

Dear First Minister, Mark Drakeford,

In the 1970's, suspect materials were dumped in the Ty Llwyd Quarry at Ynysddu, which was privately owned at the time. Some of this waste was legal, however, some waste was dumped in the middle of the night and most certainly was not legal! Companies dumping this waste included Monsanto, Johnson & Johnson, and South Wales Switchgear, who have a history of such dumping. Monsanto have recently agreed along with BP and Veolia, to pay to contribute to the clean-up of a Brofiscin Quarry in South Wales, which is another highly contaminated site like Ty Llwyd Quarry.

Caerphilly County Borough Council (CCBC) compulsorily purchased the quarry, Pantyffynnon Farm and woodland below the quarry. CCBC have, over the last few years, channelled the leachate from the quarry under a road into an aeration chamber, designed to agitate the strong smelling leachate, which will release contaminants into the atmosphere and pass the 'cleansed water' into a soakaway to disappear into the ground. It was evident to residents that if the water in the aeration chambers which came from the quarry was stinking, and the water running down the woodland from the aeration chamber was stinking, then it was leachate originally from the quarry, which still contained contaminated substances.

It should be noted that on 22nd September, 2023, Cllr Sean Morgan, Leader of CCBC, held a meeting of his Cabinet and senior Environmental Officers, inside the Ty Llwyd quarry site. At this meeting, Local Councillors Cllr Jan Jones and Cllr Janine Reed were refused entry to the site to join the meeting. No minutes were taken of this Cabinet meeting, which leads residents to believe that things were discussed that were not open to the public. As a result of representations from the local Councillors, a 2nd site meeting was held with the local Councillors and members of the public. However, it is still of concern to residents that the first initial cabinet meeting, was not minuted.

CCBC have refused to register Ty Llwyd as a contaminated site, despite leachate leaking out of the quarry onto a smallholding (with animals) below the quarry - Natural Resources Wales (NRW) have confirmed it is solely CCBC's responsibility to register the site as contaminated land. CCBC have always maintained that the leachate does not flow off Council property, despite residents' complaints that the water from the quarry runs over the B4251 road and into the River Sirhowy. However, on Thursday, 12th January 2023, Mark Williams, Director for the Environment at CCBC, telephoned Cllr Jones to say that 'water' from the Council land had reached the road. It was denied later that this outbreak was leachate, however, this fluid smelt the same as leachate from Ty Llwyd Quarry, the smell is unmistakable. The leachate at the quarry also leaves an orange residue, wherever it flows.

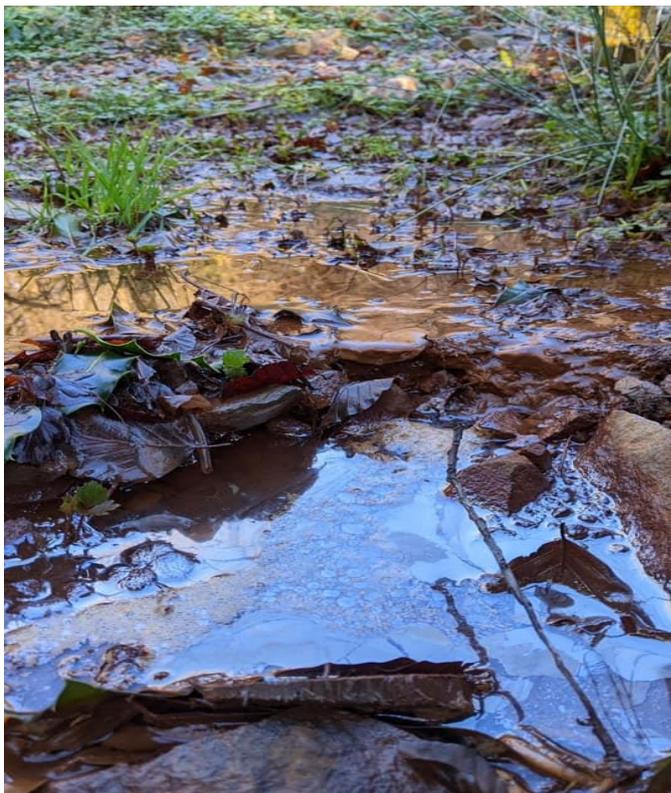
Over the preceding days after the outbreak, the quarry was visited by trusted members of the community and local press, who extensively photographed and videoed the leachate flowing from the aeration chamber and down the mountain. The outbreaks of 'water' from the quarry were seen all over the wooded area below the quarry. Water was running down a council-maintained Rights Of Way footpath, as if they were

streams, and the water was giving off an offensive smell, exactly like the leachate from the aeration chamber, strongly indicating it was leachate from Ty Llwyd Quarry.

Below are photographs taken beneath the quarry and show leachate leaving the aeration chamber and flowing into Pantyffynnon Woods and beyond.







The council's recent management decisions which have resulted in considerable work and expenditure without any remediation of the outbreaks of leachate and accompanying noxious fumes, at Ty Llwyd Quarry. The President of the Lower Sirhowy Communities Partnership and retired Pharmacist, Allan Sharpe, states the following:-

“Analyses of the leachate by consultants SKM and ALS (among others) have consistently shown the presence of industrial chemicals even 50 years after they were dumped in the quarry. The short list below is typical of those found on analysis and all are of known toxic potential (e.g. carcinogenic).

Toluene	1870	micro-grams per litre
Diethylphthalate	1090	"
Phenol	991	"
3,4-Methylphenol	239	"
Ethylbenzene	214	"
Meta/para Xylene	182	"
Benzene	143	"
Pentachlorophenol	101	"

Orthozylene, Trichlorobenzene, Naphthalene, 2-Methylphenol, Isophorone, DibenzoFURAN, etc, etc. 100 more different toxic chemicals are present.

Quantities found in leachate vary considerably depending on recent weather conditions, where and when sampled, and rate of release from rusting metal containers. The Environmental Agency (now NRW) responsible at the time were dissatisfied with the sampling process since one of the bore-holes use was blocked and subsequently contained only fresh rainwater. The agency requested the council to be more specific in regard to sampling, but it appears that sampling continues as before. Recent work to control the leachate has failed to prevent it washing over the public roadway and reaching land not in the possession of the council.

It was assumed that poisons from the tip followed existing aquifers and therefore passed westward into the Sirhowy River. However, it is now apparent that the aquifer beneath the tip is partially diverted towards the north-east by a natural rock fault. Therefore, leachate finds its way into the Sirhowy and Ebbw Rivers, further up those valleys than previously supposed. The Environment Agency have drawn this to the council’s attention, but the outbreaks are still mostly uncontrolled.

Whilst the quarry position is well documented, the full extent of the tip itself beneath ground is still not marked on maps. The amount of tipped material there certainly runs into hundreds of tons and possibly thousands.

No investigation has been carried out on the condition of the steel containers and therefore the severity of future outbreaks cannot be assessed. The future safety of the area requires that information and more immediately the total area affected should be removed from access. The land should be designated as

Contaminated Land for safety reasons. Evidence suggests children have been playing in the contaminated stream near the public footpath, which remains open despite the obvious danger. A Public Inquiry would be able to determine the facts and plan for a safer future for the area.”

Cllr Jones and I have requested plans for the Councils recent improvement plan for the quarry, which took place in early January 2023 - we are still waiting for this information.

September 2022, the Leader of CCBC promised Cllr Jones and myself, he would organise a strategic meeting with NRW, to discuss residents' concerns, regarding the safety of quarry – we are still waiting.

Due to public concerns regarding the dumping of waste at the Ty Llwyd Quarry, and the recently recorded outbreak of contaminated leachate from the aeration chamber. This leachate has ran down the mountain past houses in Ynysddu, over a road and onto a privately owned field.

We as local representatives, at the request of our constituents, call for a Public Enquiry into this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Cllr Janine Reed and Cllr Jan Jones