

From:
To:
Cc:

Subject: Gwaelod-y-garth incident - Update
Date: 17 August 2026 13:59:00
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.jpg](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image003.jpg](#)

Good afternoon,

For the attention of the Cabinet Minister, please find below an update on the Gwaelod-y-garth incident. Officials continue to work with partners and will provide further updates in due course, particularly with respect to the recommencement of quarrying activities at the site.

Updated position:

- Recovery activities have progressed well with some areas returning to business as usual
 - The Cardiff Council chaired Recovery Co-ordination Group (RCG) met 10 and 13 August and will next meet w/c 24 August.
 - Traffic management remains on Heol Goch, subject to final slope stability assessments of the banks above the carriageway.
 - NRW and Cardiff Council are waiting on final test results to assess potential contamination. Results to date do not raise any concerns.
- Breedon Group (Operator)
 - Officials understand that limited activities recommenced on site w/c 10 August and focussed on the processing of already stockpiled material.
 - There are reports that the Operator intends on starting blasting activities again once the stockpiled material has been processed. Anecdotally, this could be as early as w/c 24 August.
 - Breedon's coordinated clean-up activities have been offered and utilised by some of those affected by the incident.
- HSE investigations
 - Investigations are ongoing but early findings have led to update statements shared by the HSE. The latest is shared below.
 - Officials met with the HSE Friday 14 August.
 - The full investigation is likely to take several months to complete.

HSE Statement 13 August

A Health and Safety Executive spokesperson said:

"We recognise the concern this incident has caused for local residents of Gwaelod-y-Garth, particularly those living close to the quarrying operations. HSE inspectors attended the site within 24 hours and are investigating the causes and implications of this incident, which remains ongoing, while Cardiff Council is leading and coordinating the recovery. Our initial findings indicate this is an isolated incident unique to this quarry and its location, and there are no immediate implications for quarrying operations at other locations."

Background:

- A Quarries Inspector and a Mines Inspector have visited the Taff's Well Quarry and gone underground in the Garth Iron Mine to conduct site investigations. HSE has received assurances from Breedon's geotechnical specialists, supported by observations made underground by HSE's Mines Inspector, that the integrity of the mine voids and adit has not been compromised. On that basis, the recovery operation and investigation were able to proceed.
- This is an isolated incident where a substantial quantity of rock from a planned blast entered one of four interconnected known bodies of water collected in the old iron mine workings. A significant volume of that water was displaced out of an existing mine adit (tunnel).
- The quarry and mine had been subject to geotechnical assessment by specialists, the information used in the development of the blast design by specialist blasting contractors, and engineered blast mitigation measures by specialist contractors. This will be the focus of our ongoing investigations.
- Quarries are regulated under the Quarries Regulations 1999, in line with HSE's Major Hazard Regulatory Model (MHRM). Targeted interventions focus on major hazard topic areas, including blasting and explosives, to assess quarry operators' compliance with statutory provisions. Restrictions on blast vibration intensities are imposed by the local mineral planning authority as part of site-specific planning permission, and compliance is monitored using remote vibration equipment and enforced by the MPA.
- Due to the unique circumstances of the Taff's Well incident, HSE does not consider it appropriate to suspend blasting activities at other sites at this time. HSE will continue its investigation and take enforcement action in line with the Enforcement Management Model (EMM). Where wider findings relevant to the quarrying industry are identified, these will be shared through a safety alert and/or liaison with trade associations. HSE is also liaising with Natural Resources Wales, who are leading the investigation into environmental impacts.

Thanks,

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted] >
Sent: 07 August 2026 11:27
To: [Redacted]
Cc: [Redacted]

Subject: RE: ACTION REQUIRED: Ministerial Briefing - quarry flooding incident in Cardiff.

Bore da colleagues,

Please find attached the briefing on the above topic, it has been cleared by [Redacted]. I have copied in other relevant PS inboxes for awareness.

Diolch,

[Redacted]

Llywodraeth Cymru | Welsh Government



From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Dydd Iau, 6 Awst 2026 14:20
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: ACTION REQUIRED: Ministerial Briefing - quarry flooding incident in Cardiff.

Hi [REDACTED]

The Cabinet Minister has asked for a briefing on the recent quarry flooding incident in Cardiff.

We have started to see correspondence from Members of the Senedd and affected residents, including calls for the Welsh Government to intervene and provide financial support. Given the growing interest in the issue, it would be helpful to have a clearer understanding of the current position.

Could officials provide a briefing covering:

- What is currently known about the incident and its causes.
- What remains unknown and what further information is being sought.
- The status of any investigations and the organisations leading them.
- The respective roles and responsibilities of the quarry operator, local authority, regulators and the Welsh Government.
- The position on liability and compensation for affected residents.
- Whether any Welsh Government financial support schemes, including discretionary assistance arrangements, could apply in these circumstances, particularly where the flooding appears to have resulted from the actions of a third-party operator.
- Any key risks, sensitivities or likely lines of challenge from Members of the Senedd, residents and the media.

The Cabinet Minister would be grateful for a briefing at the earliest opportunity to help inform any future correspondence or discussions on the matter.

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

