

## **Gwaelod-y-Garth Incident – Site Visit Briefing**

**01 August 2026 at 11:00**

**Location: What3words ///wider.fonts.robe**

### **Top Lines**

- This is a concerning incident and our thoughts are with the residents and businesses affected in Gwaelod-y-Garth, Cardiff.
- I would like to pass my thanks to all emergency responders, local authority staff, and community volunteers, who have worked tirelessly to support those affected.
- We continue to monitor the situation and support our partners as part of a multi-agency response, which is now transitioning to recovery phase with continued focus on supporting those affected.
- Relevant authorities will now be investigating the incident to understand exactly what happened so it would not be appropriate for us to comment further at this stage.
- Natural Resources Wales will assess and notify of any potential impacts on water quality and the wider environment, including to the River Taff and potential impact on the wildlife and biodiversity.

### **Background**

On the afternoon of 30 July 2026, a significant flooding incident occurred in Gwaelod-y-Garth, near Cardiff. A substantial volume of flood water was suddenly released from the hillside below Taff's Well Quarry, flowing onto Heol Goch and following the road into the village. The resulting flood affected at least 19 properties in surrounding streets, causing extensive damage to homes, businesses and local infrastructure.

While the cause remains under investigation, initial and unconfirmed reports suggests the incident may have been associated with blasting operations at the quarry, operated by Breedon Group. There is speculation that blasting may have breached water-bearing geological features, flooded caverns, or historical mine workings within the hillside, resulting in the rapid release of impounded water. The floodwaters carried significant quantities of sediment and debris through the community before discharging into the River Taff, where noticeable discolouration was observed. Natural Resources Wales

(NRW) is investigating whether the floodwater contained any pollutants or contaminants that could have affected the local environment.

A multi-agency emergency response was established involving the emergency services, Cardiff Council, NRW, and other partner organisations, with a number of residential properties evacuated as a precautionary measure. Immediate efforts focused on public safety, supporting affected residents, and assessing damage to property and infrastructure.

Floodwaters have now receded and the incident response has transitioned into the recovery phase. Primary responsibility for the investigation into the incident at the quarry sits with the Health and Safety Executive. Cardiff Council is expected to lead a formal investigation into the cause of the flooding and is already engaging with the quarry operator. The Council will be supported by NRW and other relevant regulatory bodies, which are undertaking their own investigations into the environmental consequences of the incident, as well as the wider effects on the community, infrastructure, and local businesses.

#### Cardiff Council

- Cardiff Council are managing closures to the public highway which have been impacted by the flooding and subsequent deposition of debris.
- Cardiff Council are currently onsite undertaking investigations to assist in the Section 19 investigation and report.
- Local authorities are required to investigate, to the extent it considers appropriate, flooding incidents and publish the results under Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010.
- They may provide details on the scale of the flooding and recommendations on how to reduce future risk.

#### Water Quality

- Natural Resources Wales (NRW) is investigating the incident and has taken water samples for evidence from the affected area, some results will be available over the next couple of days, some analysis will take longer.
- NRW will continue to monitor the situation closely, assess any impacts on water quality and the wider environment.

- NRW will continue to monitor water quality and environmental impacts on the river Taff and the potential impacts on the wildlife and biodiversity in and around the river.
- NRW, working with partner agencies, is undertaking a thorough investigation into the environmental impacts of the incident. While that investigation is ongoing, it would be inappropriate to comment on the case or speculate on any regulatory or enforcement outcomes.
- Warm weather can place additional strain on rivers and wildlife, particularly where there are lower flow rates and water temperatures are elevated. NRW's ongoing monitoring will help establish whether there have been any cumulative impacts on the local environment and aquatic life.
- NRW confirm there have been no incident reports downstream of the quarry regarding the river Taff and no reports of dead fish.

#### Health and Safety Executive

- A HSE investigation began the morning of Friday 31 July.
- Primary responsibility for the investigation of the quarry activities sites with the HSE, under the Health and Safety at Works Act and Quarries Regulations – they are investigation criminal offences.

#### Quarry Operator, Breedons

- The quarry is not operating and will remain closed until it has been confirmed to be safe.
- The Operators is working to liaise with those affected and the local community, with offers of support.

#### Water supply

- Dŵr Cymru have confirmed that the incident was not related to its pipe network, and that there were no issues identified in the area relating to water supply.