

A busy six months at our quarries...

Welcome to our second community update newsletter. It's been a busy six months at our quarries in the East Mendips.

At Whatley quarry we are rolling out a £10 million upgrade to plant which will include the delivery of new trucks this autumn. We have also been trialling a number of site adaptations including stopping quarry extraction, along with the cessation of activities at the primary crusher, earlier at night. Plus, the load and haul and primary plant have not been used over the weekend since the start of this year and this will continue.

We have also been adapting our approach to blasting (see page 2), with our highly regarded industry specialists trialling new blast designs to mitigate perceived vibration. While we operate well within the applicable blasting limits, we are actively responding to feedback and are committed to making improvements where we can.

Following attendance at recent parish council meetings in the communities around Westdown, we have provided further detail

on some key aspects of our proposals to update the existing planning consents in response to the queries received from local people. This information can be downloaded from the documents and materials page of our website. We've also been listening to feedback and have clarified our position on a number of issues and indicated where we would be seeking to work closely with local stakeholders in the future to further develop and implement aspects of our proposals.

The Mineral Planning Authority – in this case Somerset County Council (SCC) – has now completed its own public consultation on our proposals and we are expecting a determination of our planning application later this autumn. Reopening Westdown will not only secure long-term supplies of vital construction materials but would also deliver a transformational legacy project through the progressive restoration of the quarry and the adjacent Asham Wood void.

Ian Strachan
Strategic development manager



Quarry fan visits Whatley

We were thrilled to welcome four-year-old Benji from Coleford to Whatley and show him his favourite quarry vehicles up close.

Mum Catherine Farmer had been in touch to tell us how much he enjoyed visiting the viewing platform (located at grid reference 51°13'53.2"N 2°24'05.1"W) ahead of his nursery sessions nearby and that he was fascinated by all aspects of the quarry's operations – but especially the diggers.

Catherine said: "He had an absolutely amazing time. He has loved telling everyone about it and is now enjoying spotting the numbers on the front of the vehicles when we view in the morning, which we hadn't noticed before the visit."

Justin Collis, Hanson area operations manager, added: "With Covid restrictions lifting it's been good to welcome visitors back to Whatley to show what happens on site and explain how the aggregates extracted are used."

Benji and Catherine Farmer

Blasting update and launch of blast notification service

We've been reviewing our approach to blasting to minimise disruption for our neighbours.

Recent adaptations in blast design include trialling double decking and triple decking to reduce vibration. These methods involve charging explosives at two, or three, positions in one hole while keeping the same volume of explosive as a traditional one-hole simultaneous blast. We are also trialling blasting within more stringent self-imposed parameters on the south face of the quarry.

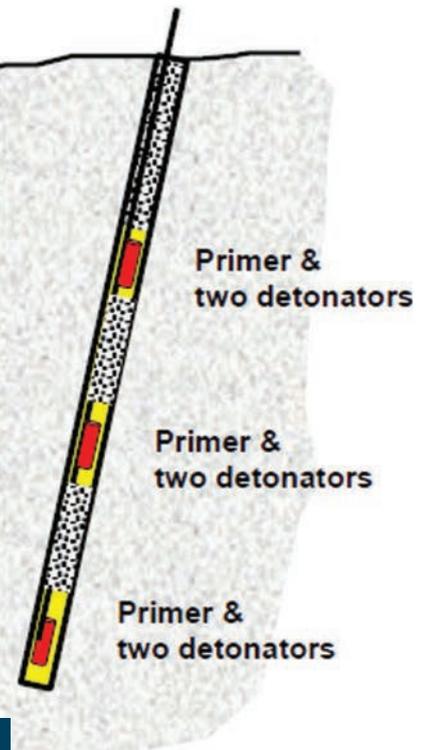
Justin Collis, area operations manager, said: "Quarry blasting in the UK is highly regulated. While geology is the most significant factor in determining the way in which a vibration wave from a quarry blast is transmitted, the energy of the wave – shaped by the kind of explosive, the

explosive charge, as well as blasting geometry and pattern – will also influence vibration levels. By adapting blast design on the south face, we are working to reduce vibration levels and thereby the way in which a blast is experienced."

Notification text service

To keep local people informed about planned blasts we are launching a blast notification text service for residents living within 1.5km of Whatley quarry. If you would like to be added to the circulation for this, please email us at: whatley.quarry@hanson.com

Please include your address and the mobile phone number on which you would like to receive these texts.



Westdown security update

Following feedback from local people, we've taken extra steps to prevent disturbances caused by anti-social behaviour at Westdown quarry.

As well as installing CCTV cameras and instigating the removal of fly tipped material, we have also sited more boulders at the entrance on Bulls Green Link Road – to prevent trespassing motocross racers using the layby to park their vehicles. Close cooperation with the local police also helped halt a planned rave from taking place and led to further police action.

Ian Strachan, strategic development manager, said: "We're grateful to local residents who alerted us to the unacceptable activities of a small minority. It's good to hear that our additional preventative measures have led to a drop off in the number of unsociable incidents."

Down in the woods

Our work to understand the impact of ash dieback disease and take appropriate action continues.

We are currently liaising with Natural England and the Forestry Commission on planned felling work for some affected trees and this is why a number of ash trees along Vallis Vale have been identified with orange and pink tree markings.

Alexandra Hemming, senior landscape architect, said: "Ash dieback is having a huge impact across the Mendips and, although it's heart-breaking, this felling is necessary to ensure the ongoing safety of those accessing the paths at Vallis Vale and Asham Wood."

Hanson is also updating the approved Forestry Commission Woodland Management Plan for the Asham Wood SSSI, developed as part of our proposals to reopen Westdown quarry. This revised approach, which includes a landscape survey, is being drawn up in conjunction with Natural England, Somerset Wildlife Trust and other stakeholders. We'll share more details with local stakeholders on this as the thinking becomes clearer.

We've also been tackling invasive giant hogweed along Vallis Vale. As well as being visually impactful, giant hogweed can be harmful, with chemicals in the sap potentially causing severe skin reactions, including blistering, pigmentation and long-lasting scars.



Markings identify affected ash trees

Hanson opens its quarries for international biodiversity competition

Whatley quarry is among 12 of Hanson UK's sites participating in the fifth round of the company's biodiversity competition, the Quarry Life Award. Westdown quarry, Asham Wood and Vallis Vale are also open to potential projects.

The international competition is run every three years by our parent company HeidelbergCement to raise the

understanding of the biodiversity value of quarrying sites during and after extraction and share new best practices. At a national level, the competition has two streams: research and community, both of which offer a £5,000 top prize. The research stream focuses on scientific projects that increase knowledge of quarry-specific ecology and/or lead to improved biodiversity and is aimed

THE QUARRY LIFE AWARD



principally at academics. The community stream is for projects that educate about biodiversity in quarries or help the quarry raise awareness among the public about biodiversity at extraction sites. This stream is open to everyone – individuals, students, schools and community groups.

Justin Collis, Hanson area operations manager, said: "The aim is to encourage projects which can support or enhance the work we are already doing to improve biodiversity. We also want to hear from people who have ideas which will create a better understanding of the importance of quarrying and its vital role in improving the built environment."



The Quarry Life Award aims to increase the understanding of the interaction between nature and quarries

PLEASE PARTICIPATE
QUARRY LIFE

The deadline for submitting outline proposals is **November 18, 2021**. To find out more visit: www.quarrylifeaward.co.uk

Hanson's support for local charities and community groups

Further local charities and community groups have benefited from support via our community giving initiatives in recent months.

Mells First School received a range of aggregate materials to support the development of its outside Forest School and we also donated £1,000 towards All Saints Church, Nunney's church bell augmentation project to commemorate the fallen of the village. In addition, Community Council for Somerset (CCS)

received a £1,200 contribution towards its Crisis Fund which seeks to help people in desperate situations, such as those without food, heating or at a life-changing moment where poverty prevents them from moving forward.

Nicola Edwards, CCS agent for the East Mendips, said: "The past year has been our most challenging yet due to Covid-19 and in this time of hardship for many in our community the need is greater than ever. We are extremely grateful for the

significant donation received from Hanson's Whatley quarry and this money will be ringfenced for communities in the Whatley, Chantry, Vobster, Nunney, Mells, Great Elm, Buckland Dinham and Coleford parishes."

Information on our community support programme, including how to make an application for funding, material donation and/or volunteer support, is available on our community website: www.hanson.co.uk/whatleyquarry

Supporting local communities through our giving initiatives. Those seeking support from a CSS Village Agent should go to: www.ccslovesomerset.org



Modern treasure hunt

Geocaching is a treasure hunt for the digital generation – all you need is a handheld GPS, such as a smart phone, and a sense of fun.

We've supported the installation of three geocaches in separate locations through Vallis Vale ready to be discovered. To find out how to seek geocaches and get hunting go to: www.geocaching.com

Liaison Group

Following an online vote of members, Cllr Philip Ham has been elected as the new Chair of the Whatley and Westdown Quarries Community Liaison Group. Philip is SCC's councillor for Mendip Central and East ward and Mendip District Councillor for Coleford and Holcombe ward. He is also Chair of Coleford Parish Council and chairs a number of other quarry liaison groups in the East Mendips.

Hanson UK provides newsletters voluntarily to help the local community keep up-to-date with our activities relating to our quarries in the East Mendip area. Any personal data you provide will be used only for this purpose. We may share your name and contact details with third parties, including in the distribution of this and future newsletters, but will not use or share your data in any other way. For further information regarding how we process your personal data please refer to our Privacy Policy at: www.hanson.co.uk

This newsletter is delivered by hand to around 2,000 homes within an approximate 3km radius of our Whatley and Westdown quarries. Copies are also distributed to local parish councils, Mendip District Council and Somerset County Council.

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How to get in touch

You are welcome to contact us with any questions you may have about our operations and we'll respond in a timely way to all who make direct contact. You can also let us know if you would like to be added to our database to receive future updates by email. You can reach us at:

☎ 0800 644 4234 or

✉ whatley.quarry@hanson.com