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Open Letter for the attention of Chair of the Sheffield South East Local Area Committee.

Dated: 10<sup>th</sup> September 2024

I have several Questions for Sheffield South East LAC committees under the Freedom of information Act 2000.

Sheffield South East LAC committee public meeting to be held: Date: 12<sup>th</sup> September 2024

Background information.

#### "Environment

Woodland sealed off after a '200ft deep' sinkhole was found near Birley Wood Golf Course in Sheffield.

By [David Kessen](#) Senior reporter Sheffield Star Published 3rd Apr 2024, 05:00 BST

Coal Authority notified over concerns '200 ft' sinkhole may lead to old Sheffield colliery shaft

Officials have issued a warning after a feared 200ft deep [sinkhole](#) appeared near a popular [Sheffield golf](#) course and [beauty](#) spot. Staff at Sheffield City Trust, which runs the city's municipal golf courses, have sealed the hole off, amid fears it could be an old vent from a long-closed colliery which once operated in the area."

The sinkhole is situated just behind Birley Moor Garden Centre at the side of The Ochre Dyke and Dent Birley Wood colliery. (No 37) on our [Welcome to our on-line Visitor's Guide to Friends of Ecological Owlthorpe](#)

<https://www.ecological-owlthorpe.org/directionsmaps.htm> (Dent) Birley Wood Colliery. <https://www.ecological-owlthorpe.org/dentandmoorholecolleries.htm> The workings at the colliery face were always in orang cultured "Ochre Water" due to the iron deposits in the workings, the water being continually pumped from the pit into the Ochre Dyke. The pit head standing Approx: 454ft above sea level. GPS Coordinates 53.33815,-1.38877

To obtain a better understanding of the flooded mines that run under Owlthorpe please visit our web page: <https://www.ecological-owlthorpe.org/dentandmoorholecolleries.htm>

**Under the freedom of information act I have asked many questions and received answers from:**

<https://www.ecological-owlthorpe.org/letters.htm#CoalAthority>

and <https://www.ecological-owlthorpe.org/letters.htm#EnvironmentAgency>

Ochre washes out of the old mine workings that run under Owlthorpe. This can be seen behind Crystal Peaks.

<https://www.ecological-owlthorpe.org/Ochredyke2.mp4> Video of flooding was taken at the same time as flooding occurred downstream. Workmen were seen working on Moss Way above the Ochre Dyke. This was not

runoff water, as at this time the Ochre Dyke was running crystal clear all the way down from the Colvert on Moor Valley down to Moss Way. The Coal Authority stated the workmen were not theirs and referred us to The Environment Agency. The Environment Agency explain the workmen were not there's.

**Question 3 to the Coal Authority: With regard to flooding, what effect does flooding have on the timber props that hold the roofs up in old mine workings?** Answer, "We do not hold information on timber props used in old mine workings or the effect that flooding may have on them."

**Question 2 to the Environment Agency: On 22nd January 2021 workmen were seen working on drains on Moss Way Sheffield; GPS Coordinates: 53.340038,-1.362883 it is assumed this is where the flood waters of the disused mines usually discharge into the drains, but in heavy rain events the drains cannot cope and Ochre floods into the Ochre Dyke.** <https://www.ecological-owlthorpe.org/Ochredyke2.mp4> this video was taken at the same time as downstream flooding occurred in Beighton, Rotherham and Fishlake. Were the workmen from the Environment Agency? I have been investigating who is responsible for the discharge from the old mine workings with the Coal Authority evidence can be seen hear <https://www.ecologicalowlthorpe.org/LettertoCoalAuthority.pdf> The Coal Authority seem to suggest that the Environment Agency is responsible. Can you confirm this?

Answer: This site is 1.5km upstream of the main river (Environment Agency maintained river) so it is unlikely that Environment Agency staff would have been in this area as it is outside of our remit from a flood risk perspective. The river here is classed as an ordinary watercourse and will be the responsibility of Sheffield City Council.

With the discovery of the 200ft sinkhole at the side of the Ochre Dyke upstream, situated just behind Birley Moor Garden Centre. Many residents of Owlthorpe have Health and Safety Concerns.

### **Questions for Sheffield South East LAC:**

- 1. What work has been undertaken to make the sinkhole safe?**
- 2. Has the Ochre Dyke washed away some of the old mine workings of the OLD Dent MAIN Colliery and washed them 200ft underground?**
- 3. After the mines closed, who is responsible for the maintenance of the flooded mines that run under Owlthorpe?**
- 4. Regarding flooding, does Sheffield City Council have any information regarding the effect flooding has on the timber props that hold up the roofs in old mineworking's that run under Owlthorpe?**

### **Although the Reports from LITHOS Consulting dated: 2014; PROBE HOLE LOGS in Owlthorpe.**

On close examination of the PROBE HOLE LOGS results shows coal is present on many of the probe holes. Also, In the Probe hole Log 18 Strata Wet between 14.2m and 18m, **heavy water inflow below 14.8m depth.** Probe Hole Log 21 Strata wet between 17.5m and 18.2m depth. Probe Hole Log 22 Strata wet between 16.8m and 17.4m depth. Probe Hole 24 **Heavy water inflow from 20.5m depth.** The reports from **LITHOS Probe hole Logs show heavy water much nearer the surface than 60m.**

- 5. The Coal Authority have confirmed that the shallowest of the recorded worked seam in Owlthorpe is the Parkgate at approximately 60m below ground level, but Reports from LITHOS Consulting dated: 2014 heavy water inflow below 14.8m depth. Is this because the land from the pit head stands at Approx: 454ft above sea level falls away for example land at Owlthorpe Surgery standing Approx: 312ft above sea level. A difference of 142ft?**

- 6. Plans of the mine workings do exist; Can Sheffield City Council make them available on line so residents of Owlthorpe can examine them to make sure their property is not at risk?**

**Thank You for Your attention**

**Kind Regards**

**Michael Meredith**

**Attached is a copy of Up Dated Letter for the attention of Kurtis Crossland to be attached and included in minutes of Sheffield South East LAC meeting Dated: 26th February 2024.**

**All interested parties have been informed.**