

Jane Davidson AC/AM

**Y Gweinidog dros yr Amgylchedd, Cynaliadwyedd a Thai
Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing**



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

Eich cyf/Your ref: P-03-302
Ein cyf/Our ref: JD/02630/10

Christine Chapman AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
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3 December 2010

Jane C/o,

P-03-302 Compost Processing Plant

Thank you for your letter of 22 November 2010 requesting further information on plant improvement measures to the composting facility at Bryn Composting Ltd, near Hengoed, Caerphilly.

I set out in my letter of 25 October the most recent plant improvement measures and action being taken by the Agency. I have attached a list of other measures that the site operator has been considering and which I understand have been shared with the community liaison group.

In relation to the national review of technical and regulatory guidance on odour, I should clarify that this is EA and not Welsh Assembly Government guidance. I have been informed by the EA that the review has started and is expected to be completed sometime in 2011.

In relation to the air quality report the Environment Agency (EA) advises that the Mobile Monitoring Facility is being deployed on the 3 December 2010. This will gather air quality data over a 3 month period. At the same time residents will be requested to gather further information regarding odour events in the area by filling in an odour diary over the three month period. Once this data has been collected, the results will need to be analysed and interpreted together with the odour diaries. Therefore it will take a little time before the results will be available to share with the Liaison Group.

You may also wish to note that on the 1 and 15 November 2010 Bryn Compost Ltd submitted the first draft of their Environment Management System and Odour Management Plan to the EA in accordance with their new permit conditions. The EA are currently reviewing these documents, which once finalised will be integral in the future regulation of the site. I understand that additional plans for site improvements, which are also being considered were submitted to the Agency on 1 December 2010.

Further information on regulation at the site will be available from the Environment Agency,
Area Environmental Protection Manager.

Yours,



Jane Davidson AM

Y Gweinidog dros yr Amgylchedd, Cynaliadwyedd a Thai
Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing



Record of recent activities to help prevent odour

29th JANUARY 2010

DEMONSTRATION BY A CHEMICAL COMPANY TO SPRAY FOAM OVER THE COMPOST WINDROWS AS THEY ARE BEING EMPTIED FROM A TUNNEL TO MASK THE SMELL.

THE CONCEPT WAS GOOD BUT THE PUMP WAS TOO SMALL AND THE VOLUME OF FOAM TOO SLOW TO MAKE ANY IMPACT.

5th JUNE 2010

MARTIN POWELL OF MEYRICK & POWELL IS TO GIVE A PRICE FOR CLOSING/SEALING THE AREA AT THE BACK OF THE TUNNELS 'DIRTY AREA' TO REDUCE ODOUR.

14th JUNE 2010

DISCUSSED WAYS AND VARIOUS OPTIONS OF TRYING TO REDUCE THE ODOUR COMING OFF THE LAGOON. ALUN SPOKE TO STEVE BULLOCK, CELTIC ENERGY TO ASK HIM FOR DIFFERENT OPTIONS OF COVERING THE LAGOON AND COSTINGS. WE ALSO LOOKED AT TRYING TO GET RID OF THE ODOUR FROM THE TUNNEL DOORS.

6th JULY 2010

DISCUSSED WITH ALAN VALENTINE OF 'FIRSTGRADE RECYCLING SYSTEMS' TO PUT A VARIABLE SPEED ON THE EXTRACTION FANS TO KEEP THE TUNNELS WITH NEGATIVE PRESSURE. RECEIVED A QUOTATION OF THE COST TODAY.

8th JULY 2010

REFRESHED THE BIOFILTER, TAKING OUT SOME OF THE OLDER MATERIAL AND MOISTENED IT TO HELP REDUCE THE ODOURS. INSTALLED A SPRINKLER SYSTEM TO THE BIOFILTER SO THAT WE CAN EASILY ADD WATER TO KEEP IT DAMP (PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN)

8th JULY 2010

IDENTIFIED A GAP AT THE TOP OF THE ROLLER SHUTTER DOORS MECHANISM TO THE RECEPTION BUILDING. D HUGHES INDUSTRIAL DOORS CAME OUT TODAY AND WILL INSTALL A 'BRUSH' TO FILL THE GAP TO STOP ODOURS ESCAPING.

ADVISED US TO BLOW MORE AIR INTO THE LAGOON AS A TEMPORARY MEASURE UNTIL WE GET THE COVERS FOR THE LAGOON.

ALSO ADVISED TO TURN THE WINDROWS ON THE MATURATION PAD BY 90 DEGREES TO RUN IN A DIFFERENT WAY. THIS WILL MAKE FOR SHORTER WINDROWS WITH BETTER AERATION.

9th JULY 2010

SPREAD WOOD CHIP AT THE END OF WINDROW TO ABSORB THE MOISTURE & EFFLUENT TO REDUCE THE ODOUR.

ADVISED TO SPREAD 20mm SCREENED COMPOST ON TOP OF THE WINDROW TO SEAL THE WINDROW AND ACT AS A BIOFILTER, THIS HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED

ADVISED TO COVER THE WINDROW WITH A BREATHABLE SHEET TO REDUCE ODOURS EMINATING FROM THE WINDROWS. THIS HAS ALSO BEEN IMPLEMENTED.

UNTIL SUCH TIME AS D HUGHES INDUSTRIAL DOORS ARE ABLE TO FIT A 'BRUSH' TO FILL THE GAP AT THE TOP OF THE ROLLER DOORS, WE HAVE FILLED THE GAP WITH PADDING AS A TEMPORARY MEASURE.

10th JULY 2010

COVERED THE BIOFILTER WITH A BREATHABLE SHEET TO REDUCE THE ODOURS

12th JULY 2010

D HUGHES INDUSTRIAL ROLLER DOORS TO GIVE US A QUOTATION TO INSTALL FAST CLOSING ROLLER SHUTTER DOORS TO THE RECEPTION BUILDING.

12th JULY 2010

RECEIVED E-MAIL FROM 'GORE COVERS' AS AN OPTION TO COVER THE WINDROWS TO REDUCE THE ODOUR.

13th JULY 2010

ADM SERVICES FROM BRYNMAWR COMING TO THE SITE TO LOOK AT PUTTING MORE EXTRACTION FANS FOR THE AIR IN THE RECEPTION BUILDING.

13th JULY 2010

'FIRSTGRADE RECYCLING SYSTEMS' INSTALLING VARIABLE SPEEDS ON THE EXTRACTION FANS AS PER 6th JULY.

19th JULY 2010

D HUGHES INDUSTRIAL ROLLER DOORS FITTED BRUSHES TO THE TOP OF THE ROLLER SHUTTER TO STOP ODOURS ESCAPING AS PER 8th JULY.

21st JULY 2010

RECEIVED QUOTATION FROM MEYRICK & POWELL TO PUT DOORS AT THE REAR OF THE BUILDING as 29th JANUARY 2010

22nd JULY 2010

RECEIVED QUOTATION FROM ADM SERVICES FOR EXTRACTION FANS as 13th JULY 2010

USED COVERS OVER THE WINDROWS AND WILL CONTINUE TO COVER EACH TUNNEL IMMEDIATELY AS IT IS REMOVED FROM THE TUNNEL.

27th JULY 2010

MARTIN FROM MEYRICK & POWELL CAME TO MEASURE TO MAKE THE DOORS FOR THE REAR OF THE BUILDING.

2nd AUGUST 2010

SEALED AROUND ALL 12 TUNNEL DOORS TO STOP ODOURS ESCAPING, AND MADE A CHECK OF THE IMPROVEMENTS MADE TO DATE.

3rd AUGUST 2010

MARTIN NEWY BIOGAS PRODUCTS CALLED ON SITE TO GIVE A QUOTATION TO COVER THE LAGOON TO REDUCE ODOURS

6th AUGUST 2010

MEYRICK & POWELL STARTED WORK ON PUTTING THE DOORS AT THE REAR OF THE BUILDING.

17th AUGUST 2010

AIR SPECTRUM ON SITE TO INSTALL ODOUR SUPPRESSION AROUND THE DOORS TO THE RECEPTION BUILDING AND BIOFILTER

25th AUGUST 2010

RECEIVED QUOTATION FROM MARTIN NEWY BIOGAS FOR A COVER FOR THE LAGOON BUDGET PRICE £25-£30,000.

31st AUGUST 2010

ADM SERVICES PUTTING NEW DUCTING IN THE RECEPTION BUILDING

2nd SEPTEMBER 2010

MEYRICK & POWELL COMPLETED PUTTING THE DOORS AT THE REAR OF THE BUILDING.

6th SEPTEMBER 2010

CHEMIST FROM 'CHEMICAL CORPORATION UK LTD' MET WITH PAUL COLLEY AND TOOK AWAY ANALYSIS OF THE LAGOON AND COMPOST, WITH A VIEW TO PROVIDING A CHEMICAL TO COMBAT/MASK ODOURS.

7th SEPTEMBER 2010

SEALED THE EAVES OF REAR OF THE BUILDING WITH 'EXPANDABLE FOAM' TO MAKE THE LEAN-TO AREA AIR TIGHT.

9th & 10th SEPTEMBER 2010

SEALING THE EAVES OF THE MAIN RECEPTION BUILDING WITH EXPANDABLE FOAM TO MAKE IT AIR TIGHT.

10th SEPTEMBER 2010

MERYICK & POWELL SEALING THE NEW DOORS AT THE REAR OF THE IVC

13th SEPTEMBER 2010

SEALING THE EAVES OF THE MAIN RECEPTION BUILDING WITH EXPANDABLE FOAM TO MAKE IT AIR TIGHT.

20th SEPTEMBER 2010

STEVE BULLOCK LIASING WITH LIAM FROM AQUA-TREAT FOR THE RENTAL & PURCHASE PRICE FOR A 'DIFFUSED AERATION SYSTEMS'

15th SEPTEMBER 2010

RECEIVED QUOTATION FROM CORGIN FOR A SPIRAL AERATOR FOR THE LAGOON

20th SEPTEMBER 2010

REFRESHED THE BIOFILTER AND PUT LARGER WOODCHIP IN THE BASE

RECEIVED QUOTATION FROM AQUA-TREAT FOR 'DIFFUSED AERATION SYSTEM' FOR THE LAGOON.

24th SEPTEMBER 2010

QUOTATION FROM 'D HUGHES INDUSTRIAL ROLLER DOORS' FOR A NEW FAST CLOSING ROLLER SHUTTER DOOR FOR THE RECEPTION BUILDING

28th SEPTEMBER 2010

WILLIAM HINMAN FROM ECOBUG CAME TO THE SITE OFFERING A SOLUTION TO THE ODOUR ISSUE.

29th SEPTEMBER 2010

DISCUSSED WITH ADM SERVICES, REQUIRE BIGGER FANS FOR THE RECEPTION BUILDING IN ORDER TO HAVE MORE NEGATIVE PRESSURE. THERE ARE CURRENTLY 2 AIR CHANGES PER HOUR, WE NEED 5 TO 6 AIR CHANGES PER HOUR. A NEW BIO FILTER WILL BE REQUIRED TO TAKE THE EXTRA VOLUME

30th SEPTEMBER 2010

CONFIRMED WITH 'D HUGHES INDUSTRIAL ROLLER DOORS' ORDER FOR A NEW FAST CLOSING ROLLER SHUTTER DOOR.
ONE ENTRANCE WILL BE SEALED UP COMPLETELY AND WILL JUST HAVE ONE ACCESS TO THE RECEPTION BUILDING

JOHN DAVIES CONTRACTORS ON SITE EMPTYING THE LAGOON AND REMOVING THE SILT FROM THE BOTTOM

1st OCTOBER 2010

INTERVIEW WITH WRAP FOR POTENTIAL TEMPORARY MANAGER

4th OCTOBER 2010

HIRE IN SPECIALIST EQUIPMENT TO EMPTY LAGOON AS THERE IS A METRE OF SILT ON THE BOTTOM, WHICH IS VERY ODOUROUS. BEEN ADVISED TO PUT SILT TRAP INTO FILTER BEFORE ENTERING LAGOON, TO STOP SEDIMENT ENTERING LAGOON AND BECOMING ANEOROBIC. WILL DISCUSS WITH EA THE BEST WAY TO PROCEED WITH THIS.

Response from petitioner

Dear Christine,

Thank you for your letter dated 22 November 2010 regarding our petition.

In response to the Minister, I would note that most residents seem to accept the findings of the report on bioaerosols. It should be recognised that Public Health Wales have identified that there may be psychological health risks associated with the ongoing concerns and stress caused by living in the midst of the odour pollution.

However, the petition was concerned solely with the cessation of the odour pollution itself. Residents would argue that, given the length of time that this problem has been present, the odour is a serious pollution incident. The odour has affected this community for at least three years and has caused much distress throughout the villages of Penybryn and Gelligaer. When it was first brought to our attention as Ward members, we reported it initially to the county borough council and then the Environment Agency.

It took the EA a long time to recognise the problem and at least a year to find a consultant and produce a report on the matter. They then introduced a 10 point plan 18 months ago which, despite modifications, appears not to have worked. The ongoing steps appear now to be ones of measurement rather than prevention. We are pleased that the EA has finally moved to introduce a formal Odour Management Plan, which will give them more powers of control. We await further information about this but we understand that it would strengthen their powers to enforce a temporary suspension if the objectives of the plan are not met.

There is a council led liaison committee in place but the longer the problem continues, the less value it has in acting as a bridge between residents and regulatory bodies. Indeed, residents were deeply disappointed that the county borough council decided in October 2009 to process all of Caerphilly's food waste at the plant. Residents have since ceased to recycle food waste and we support them in this. A suspension of activity would be a sign that the EA understands the distress that the activity has caused.

The plant owner continually claims that a building would solve the problem, yet has not submitted a planning application for this. He has submitted and then withdrawn an application for an anaerobic digester. We believe that the landowner has little motivation to end the smell as he perceives that it strengthens his argument for the building of a covered anaerobic digester. We feel that he should be concentrating on the 10 point plan and other measures and not a building. The owner has publically expressed scepticism for the EA's proposed measures. He has engaged a PR firm which used elements of the Minister's letter to create favourable publicity for the plant in the press but which caused consternation among residents. He has also failed to effectively manage some of the measures in the EA's plan, including the monitoring of a biofilter.

Residents would argue that, given the longevity of the problem, a temporary suspension of activity and some respite from the smell would be only reasonable while the search goes on for a permanent resolution. All of the elected representatives for the area, from community councillors, to county borough councillors and the AM and MP are united in the view that this will help resolve the issue.

Sincerely,

Cllr Hefin David
St Cattwg Ward

NAM

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creating a better place



Asiantaeth yr
Amgylchedd Cymru
Environment
Agency Wales

Ms Christine Chapman AM
Chair, Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
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Ein cyf/Our ref: 11 January Chapman 19
(2282/70726)
Eich cyf/Your ref: P-03-302

Dyddiad/Date: 19 January 2011

Dear Ms Chapman

P-03-302 Compost Processing Plant

Thank you for your letter of 14 January 2011 regarding the petition received concerning Bryn Composting, Gelligaer.

I confirm that you will receive a full response within your timescale.

Yours sincerely

Chris Mills

PP **CHRIS MILLS**
DIRECTOR WALES

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GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Iechyd Cyhoeddus
Cymru
Public Health
Wales

Response to: P-03-302 Compost Processing Plant
Author: Huw Brunt, Consultant in Environmental Public Health Protection
Date: 27 January 2011
Version: 1

Public Health Wales has been supporting Aneurin Bevan Health Board respond to community concerns relating to bioaerosol emissions and odour nuisance from operations at Bryn Compost, Gelligaer, Caerphilly, over the last 18 months or so. Both Public Health Wales and the Health Board are members of a multiagency community liaison group, led and co-ordinated by Caerphilly County Borough Council.

To date, Public Health Wales and the Health Board have commented on two sets of bioaerosol monitoring results (in February 2010 and June 2010). On both occasions, detailed comments were provided in respect of sampling methodologies and concentrations of ambient bioaerosol measurements, concluding that "bioaerosol levels recorded were low, and fell well below corresponding threshold levels". Therefore, it would be unlikely for the level of bioserosols measured to give rise to any adverse public health impacts amongst residents in the local community.

In August 2010, Public Health Wales issued a press statement in response to a media briefing request. It said that ".....ongoing monitoring has been carried out correctly and that the levels [of bioaerosols] identified are well below guideline levels and therefore present no elevated risk to health".

All specialist public health advice provided by Public Health Wales has been verified by experts from the Health Protection Agency's Centre for Radiation, Chemicals and Environmental Hazards.

With specific regard to the alleged odour nuisance issue, Public Health Wales has previously commented that "since the odour arising from operations at Bryn Compost is considered to be a nuisance by many local community residents, it is feasible that the public perception of there being a link between unpleasant odours and ill-health could result in wider and less tangible public health implications in the form of potential psychological impacts, for example stress, anxiety etc."

In response to a subsequent request by concerned community residents to carry out a mental health survey to determine the impacts of alleged odour nuisance exposure on mental health, Public Health Wales and Aneurin Bevan Health Board held discussions to assess feasibility. The outcome of these discussions was presented to residents at a recent community liaison meeting and can be summarised as follows:

Carrying out a community mental health survey to assess the psychological impacts on local residents from odour nuisance associated with operations at Bryn Compost would be problematic and have several limitations. There is no baseline against which any findings could be compared and quantified; also there are a number of other well documented potential problems with carrying out this sort of small area investigation.

Whilst small area health studies might be perceived to be helpful in some respects, they often raise more questions than answers due to the many limitations associated with such studies. The UK expert Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollution (COMEAP), in its advice to local authorities on investigating the health effects of local industry, state that "single site studies of effects of air pollutants on health are unlikely to have sufficient statistical power to confirm or refute assertions of effects and there is a significant risk that the results of such investigations will be impossible to interpret". This statement is equally relevant for odour emissions, perhaps even more so as measuring odour nuisance and associated impacts are so subjective. Because of the limits of statistical tests, when distinguishing between random fluctuations in the number of cases of those experiencing mental health problems locally and a statistically significant effect, around one in twenty tests will produce a false positive result.

Other small area health study issues and limitations include:

- data confidentiality, data protection rules and regulations;*
- numbers of health events over short periods in small areas are often small;*
- populations of small areas often change substantially over small time frames;*
- boundary changes to small areas occur relatively frequently; and*
- large numbers of comparisons will produce many high or low chance results.*

In addition, it would not be possible to attribute small area study findings to one specific potential point source since there could be other potential sources. It is well documented that the causes of poor mental health are multifactorial; its occurrence will therefore be influenced by numerous other contributing factors and stressors and any investigative studies would therefore need to be carefully designed to take these potential confounders into account. Identifying a suitable comparison population group would also prove to be difficult. Taking all these issues into consideration, while such studies are technically feasible, they have considerable limitations and may raise more questions than answers.

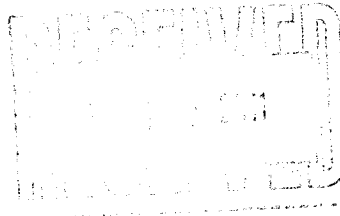
The aforementioned press release also made reference to the ongoing odour nuisance allegations, stating that "local residents continue to express their concerns about odours they believe to be associated with activities at the composting facility. We understand that, even when there is no public health risk, the community's perception of possible harm, or experiencing odours, could mean that some local residents suffer stress

and anxiety. These symptoms however are much more difficult to measure and quantify”.

Both Public Health Wales and Aneurin Bevan Health Board are committed to addressing community residents’ public health concerns and will continue to attend the Bryn Compost Community Liaison Group.

Response from Environment Agency Wales

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Environment
Agency Wales

Mrs Christine Chapman AM
Chair, Petitions Committee
Welsh Assembly Government
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Ein cyf/Our ref: 11 02 Chapman 08

Eich cyf/Your ref: P-03-302

Dyddiad/Date: 8 February 2011

Dear Ms Chapman,

P-03-302 Compost Processing Plant

Thank you for your letter of 14 January 2011 and for allowing us to comment on the recent petition that calls for suspension of operations at Bryn Compost Ltd, Gelligaer.

Bryn Compost was granted a permit for an in-vessel composting (IVC) facility in 2005. It was set up in partnership with the Wales Environment Trust, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council and Torfaen County Borough Council as a demonstration facility, the first IVC unit in Wales. It commenced operations on 1 April 2006.

The facility recycles 20,000 tonnes of co-mingled food and green waste into compost. It is considered to be a strategic site for food waste recycling in South East Wales, taking in food wastes from Caerphilly and Merthyr Councils as well as a number of private sources.

Over the last few years numerous complaints have been received from local residents, local Councillors and an Assembly member (Mr Jeff Cuthbert) regarding malodours from the IVC process. Other complaints in relation to dust, land spreading and water pollution have also been received.

We fully acknowledge that the Gelligaer site continues to cause odour annoyance and that this has a significant impact on the amenity of the local communities surrounding the site. We have worked closely with the community and site operator since these instances became more frequent and widespread in 2007. However, odour complaints associated with this site are complex to investigate. The site has multiple uses which generate odour and we are not the regulator for all the activities which can give rise to odour problems conducted at this site. Activities at the site include an 800 acre dairy farm, a large transfer station, a green waste composting facility, land spreading activities and an active stone quarry.

During 2010, the Environment Agency has been reviewing its approach to permitting and regulating odour management at composting sites across Wales and England. Staff at Environment Agency Wales have been contributing to this work through our experiences at Bryn Compost, with the aim of improving regulatory control and implementation of best practice.

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Set out below is our current regulatory position, together with the actions we plan to implement to address the residents' concerns.

Regulatory Position

The Environment Agency has powers to suspend a permit only where there is a risk of serious pollution and sufficient evidence to support the use of these powers. Our decisions on regulatory actions are based on our Enforcement and Sanctions Statement and Guidance. To date, our investigations into odour complaints have not provided sufficient evidence to confirm the facility is resulting in a risk of serious pollution within the community.

Separate to the odour issues, the environmental permit also requires the operator to undertake bio-aerosol monitoring around the site (carried out by UWIC, Llandaff) to assess risk to human health. Levels of bio-aerosols recorded to date are well within limits set by the Environment Agency. The results have been reviewed by Dr Gill Richardson, Director of Public Health of the Aneurin Bevan Health Board, who has reported her findings to the Bryn Compost Liaison Group. However, we do recognise that residents remain concerned that the odours they are experiencing may affect their wellbeing. We will seek advice from colleagues in Public Health Wales and Dr Gill Richardson to explore this further in liaison with the Bryn Compost Liaison Group.

Improvement Actions

Permit review

We are applying the findings from the Agency-wide review of odour control at permitted sites, to Bryn Compost. One of the key developments is a new permit condition for a site specific Odour Management Plan (OMP) which defines in detail how the operator must control odours at all stages of waste processing. Key requirements of an OMP include:

- A full assessment of the risks from the odours generated
- The appropriate controls needed to manage those risks
- Appropriate technical management to monitor operational standards
- Contingency plans and responsibilities when problems arise (including the operator voluntarily ceasing operations temporarily to avoid serious odour pollution until problems are resolved)
- Regular reviews of the odour control measures to make sure they are performing effectively
- Details on how the site will engage with the local community and deal with any complaints

It is now a requirement for relevant new environmental permits (those issued since 2009) to include an OMP. Bryn Compost is one of the first sites in England and Wales to have an *existing permit modified* to include an OMP - the permit conditions at Bryn Compost were varied on 5 October 2010 to include a requirement for an OMP. The permit was also varied to include other improvement measures, highlighted following a site inspection by our Odour Expert from National Technical Services.

Bryn Compost submitted their OMP to us on 15 November 2010. It is currently being reviewed as part of the Agency-wide review. We are discussing the final draft with the operator, for it to be put into operation by the end of February. We will share the details of the plan with Jeff Cuthbert AM and Councillor David once it has been finalised. In the meantime, some of the key OMP requirements are already being implemented. The improved permit conditions will help to ensure that the operator is applying best available techniques at the site, including pursuing the option of enclosing those activities which generate significant odours. We are confident that these changes will enhance our regulatory capabilities, as any significant failure to comply with the OMP could result in enforcement action. This could ultimately result in permit suspension or revocation.

Odour Monitoring

We have made improvements to our incident management procedures for this site, in order to better substantiate compost odour incidents and gather evidence to ensure operator compliance with the permit. Proactive and reactive odour assessments are now regularly carried out around the surrounding communities, to assess the levels of odours experienced at many different times of the day. We are also working closely with Caerphilly County Borough Council Environmental Health Pollution Officers to ensure we have a shared understanding of the various odour sources at this site.

We have deployed a Mobile Monitoring Facility (MMF) near the site and this became operational on 19 January 2011. It will gather air quality data over a 3 month period. At the same time, some residents have agreed to gather information about odour events in the area by filling in an odour diary. Once all this data has been collected, it will be analysed and the results shared with the Liaison Group.

Community Communications

To keep the community updated, we have been actively engaged with the Bryn Compost Liaison Group which has been meeting approximately every 3 months. We will continue to provide updates for this group, but will now also produce quarterly newsletters for wider dissemination in all three communities affected by odours. We also propose a second local 'drop-in' session for local residents, to update them on the outcomes from the MMF and odour diary data, once it has all been compiled. Furthermore, we will continue to maintain, and strive to improve, our communications with the local Assembly Member, local councillors and the local communities.

I trust this information provides you with the reassurance that we are fully committed to seeking solutions to the odour issues at Bryn Compost and explains why we have not suspended operations at the site. However, please do not hesitate to contact us if you require any further details.

Yours sincerely



CHRIS MILLS
DIRECTOR WALES

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Response from the petitioner

P-03-302 Compost Processing Plant

21-03-2011

Dear Christine,

Thank you for your letter of 3rd March regarding P-03-302 Compost Processing Plant.

In response to the Environment Agency, I would welcome their attempts to improve the monitoring of odour and I look forward to reading the results. I would also welcome their plans to improve community communications and wait to see the results.

I am also grateful for the response from Mr Huw Brunt of Public Health Wales which sought to reassure residents regarding the implications for their physical health. I would ask that regular monitoring of bioaerosols be continued and that the results are reported in EA communications to residents and members (subject to concerns about regularity and quality of communication outlined below). I remain concerned at the psychological impacts of the smell and while I recognise that there are many complications to measurement of such things, rendering it virtually impossible to quantify, it is equally virtually impossible to reassure members of the public who are affected in this regard. It seems from the Public Health Wales response that the only way to resolve this issue is to permanently stop the smell.

I still have some questions of the Environment Agency. There appears to be a reluctance by the EA to confirm that, if the current Odour Management Plan does not bring about the desired changes, that the operation will be suspended until an acceptable remedy is in place. Such an option seems to be within the power of the new OMP (as was absent from the previous regulatory system) and this was the purpose of the petition we submitted. Please could we receive some clarification that the EA can and will use powers to suspend activity if there are breaches in the OMP as this is important to resolution of the issue.

I also have some concerns about the regularity and quality of correspondence from the Environment Agency to Ward members. We receive information at the 3 monthly liaison committee but all other correspondence is copied to us from our AM and not directly from the Environment Agency. We would like to see a significant improvement in the EA's written communication to Cllrs Wynne David, Graham Hughes and me. We would also like to receive copies of the information that will be shared with the communities affected. The timely delivery of this is important in enabling us to ensure that information is passed on.

Thank you for your help so far and residents and members alike appreciate the time you have spent on this issue.

Hefin.

Cllr Hefin David

St Cattwg Ward