Feedback report on the public engagement events held in July 2017 about proposed mine water treatment schemes for discharges in Nenthead and Nentsberry

The Coal Authority and Environment Agency held events to consult the public on the short list of potential locations for the proposed mine water treatment schemes in Nenthead and Nentsberry.

These were facilitated by Wilson Sherriff, an independent firm of stakeholder engagement and facilitation specialists.

The events were designed to consult the public on 2 points.

**The consultation process**: designed to provide information to enable people to get involved in shaping the development of proposed schemes.

**The short listed sites**: designed to obtain people's views, comments and opinions on the potential locations identified for the proposed schemes.

The events were widely advertised using:

- the Gov.uk website
- letters to local residents
- posters and notices in public spaces
- local newspaper advertising and editorial
- social media

Feedback at the events was collected through a variety of methods, including evaluation questionnaires, comments made to the team during conversations and comments written on flip charts during the event.

**Venue and arrangements**

The event was in the form of an open house session which allowed people to drop in at their convenience from 8am till 9 pm on both days.

The Nenthead Village Hall was chosen as the most appropriate venue because of the large open space that would easily accommodate the large maps and display boards.

An exhibition board was available for both proposed treatment schemes for people to have a look at, and members of staff from the Coal Authority and Environment Agency project team were available to speak to, on a one to one basis.

Three potential sites were presented for each mine water treatment scheme, with 6 sites being
shown in total, and people were invited to review and comment on the proposed locations. The display boards from the previous events were also made available to allow people to refresh their memories of the progress made to date and to allow any new attendees to understand how the short listed sites had been identified.

Purpose of the event

Our goal is to work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that the public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.

At the event in July, we wanted to continue to talk to the community about the need for mine water treatment schemes in the area and the scope of the decisions to be made.

More specifically, we wanted the community’s views on each of the potential short listed sites.

Through display boards, maps and the attendance of experts from each organisation, information was available and discussions were held on:

- the need for mine water treatment within the Nent catchment and nationwide
- the advantages and disadvantages of each potential shortlisted site
- what was important to residents and businesses
- how people could continue to be involved in the process of identifying appropriate solutions

Building on the event in March 2017, this event was intended to continue to encourage members of the community to provide their opinion on suitable locations and to help find an acceptable way of treating the mine water.

Summary of the themes discussed

Numerous viewpoints were expressed and the detailed records of comments and opinions expressed both during the events, and in subsequent follow up communication, is detailed in Wilson Sherriff’s Consultation Report and can be found at the following link.


Below is a summary of the most frequent points raised.

**Local benefits**

Concerns were raised that the proposed treatment schemes do not have a direct improvement to the amenities or economic prospects for the local community.

People are concerned that there should be no detrimental effect on the local population, for example on health, on safety and on the local economy, including personal finances.

**Odour control**
The effectiveness of the abatement measures is still a concern for some members of the community. Therefore for many people, the further away the site is from housing, the better.

**Mosquitos and Midges**
Measures should be taken to ensure the mine water treatment scheme doesn't exacerbate the current issue the community has with flying insects.

**Need for the schemes**
Many members of the community understand why the Environment Agency and the Coal Authority want to build these schemes to clean up the river.

However some members of the public don't recognise or accept the problems caused by the pollution and the benefits from cleaning it up or how the wider sources of pollution, such as spoil heaps, are going to be addressed.

**Pipe routes**
The shortlisted sites are a significant distance from the discharge point and proposed routes could cause significant disruption to access tracks and the main road. Works will have to be planned carefully to ensure people can still get access to homes.

**Next steps**
Having listened to the public's comments during the events, the project team are continuing to investigate the feasibility of the short list of sites.

Over the next few months you are likely to see:

- topographical surveys being undertaken along the suggested pipe routes and on the shortlisted sites
- ground investigations to confirm the presence of services, old mine shafts, the nature of the soil and other issues which could affect building a scheme.
- ecological studies such as bird and bat surveys, protected species field studies and general habitat assessments on and around the shortlisted sites, the capture points and the potential pipe transfer routes
- environmental monitoring to understand existing levels of noise, traffic, dust and odour
- lots of general photography and site walkovers in and around the general area

**Next public consultation event – September/October 2017**
We are planning to hold the next event at the Nenthead village hall in September/October. The exact date, timings and format will be confirmed nearer the time.

At this event, we hope to present a preferred site for the potential treatment scheme for the Haggs adit discharge in Nentsberry.

We will then be asking the public to comment on:

- general layout and landscaping
• operational matters such as security measures, site access, working hours, and traffic management
• the construction programme, including any measures needed to avoid causing nuisance

Until now we have run the public consultation for the Haggs and Caplecleugh discharges together.

However, now that the investigations are becoming more specific to a location, our intention is to run the events for each discharge separately.

We are also planning to delay the next public engagement event for Caplecleugh until early in 2018 to focus on the Haggs mine water treatment scheme.

For any questions that you may have, please contact:

Jeremy Regan at the Coal Authority
jeremyregan@coal.gov.uk
nent@coal.gov.uk
nenthaggs@coal.gov.uk
T: 01623 637178

Coal Authority
200 Lichfield Lane
Mansfield
NG18 4RG