

**Minutes of the Craig-yr-Hesg Community Liaison Group meeting
held on:**

**Tuesday 24th February 2026, 4pm at Floor 3 of the Council
Headquarters, Llys Cadwyn, Taff Street, Pontypridd, CF37 4TH**

PRESENT
Rhian Thomas (Chair)
Simon Gale (Director - Housing and Regeneration Services, RCTCBC)
Chris Jones (Head of Major Developments & Investment, RCTCBC)
Neil Pilliner (Environmental Protection & Housing Standards Manager, RCTCBC)
Ian Gibson (CyH Community)
Chris Whiles (CyH Community)
Selena Young (CyH Community)
Julian Radcliffe (Heidelberg Materials)
Astrid Dahl (Heidelberg Materials)
Samantha Stagg (Heidelberg Materials)
Luke Owen (Heidelberg Materials)
APOLOGIES
Louise Davies (Director - Community Services, RCT)
County Borough Councillor Doug Williams (Elected Member – Glyncoch ward)

1.	Welcome and Introductions
	The Chair welcomed attendees to the inaugural meeting of the Craig-yr-Hesg Community Liaison Group. Introductions were made around the table and apologies for absence were noted. The Chair referred to the draft Terms of Reference of the Liaison Group, which had been circulated to attendees in advance of the meeting, and it was noted that these would develop as the Group matures. The Chair asked that attendees allow one another a fair opportunity to present their views and questions at meetings and stated that any matters requiring further clarification would be actioned and be brought forward to future meeting of the Group.
2.	Minutes and Actions from previous meeting
	As it was the first meeting of the Group, there were no minutes or actions requiring review. However, it was noted that the Minutes and Actions from the previous meeting would be a standard item on future agendas.

3.	Operator Update
	With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, representatives from Heidelberg Materials provided an overview of operations at Craig-yr-Hesg Quarry. To date, 17 individuals are employed full-time by the Quarry, there is 1 higher apprentice and 1 current vacancy. In addition, there are around 60 contractors employed directly and indirectly by the Quarry. It was explained that most of the employees live fairly closely and that there is a focus on local recruitment, where possible. The product of the Quarry is blue pennant sandstone, which is a product of strategic national importance and provides high skid resistance, making it one of only a few sources in the UK specified for use on motorways. It was stated that approximately 40% of the material produced at Craig-yr-Hesg Quarry remains in South Wales. The presentation went on to cover an operational logistic overview, including 2026 forecasted volumes. (Note: actual figures have not been included within the minutes as these are commercial-in-confidence). RCT (CJ) noticed a discrepancy in the extraction figures provided to RCT and the figures provided within the presentation, commenting that the figures provided to RCT were lower. ➤ ACTION: Heidelberg Materials to provide confirmation of the sales in 2025 due to possible issues arising from RCT's extrapolation of quarterly data. In terms of volume, the Community (CW) noted that in 2022, following a public inquiry, Welsh Government had overruled the Council's decision and granted the Quarry an extension of six years for the extraction of the remaining reserves of some 5.7 million tonnes of sandstone, with quarrying operations permitted to continue until 2049. Based on the figures provided, it was queried whether the reserves of 5.7 million tonnes would be completed within the 21 years remaining of the current application. Heidelberg Materials (JR) explained that the following the expiration of the 21-year application, the reserves would be extinguished, and the remaining material would be aggregate ranging from 0-4mm, which would form part of the restoration plan. The presentation covered a list of public bodies, which had attended the site over the past year, and the Community (CW) queried which Member of the Senedd had visited. Heidelberg Materials (AD) confirmed that it was Joel James MS. The Chair questioned if there were public reports available that could be shared with the Group following the visits by the public bodies.

RCT (SG) directed the Chair to the Craig-Yr-Hesg Quarry [website](#) and the dedicated page within the RCT CBC [website](#).

The Community (CW) queried whether any of the visits undertaken by public bodies was of their own accord or if all were in response to complaints made by local residents.

Heidelberg Materials (JR) informed the Group that the HSE had visited the site on two occasions during the past year, one visit was a routine check and the second was in response to concerns raised by residents. In terms of NRW and RCT, it was stated that both undertake routine visits and that RCT visit four times a year to check permit compliance in terms of dust emissions.

RCT (SG) added that in addition to the routine inspections, officers carry out visits in response to resident concerns in relation to matters such as ecology and drainage.

Heidelberg Materials had only included the visits that they considered to be non-standard during the past year, but the community representatives felt it would provide further transparency and trust if all visits were included to show that regular routine inspections were taking place, beyond the ones which arose as a result of concerns from the community.

The Chair suggested that the dedicated Craig-yr-Hesg Quarry web page within the RCT CBC website, which contains such public reports, could have better prominence for the benefit of the community.

- **ACTION:** Heidelberg Materials to provide a list of all visits undertaken by public bodies to the site for the year to date (including regulatory monitoring visits) at the next meeting.

(Note: At this point in proceedings, the community representative, Ms S Young arrived at the meeting).

Heidelberg Materials went on to provide an overview of the standards and regulations in terms of vibration limits of blastings. It was explained that the permitted levels for Craig-yr-Hesg Quarry allows blasts up to the regulatory limit of 6mm PPV, at 95% confidence, which reflects the planning guidance in Wales. The blasts can take place between 10am and 4pm Monday to Friday but operations are planned so that where feasible, blasts take place between 12pm and 3pm.

Blasting data at the Quarry between 18th June 2024 and 19th February 2026 was then provided. The average level of the blasts outlined was 1.92mm/s PPV.

The Community (CW) noted that prior to two years ago, three vibrographs were used in different areas of the quarry to monitor ground vibration and the highest measurement would be recorded but recently, only one vibrograph was used. It was noted that within the period outlined, there were five occasions whereby

the vibrograph had not picked up any vibrations and DNT (did not trigger) was recorded. The community representative questioned the reason for the change in process and felt the use of the three vibrographs in different areas would have more likelihood of generating an output, thus being more reliable and be the preferred method of the community.

Heidelberg Materials (AD) spoke of incidents that had occurred at different areas of the site, which had been unsafe for employees. It was said that Heidelberg Materials were only mandated to carry out one but would be content to revert to carrying out the monitoring in other locations if they could be assured that the employees would not be subject to verbal abuse or any third-party interference with monitoring equipment.

The Community (CW) spoke of one incident but insisted that this took place after Heidelberg Materials had reduced their monitoring to the one location. The representative acknowledged that no employee should feel unsafe when doing their job but stated that no issues had previously been raised regarding safety.

Heidelberg Materials (AD) had conflicting views about the number of times employees had been subject to verbal abuse but reiterated that they would be willing to dispatch employees to various sites if safe to do so.

The Community (IG) questioned if prior to the monitoring at different locations, the monitoring would take place near the area of the blast.

Heidelberg Materials (JR) advised that, historically, they would choose the nearest point to blast, which would potentially give the highest reading but that a number of years ago, they chose to monitor at various sites. It was noted that independent experts from Carmarthenshire were able to independently monitor vibrations and that Heidelberg Materials would consider guaranteeing a minimum of two readings (theirs and Carmarthenshire's), which would give the residents greater confidence and assurance in the data.

RCT (SG) added that one of the fundamental reasons Carmarthenshire experts were brought in, was to validate and provide residents with assurance that Heidelberg Materials monitoring is robust and sought to assure residents that Carmarthenshire had not raised any issues to date. If there were concerns regarding the location of monitoring, RCT would be happy to liaise with Carmarthenshire about whether they have any concerns with the current blasting monitoring location or if they can recommend an appropriate secondary location and bring forward the outcome to the Group.

The Community (IG) hoped that the establishment of the Liaison Group would alleviate the concerns of the community and help reduce any verbal abuse experienced by employees going forward.

Discussions ensued around potential monitoring locations and it was explained by RCT (CJ) that a location must be considered meaningful. It was explained that the Rugby Club had been suggested in the past, but Carmarthenshire had

	deemed it unviable as it is not a residential property. In terms of the Rugby Club, the Community (CW) spoke of an incident that occurred during Kids Club at the Rugby Club on 5th August, which the residents felt had placed their children at risk. Heidelberg Materials (AD) advised that in other quarries, if there has been a resident who has particular concern regarding the vibrations, they have undertaken monitoring at their residential property as a secondary location. However, it was emphasised that if this is the preferred way forward of the community, the monitoring would need to be safe and would need to take place at the agreed residential location for an extended period of time, for it to be meaningful and consistent. The Liaison Group agreed that it was a sensible option to let the community, who are the ones with the concerns, choose the secondary location, which would negate the need to speak to Carmarthenshire at this current time. ➤ ACTION: The community representatives to feedback to the community regarding a suitable secondary location for blast monitoring and bring forward the suggestion/s to the Group to confirm whether it is appropriate. The Community (CW) noted that Carmarthenshire had been on board for a twelve-month period and questioned if the arrangement had been subject to review/extension. RCT (CJ) responded and advised that it had been reviewed and that they were currently two months into the second year. The Community felt that this required further promotion to ensure residents are aware of the situation. ➤ ACTION: RCT to include a section on the dedicated RCT webpage with information around the independent verification activity from Carmarthenshire. The Community questioned if there would be any documentation arising from this Community Liaison Group to refer residents to. ➤ ACTION: Following ratification of the minutes, they would be published to the RCT dedicated webpage for transparency.¹ Heidelberg Materials (AD) continued the presentation and spoke of dust management at the Quarry and included data from the past 60 days for consideration. It was agreed that the Group would welcome a Specialist to attend a future meeting to contextualise the information and provide an in-depth analysis. The presentation continued and the matter of traffic was highlighted, which had been a continuous cause for concern. Heidelberg Materials (AD) provided
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¹ Heidelberg Materials will also upload approved minutes to its Craig-yr-Hesg quarry community website.

assurance that all complaints regarding driver behaviour were subject to investigation and that best practice is enforced.

The Community representatives spoke strongly of the concerns of residents regarding traffic in the area. The concern of residents was for the safety of pedestrians and school children during peak hours, where there is a bottleneck and a convoy of large vehicles entering and exiting at one time, mounting the walkways. The community referenced the Council's recent decision regarding school transport and raised concerns that an accident was imminent. They requested Heidelberg Materials to consider amending the delivery times of vehicles, to stagger them throughout the day.

Heidelberg Materials (AD) advised that this is something which they were continuously investigating but emphasised that they didn't envisage having any success in changing the logistics. It was stated that, for collect customers, the external flow of vehicles was out of the company's control as they were not informed of collection times. In terms of their own lorries, they stated that it would be difficult to enforce timings as travel distance would need to be taken into consideration along with the demands of the construction sector, which requires early deliveries of material to the site and early sales.

The Community representatives insisted that the issue is within the control of Heidelberg Materials, particularly in terms of their own lorries and that staggering would reduce the volume of traffic.

Heidelberg Materials (LO) advised that since the Christmas period, the company had enforced timings on internal collect vehicles, in that their first load is from 8:30am onwards. It was felt this had helped the situation to an extent but that those arriving early are not being turned away due to the difficulty in turning HGVs around on site due to the small entrance to the site and not wanting to compound the situation. AD set out that, in the main, the driver base is made up of independent franchisees and hauliers not direct Heidelberg Materials employees – a situation which is very common in the aggregates sector. This means that the majority of drivers are third party drivers and so this has knock-on implications for the degree of direct control that Heidelberg Materials has.

The Community spoke of the dangerous issues experienced on Berw Road due to multiple passing HGVs. The representatives spoke of the narrow 39cm curb, which was under the regulatory requirements by almost half, the congestion and the lack of school transport facilities available for children. The representatives were of the view that if the convoy could not be stopped, then enforcements would need to be put in place to manage the traffic and prevent the HGV's mounting the curb.

- **ACTION:** Heidelberg Materials to liaise with their transport team, noting that they are not within the direct control, to bring forward data regarding number of HGVs entering and exiting the site at peak times to evaluate at the next meeting of the Liaison Group (Note: data is likely to only be available on company vehicles rather than external).

	➤ ACTION: RCT Highways to consider what, if any, traffic measures (including estimated costs) could be enforced on the existing highway network to alleviate the concerns raised. The Chair acknowledged that this was a live topic, which would be addressed at the next meeting under community items. The presentation continued and discussions ensued around the establishment of the permissive path, which had been installed last autumn to connect Glyncoch and the Darren Ddu road to the benefit of the community and as a condition by the Planning Inspector. Unfortunately, some of the fencing had been removed, likely due to vandalism but Heidelberg Materials spoke of plans to reinstate it. The Community wished to place on record that any vandalising could have been caused by any party and not necessarily by any local residents. However, representatives were unsure of the benefit of the post and rail fencing and way markers acknowledged that if the wider community did not feel it to be beneficial, then its reinstatement could be dismissed. ➤ ACTION: The community to feedback the option to residents to discharge the condition regarding the post and rail fencing and way markers on the permissive path, noting that Heidelberg Materials would pause the commencement of work until a decision is made. The presentation continued with Heidelberg Materials (AD) outlining the categories of complaints over time. It was noted that blasting had received the highest number of complaints and that there had been a decrease in negative feedback received over time. There were various views and perspectives voiced about the reason for this, but the Community representatives felt that it was due to the fear experienced by residents. RCT (SG) also spoke of a specific inbox, which had been set up by RCT for complaints as another outlet for residents. ➤ ACTION: RCT to bring forward the complaints data received to the dedicated Craig-Yr-Hesg Quarry inbox for further transparency. In terms of complaints received by RCT, it was again emphasised that there was a discrepancy in the volume of tonnes sold (previous action noted and to be addressed at the next meeting) and that the correct set of figures would allow RCT to respond to residents more effectively.
4.	Local Authority Update RCT (CJ) spoke of a condition which governs the Craig-yr-Hesg Community Liaison Group, that had been discharged in the sense that the Group had been reconvened since it was initially formed some years ago. A former action was referenced, which was that the most appropriate form of social media would be utilised to inform the community of planned blasts. RCT sought confirmation from the community representatives that Whatsapp was still the preferred method going forward.

	➤ ACTION: The community representatives agreed to liaise with other members of the community regarding the preferred form of social media for blast communications and report the feedback to the next meeting. It was also noted that information on blasts was available on the Heidelberg Materials Community Page. The Community (CW) noted that other quarries provide more robust information to the communities in terms blasting such as the date, time and general area that the blast is planned to take place. The Community requested if they could be provided with more in-depth information going forward. It was also questioned whether Heidelberg Materials provide RCT with a seven-day notice of a planned blast and if so, it was felt that the communication between the three parties could be strengthened with each receiving the same information at the same time. RCT (CJ) acknowledged that the condition in place was for 24 hours notice but explained that if officers were to receive 48 hours notice going forward, it would be helpful in terms of planning and logistics. Heidelberg Materials (LO) advised that they typically advise Carmarthenshire of the general week planned for a blast in advance, followed by 7 days' notice of the confirmed day and time. They had previously not included RCT in the emails as RCT are not carrying out the monitoring. ➤ ACTION: Heidelberg Materials agreed to provide RCT with 48 hours notice but with the caveat that there must be a degree of flexibility with dates and times due to adhoc weather conditions or operational safety requirements.
5.	Community Items
	The Chair advised that at future meetings of the Community Liaison Group, the attendees from the local communities would have the opportunity to bring forward any key areas for discussion for this item of business. The Community (IG) spoke of amenities and acknowledged the work undertaken by Heidelberg Materials on the permissive path but felt that that type of targeted action would be welcomed elsewhere for the benefit of the community. Whilst the importance of hard data was recognised, the community required evidence of willingness. Heidelberg Materials (AD) advised that they had brought forward several examples of what work to amenities has been undertaken within other communities for residents to consider what would work best for their needs. The Community (CW) emphasised that trust needed to be built within the community and that once the residents begin to witness compassion and feel that they are being heard, the relationship with the Council and Heidelberg Materials would be strengthened.

	The Chair noted the comments and recognised the need for all attendees to be able to articulate the progress and achievements of the Liaison Group as time goes on.
6.	Thematic Deep Dive The Chair advised that in line with the draft Terms of Reference, the Group would receive a detailed overview of a chosen theme at each meeting for further clarity and to drive discussion. As such, the Chair welcomed suggestions and ideas from different perspectives. Heidelberg Materials (AD) proposed the following themes for comments: - Blasting; - Air Quality; and - Ecology and land management. Both community and RCTCBC representatives were supportive of receiving further detail into each of proposed themes at future meetings. RCT (CJ) advised that, in addition to specialists from Heidelberg Materials, a specialist from RCT could also attend to provide a second opinion on each of the themes. It was thought that this may be helpful to the community representatives in term of trust issues. RCT (SG) noted that the Group had had a robust discussion about blasting during the Operator Update at today's meeting and suggested that Air Quality be prioritised as the first thematic deep dive at the next meeting. The Group agreed and recognised that air quality was a complex area in terms of the different types of dust, specific health issues, legalities and what is covered by the planning regime or public health etc. Due to this, it was noted that Public Health Wales would be invited to attend a meeting of the Group further down the line. RCT (SG) suggested that Land Management (flooding/draining) is discussed as a separate theme to ecology. ➤ ACTION: The Group agreed the following prioritisation of themes to be discussed at the next four meetings, noting that the order would be subject to the availability of specialists in the fields from both Heidelberg Materials and RCT: 1. Air Quality; 2. Land Management - Flooding and draining; 3. Ecology; and 4. Blasting.
7.	Forward Plan

	The Chair noted that several actions had been captured during the course of the meeting and that the key themes for future meetings had been identified in the previous item of business. Heidelberg Materials (AD) provided the Group with a brief overview of the forward plan for Craig-yr-Hesg quarry: - Introduction of mobile crushing from March/April; and - Stripping for phase 2 to begin 2027. ➤ ACTION: The Chair requested that Heidelberg Materials provide an update at the next meeting on the mobile crushing activities following its introduction in March/April 2026. The Community (CW) sought clarity on whether there was a condition in place, stating that there should be no mobile crushing on site. Heidelberg Materials (JR) stated that the condition imposed no mobile crushing within 200 metres of nearest residential properties on level one and that the intention was to place the crusher halfway down the site, occupying approximately 100 square metres of land. The community were assured that because of its location it should not be heard or seen by residents. The Community (IG) expressed the emotional turmoil caused by hearing of the business' phase 2 plans for 2027. Referring to the work undertaken on the fence, which was discussed in the previous item of business, it was felt that such improvements/activities may alleviate the impact to residents. Heidelberg Materials (JR) welcomed suggestions from the community in terms of what they could do and explained that the permissive path was a token of goodwill but that they were heavily reliant on the feedback of residents. ➤ ACTION – The Community to bring forward suggestions and ideas of activities/areas for improvement, which can be included as part of the Phase 2 stripping in 2027 and may alleviate the emotional/psychological impact to residents. Heidelberg Materials (AD) referred to a slide within the PowerPoint, which provided examples of work carried out in other host communities and it was agreed that this would be circulated to attendees with the draft minutes. The Chair noted that there would not be an expectation for Heidelberg Materials or Council officers to immediately respond to any ideas presented at the next meeting and suggested that they, instead, be reflected upon and fully responded to at the following meeting, to allow sufficient time for evaluation. RCT (CJ) emphasised the need for clear information regarding changes at the site, such as the introduction of mobile crushing to ensure the community are correctly informed in advance of operations.
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	Heidelberg Materials (JR) clarified that their recent emails to the Council were in respect of a mobile screen which had been brought onto the site and that the the mobile crush was planned for the near future. However, it was accepted that early communication would be best practice.
8.	Any Other Business
	There was no business to be reported.
9.	Confirmation of Actions / Deadlines and Date of Next Meeting
	The Chair advised that the draft minutes and actions of the meeting would be circulated to attendees for comments/queries before being ratified at the next meeting. It was proposed that the next meeting of the Liaison Group take place during the third week of May or the first week of June 2026, with the intention to avoid half-term. The Chair advised that a poll would be circulated in due course and asked that attendees please respond in a timely manner in order to confirm a date. Recognising that the Group is in its infancy, the Chair advised that individual informal debrief sessions would be convened between the meetings to gather views on how the forum can be shaped and/or improved going forward.

Meeting concluded – 17:58.

LIVE ACTION PLAN				
Date of Action	Action	Owner	Deadline	Comments/ Complete
24-02-26	Provide confirmation of the volume of tonnes sold in 2025 due to conflicting figures.	Heidelberg Materials	Meeting 2 – Date TBC	
24-02-26	Provide a list of all visits undertaken by public bodies to the site for the year to date (including regulatory monitoring visits).	Heidelberg Materials	Meeting 2 – Date TBC	
24-02-26	Feedback to the community regarding a suitable secondary location for blast monitoring and bring forward the suggestion/s to the Group to confirm whether it is appropriate.	Community	Meeting 2 – Date TBC	
24-02-26	Include a section on the dedicated RCT webpage with information around the independent verification from Carmarthenshire for transparency.	RCT	Meeting 2 – Date TBC	
24-02-26	Following ratification, the minutes of each meeting are to be published to the RCT dedicated webpage for transparency.	RCT	Ongoing	
24-02-26	Provide data regarding the number of lorries entering and exiting the site during peak times to consider next meeting. <i>(Note: the available data will likely be in relation to company owned vehicles rather than external.)</i>	Heidelberg Materials	Meeting 2 – Date TBC	
24-02-26	RCT Highways to consider what, if any, traffic measures (including estimated costs) could be put enforced on the existing highway network to alleviate the concerns raised.	RCT CBC	Meeting 2 – Date TBC	

24-02-26	Include 'traffic' as a topic for discussion within the Community item of the agenda for the next meeting of the Liaison Group.	Chair	Meeting 2 – Date TBC	
24-02-26	Feedback the option to residents to discharge the condition regarding the fence/permissive path. <i>(Note: Heidelberg Materials will pause repair works until a decision is made)</i>	Community	Meeting 2 – Date TBC	
24-02-26	Bring forward complaints data received to the dedicated Craig-Yr-Hesg Quarry inbox.	RCT CBC	Meeting 2 – Date TBC	
24-02-26	48-hour notice to be provided to the Council regarding information on planned blasts with the caveat that there will be a degree of flexibility in terms of the plans.	Heidelberg Materials	Ongoing.	
24-02-26	Liaise with the community to check whether Whatsapp remains the preferred form of communication with HM regarding planned blasts and feed back to the Group.	Community	Meeting 2 – Date TBC	
24-02-26	To prioritise the following areas (in order) for a thematic deep dive at future meetings: 1.Air quality 2.Land Management - Flooding and draining RCT 3.Ecology 4.Blasting <i>(Note: Dependent on availability of specialist officers from both RCT CBC and HM)</i>	Chair	Meetings 2 - 5	
24-02-26	Provide an update on mobile crushing activities following its introduction in March/April 2026.	Heidelberg Materials	Meeting 2 – Date TBC	
24-02-26	Reflect on and bring forward possible activities and initiatives to be carried out	Community	Meeting 2 – Date TBC	

	within local communities in preparation for phase 2 in 2027. <i>(Note: Examples of activities carried out elsewhere by HM have been included as part of the minutes)</i>			
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