licences have been issued the work can proceed.
- AH said there will be another hazardous tree survey this year as we've noticed sooty bark disease in some sycamores.

- RA said it does seem like a disaster but it also means we can get a greater diversity and wider species in to the woods for the long term future of the forest.
- AH said the scrub layer is poor so we'll also be looking to improve that as well.
- JHH asked if there was a problem with Deer.
- AH said no there wasn't, because of the footfall.
- JR asked what species the 350 trees were that have been planted.
- AH said there has been various species planted including Field Maple, Sweet Chestnut, Birch, Hazel, Hawthorn, Spindle, Beech, Oak, Cherry, Butchers Broom, Wild Service Tree and Lime. She said its tragic having to fell so many trees, but we cannot ignore the danger they pose. She said it's now an opportunity to do a lot of management to help it thrive.
- RA said there will be a new management plan and they will look at how they have managed it in the past and what to plant going forward.
- AH said Heidelberg Materials own Ridge Wood, but South Gloucestershire Council (SGC) lease it and we are working together as a responsible landlord. She said the Company had taken ownership of the felling initially but ongoing support would be given for planting and path repairs.
- RA said the agreement allows the public access to the woodlands. He said we have had lots of support from HMUK in the past and have done a lot of improvements, and we're very grateful for the work HMUK have done.
- AH said there are designated rights of way and permissive paths through the woods, but there are also some unofficial paths which we'll be looking at potentially blocking off. She said that every unofficial path created has to be looked at and thus more trees to manage, plus the floor which would have been carpeted with wild flowers gets worn away.
- FC asked if there were maps where the official paths are.
- RA said yes, there are at the beginning of the paths in to the woods but they will be renewed.
- AH said there will also be signs to inform people of why the dead hedges has been left there as so many get trodden on.
- JR said are you starting on Brinsham next week.
- AH said she was waiting on confirmation from a contractor.
- JR said there were lots of fallen/broken trees branches in the area that would require removing.
- AH said anything the survey had picked up as being dangerous would be removed by the contractor.
- JR said storms had taken down trees and branches in Brimsham Lane,

- AH said she would speak to the contractor to get them sorted.
- JHH said there was a tree outside of his house which was also an issue.
- AH asked him to send an email with the address and details to chippingsodburyquarry@uk.heidelbergmaterials.com.
- JHH asked if hedge would be layed where the trees have come out.
- AH said yes, there is a management plan.
- AH said great crested newt trials were underway in the restored Hampstead tip. She said a sniffer dog had been used to detect them.
- AH said it has been great to support Nikki Glover (the owner and trainer of the dog) in her work. She said they fence off an area and 1 person and 1 dog go in to find the newts, and the sniffer dogs wins every time.



4. Land and Mineral Planning update – Trystan Mabbitt (TM)

- JB said there was no update on the planning application, we are still awaiting feedback from SGC.

Proposed temporary haul road



5. AOBs

- GM said he would like contact details for members of the liaison group from Yate Town Council and Sodbury Town Council. (MMB to send to group)
- AG said he was the organiser of “Good Times on the Pitch” which is a festival of music and comedy the last week in May. He said the car park is South field and there will be temporary traffic lights operation in Peg Hill from 4pm until midnight week commencing 26/05/2025.
- SS asked if she could get comms on it so she could give warning to residents.
- AG said the light will be manually operated to stop build-up of traffic. He said traffic management is very important to us for the future life of the festival.
- JR said it may be useful to have “resident only” signs to stop festival goers coming into Yate Rocks.
- AG said our main concern is St John’s Way as it’s held at the rugby club. He said I’ll send out comms to this group.

Action - (MMB to send to group contact details to all members)

- AG said if you have charitable cause that could benefit from tickets, the organiser is called James Merdon.
- JR said she wasn’t at the last meeting and asked about the water running off from the farmer’s field.
- AH said it was raised with the farmer, but we had not had a reply. She said everything is saturated now due to heavy rainfall.
- JB said he would not be available for the next proposed liaison meeting on 5th June and proposed moving it to 19th June, to which everyone agreed.

Contact details.

Email: chippingsodburyquarry@uk.heidelbergmaterials.com

Chipping Sodbury Quarry Community Web page

www.communities.heidelbergmaterials.co.uk/en/sites/chipping-sodbury-quarry-community-page

Heidelberg Careers Web page

www.careers.heidelbergmaterials.co.uk/en

Summary of Actions

- ❖ MMB to add minutes to Chipping Sodbury Quarry community web page.
- ❖ JB to organise cutting back of hedges of verge at Southfields on Peg Hill.
- ❖ JB to share details of “smart quarry” at next meeting.
- ❖ JB to organise road sweeper to clean the road from the churned-up verges.
- ❖ JB to send KC details of “open day”.
- ❖ AH to get contractor to clear broken trees (from the storm) in Brinsham Lane.
- ❖ MMB to send liaison group contact details to all members of the group.

Proposed dates for next meeting

Thursday 19th June 2025 at 17:00

Thursday 4th September 2025 at 17:00

Thursday 4th December 2025 at 17:00

Thursday 5th March 2026 at 17:00

[ENDS]