

Quarry *or* not?



EAST MIDLANDS STUDENTS DECIDE WHETHER TO QUARRY OR NOT

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 30th June 2009 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.



Students and facilitators on the Local Campaigners group at Quarry or not? 2009

The event was organised by the BGS in collaboration with the Department for Communities and Local Government, with additional support from Tarmac Ltd, Lafarge Aggregates, Sibelco UK Ltd, the RSPB, SLR Consulting and the Australian Geological Survey. 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.

Andrew Bloodworth, Head of Science for Minerals and Waste at the BGS said:

"Quarry or Not? heightens students' awareness of how society makes difficult decisions. Balancing the need for the raw materials such as minerals to maintain our economy and lifestyle, with the need to protect our environment is a central problem of our time. Through this event, students have an opportunity to role play that decision-making process. Students are guaranteed an action-packed, fun-filled and informative day. The exercise involves teamwork, time management, critical thinking, analytical, numerical, comprehensive, presentation and debating skills".

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Students and facilitator on the British Geological Survey group at Quarry or not? 2009

The day culminated in a real life planning inquiry, wherein group leaders were asked to present their case in front of a panel of three 'inspectors', all 'real life' professionals working on minerals issues. The student teams represented different stakeholders in the decision making process. They played pro-quarrying groups such as industry (the 'Mineral Company' and the 'Chamber of Trade'), anti-quarrying environmental groups (the 'Local Campaigners' and 'National Campaigners'), as well as local authority planners (the 'Regulators' and the 'Parish Council') who would, in real life, have to take a balanced view on whether or not the quarry should go ahead. Other groups included those providing geological advice (the 'British Geological Survey' group) and those covering the news story (the 'Media' group).

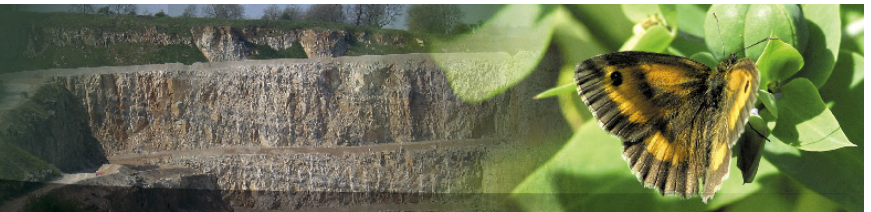


Helen Reeves, Richard Bates & Chris Dobbs on the Inquiry Panel, Quarry or not? 2009

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Feed back from Teachers

“The realism of the event with the use of professionals and experts allowed the students to gain a great insight to the process.”



Campaigners group interviewed by the Media group at Quarry or not? 2009

Feedback from Students

“I enjoyed working in groups deciding and debating what we individually thought”

“As a Local Campaigner, I enjoyed the protests”

“It was all good”

“The media being so realistic and the general event being so realistic”

“Very well prepared, provided a realistic insight into environmental decision-making”

Feedback from Facilitators

“The whole event is well managed and very rewarding for all those involved”

“Please keep running the event. As an industry rep it really is worthwhile and does more to engage with people than many of the other mineral industry events which attract considerable funding”

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Teacher from one of the schools participating in Quarry or not? 2009



Campaigners group protesting at Quarry or not? 2009

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