

17 December 2024

Dear

ATISN 22147 – Coal Tips

Information requested

Thank you for your request which I received on 28th November 2024. You asked for:

Information relating to changes in the categorisation of disused coal tips in Wales in terms of their potential to impact public safety:

- 1. Total number of coal tips that have moved into a higher category (e.g. from category C to D) since February 2020*
- 2. Which coal tips have moved into a higher category (e.g. from category C to D) since February 2020*
- 3. Whether additional inspections are carried out on coal tips following severe weather (such as that seen during Storm Bert)*

Our response

The information you requested is enclosed is:

1. Total number of coal tips that have moved into a higher category (e.g. from category C to D) since February 2020?

Tables 1 and 2 below provide the numbers of disused coal tips that moved into a higher category.

Explanatory Note

Interpretation and analysis of the status of disused coal tips in Wales is problematic in the years immediately following the Tylorstown slip in February 2020 as a consistent way of identifying, mapping and assigning tip landforms was still in active development. The National Disused Coal Tips Dataset was developed specifically to address the gap in information about the number and location of disused coal tips across Wales. As part of this process new tip landforms were being captured for the first time and existing information relating to tips held by Local Authorities, Natural Resources Wales and the Mining Remediation Authority (then the Coal Authority) were being collated and assessed. This means that the high number of category changes in the years prior to November 2022 are not necessarily based on a change in physical conditions on a specific tip but include the results of discussions held between public bodies to reconcile differences in different ways of recording and categorising tips between each party in a way consistent with the developing National database. This can be seen in the high numbers of tips changing their category ratings in the time prior to November 2022.

To this end the number of coal tips that have been re-assigned to a higher category rating is presented twice. First those tips that have had a change in category rating since November 2022 when the National Disused Coal Tips Dataset had reached a reasonable level of completeness that make analysis of coal tip changes meaningful. The second presentation shows the total number of category changes recorded in the data since February 2020 (i.e. during its inception and development and thus contains many of the issues, raised above, that make meaningful analysis problematic).

Table 1 - Total Number of Tips Showing an Increase in Category Rating Since Nov 2022

Change Type	Total Changes since Nov 2022 to present
Reclassified to A	0
Reclassified to B	2
Reclassified to C ¹	9
Reclassified to D	2
TOTAL	13

Table 2 - Total Number of Tips Showing and Increase in Category Rating Since Feb 2020

Change Type	Total Changes since Feb 2020 to present
Reclassified to A	3
Reclassified to B	43
Reclassified to C	33
Reclassified to D	22
TOTAL	101

Method

This information has been produced by comparing category changes of tips at key points in the development of the National Disused Coal Tips Dataset. Newly identified tip landforms, those receiving a category rating for the first time or those whose category rating has been reduced (e.g. from a C to a B) are not included in the figures and this was not judged to be a category change.

2. Which coal tips have moved into a higher category (e.g. from category C to D) since February 2020

A list of all disused coal tips recorded in the National Disused Coal Tips Dataset that have had a change in their category rating are provided in **Annex A** at the end of this letter

3. Whether additional inspections are carried out on coal tips following severe weather (such as that seen during Storm Bert)

Public authorities regularly inspect disused coal tips after storm events or periods of sustained rainfall. Following Storm Bert, local authorities, Natural Resources Wales and the Mining Remediation Authority are inspecting the highest priority sites. This is in addition to the ongoing regular inspection and maintenance regime funded by Welsh Government

Next steps

If you are dissatisfied with the Welsh Government's handling of your request, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response. Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Welsh Government's Freedom of Information Officer at:

Information Rights Unit,
Welsh Government,
Cathays Park,
Cardiff,
CF10 3NQ

or Email: Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales

Please remember to quote the ATISN reference number above.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

Yours sincerely

Annex A

List of Disused Coal Tips that have had their category rating re-assigned to a higher category.

Table shows the Unique Identification Number for the tip, it's original category rating, the newly assigned rating, the period of time when the changed was actioned and location coordinates (in OS British National Grid).

UID	Category	New Category	period of change	X	Y
T72316	R	A	Feb2020 to Aug2021	245411	204902
T52732	R	A	Feb2020 to Aug2021	254647	213140
T33428	R	A	Feb2020 to Aug2021	322056	204952
T74276	A	B	Feb2020 to Aug2021	269410	208555
T77592	A	B	Feb2020 to Aug2021	274225	199216
T46165	A	B	Feb2020 to Aug2021	279500	187904
T18363	A	B	Feb2020 to Aug2021	281764	200845
T32795	A	B	Feb2020 to Aug2021	307813	202528
T68531	A	B	Feb2020 to Aug2021	254048	201917
T49565	A	B	Feb2020 to Aug2021	245956	208289
T85484	A	B	Feb2020 to Aug2021	324951	209689
T58243	A	B	Feb2020 to Aug2021	247804	208852
T31365	A	B	Feb2020 to Aug2021	255435	199454
T25300	A	B	Feb2020 to Aug2021	245888	208306
T42149	A	B	Feb2020 to Aug2021	255318	201542
T30525	A	B	Feb2020 to Aug2021	270166	213621
T52569	A	B	Feb2020 to Aug2021	316997	211206
T76597	A	B	Feb2020 to Aug2021	278060	198831
T53669	A	B	Feb2020 to Aug2021	249199	210426
T74147	A	B	Feb2020 to Aug2021	266763	212715
T87109	A	B	Feb2020 to Aug2021	250471	211412
T57877	A	B	Feb2020 to Aug2021	245211	206658
T48449	A	B	Feb2020 to Aug2021	247781	208817
T35352	A	B	Feb2020 to Aug2021	247784	208679
T78027	A	B	Feb2020 to Aug2021	250513	211247
T18398	A	B	Feb2020 to Aug2021	248651	202021
T73489	A	B	Feb2020 to Aug2021	248628	201675
T80792	A	B	Feb2020 to Aug2021	278228	198723
T52363	A	B	Feb2020 to Aug2021	269415	208772

T98409	A	B	Feb2020 to Aug2021	299667	191267
T51094	A	B	Feb2020 to Aug2021	300344	206605
T67840	A	B	Feb2020 to Aug2021	326982	196809
T43076	A	B	Feb2020 to Aug2021	284421	194779
T36448	A	B	Feb2020 to Aug2021	284079	183600
T49588	A	B	Feb2020 to Aug2021	287829	189685
T56431	A	B	Feb2020 to Aug2021	274164	199166
T64228	B	C	Feb2020 to Aug2021	296418	199497
T93419	B	C	Feb2020 to Aug2021	281401	202709
T86330	B	C	Feb2020 to Aug2021	310798	209380
T52313	B	C	Feb2020 to Aug2021	312416	184266
T44811	B	C	Feb2020 to Aug2021	317227	211720
T77634	A	C	Feb2020 to Aug2021	300761	199139
T27854	A	C	Feb2020 to Aug2021	319107	209633
T94035	A	C	Feb2020 to Aug2021	269412	208976
T60758	A	C	Feb2020 to Aug2021	314201	208230
T63652	A	C	Feb2020 to Aug2021	320311	207133
T35787	A	C	Feb2020 to Aug2021	272057	213677
T57200	A	C	Feb2020 to Aug2021	287970	206882
T88951	A	C	Feb2020 to Aug2021	300786	199069
T25164	A	C	Feb2020 to Aug2021	288187	206977
T78161	A	C	Feb2020 to Aug2021	302126	204600
T37435	A	C	Feb2020 to Aug2021	303910	205946
T13802	A	C	Feb2020 to Aug2021	287396	189213
T67862	A	C	Feb2020 to Aug2021	318977	212434
T20695	A	C	Feb2020 to Aug2021	324469	204145
T75600	A	C	Feb2020 to Aug2021	279920	199625
T11521	C	D	Feb2020 to Aug2021	311054	191442
T76136	C	D	Feb2020 to Aug2021	307045	186226
T54048	C	D	Feb2020 to Aug2021	296079	198183
T76146	C	D	Feb2020 to Aug2021	312477	201972
T94645	C	D	Feb2020 to Aug2021	325814	203988
T40442	B	D	Feb2020 to Aug2021	313643	208925
T63654	B	D	Feb2020 to Aug2021	313655	209498
T27055	C	D	Aug2021 to July2022	320941	205589
T94048	C	D	Aug2021 to July2022	297009	202922
T65411	C	D	Aug2021 to July2022	303773	190490
T31711	C	D	Aug2021 to July2022	304612	204982

T14496	C	D	Aug2021 to July2022	297102	202979
T82977	C	D	Aug2021 to July2022	294742	184570
T66280	C	D	Aug2021 to July2022	325151	205388
T48545	C	D	Aug2021 to July2022	324923	202040
T58499	C	D	Aug2021 to July2022	297400	195949
T63923	C	D	Aug2021 to July2022	325314	203258
T82153	C	D	Aug2021 to July2022	296874	202997
T89387	B	C	Aug2021 to July2022	311583	183622
T57619	A	B	Aug2021 to July2022	308492	183072
T47637	A	B	Aug2021 to July2022	308441	183009
T69583	A	C	Aug2021 to July2022	263892	212481
T47719	A	B	Aug2021 to July2022	308397	182692
T52371	A	B	Aug2021 to July2022	308228	182521
T68314	A	B	Aug2021 to July2022	311687	183889
T40281	A	B	Jul2022 to Nov2022	314424	210077
T97180	A	B	Jul2022 to Nov2022	319968	207646
T78540	A	C	Jul2022 to Nov2022	315397	207103
T22986	A	C	Jul2022 to Nov2022	316176	204796
T29096	B	D	Jul2022 to Nov2022	317091	211527
T46283	B	D	Jul2022 to Nov2022	322086	205779
T84923	R	B	Jul2022 to Nov2022	315468	206439
T32893	A	B	Nov2022 to May2023	294544	196499
T41543	A	C	Nov2022 to May2023	292260	197795
T95890	A	B	Nov2022 to May2023	292708	198767
T67079	B	D	Nov2022 to May2023	286523	204979
T52312	R	C	Nov2022 to May2023	292574	199965
T80869	B	C	May2023 to Oct2024	311451	183720
T58913	B	C	May2023 to Oct2024	301847	202467
T66769	B	C	May2023 to Oct2024	289897	191970
T32854	B	C	May2023 to Oct2024	278951	205431
T53286	B	C	May2023 to Oct2024	331652	355073
T38208	C	D	May2023 to Oct2024	327250	198983
T30649	B	C	May2023 to Oct2024	302080	204235
T65921	B	C	May2023 to Oct2024	315340	205801