

Quarry *or* not?



British Geological Survey
NATURAL ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH COUNCIL



SIXTH FORM STUDENTS INVOLVED IN ROCKY DECISION

Sixth Form students from across the East Midlands put themselves between a rock and a hard place when they took part in a public inquiry to decide whether or not permission should be given for a new quarry. The 'Quarry or Not?' schools event was held on the 27th June 2008 at the British Geological Survey (BGS) headquarters in Keyworth, Nottingham. The event aimed to raise awareness of environmental science and economic issues related to minerals extraction amongst schools and the general public.



The event was organised by the BGS in collaboration with the Department for Communities and Local Government, with additional sponsorship from Confederation of British Industry Minerals Group, Tarmac, Cemex and WBB Minerals. The event targeted lower sixth form students of geology, geography, citizenship, government and politics and media studies. Students were presented with a fictitious scenario that involved the proposed development of limestone quarry close to a National Park.

Before the event, Andrew Bloodworth, Minerals Programme Manager at the BGS said: "Quarry or Not? will heighten students' awareness of how society makes difficult decisions. Balancing the need for the raw materials such as minerals, which we need to maintain our economy and lifestyle, with the need to protect our environment is a central problem of our time. Through this event, students will have an opportunity to participate in that decision making process. Students are guaranteed an action packed, fun filled and informative day. The exercise will involve teamwork, time management, critical thinking, analytical, numerical, comprehensive, presentation and debating skills."

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The day culminated in a planning inquiry, wherein group leaders were asked to present their case in front of a panel of three 'inspectors', all professionals working on minerals issues. The student teams represented different stakeholders in the decision making process. They played pro-quarrying groups such as industry, anti-quarrying environmental groups, as well as local authority planners and parish councils who would, in real life, have to take a balanced view on whether or not the quarry should go ahead.



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Feed back from Teachers

“The entire concept has enabled my pupils to explore different aspects of their knowledge and personality”

“The students and I thoroughly enjoyed the day. We all felt it to be so beneficial on many levels”

“Feedback from my students was extremely positive. The experience of interacting with professionals and students from other schools was really stimulating.”

“A fantastic day...Our students benefited enormously in many different ways”



Feedback from Students

“I gained a lot of confidence and communications skills”

“I enjoyed the debate and arguing with the other stakeholder groups and the fact that it was up to us to make decisions”

“It was rewarding to see all our research and discussion come together in a point of view”

“The whole day was a great experience”

Feedback from Facilitators

“Facilitating the group work was good fun. Seeing the students come out of their shells and get involved was rewarding”

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