

Anthony Richard Minshall  
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Terrick Road  
Whitchurch  
SY13 4JZ

26th August 2025

Environment Agency – Pollution Hotline / Local Office Environment Agency

Dear Sir / Madam,

Re: Urgent request for investigation and intervention — contamination and active leachate at Malkins Bank Golf Course (drains near 15th hole / Birchenwood Brook) — evidence attached

I am writing to request the Environment Agency's urgent attention and intervention regarding a serious and ongoing pollution problem at Malkins Bank Golf Course (Malkins Bank, Cheshire). I enclose key evidence for your review (listed below) and request immediate action to protect controlled waters and public health.

#### Summary of the problem and key facts

- Historic tipping: The site contains large areas of mid 20th century unlicensed tipping, including industrial wastes and buried drums (ICI materials). These waste masses were the subject of Nicholson and Atkins investigations (copies attached).
- Contaminant status: The site was diagnosed as contaminated land immediately prior to RM Estates Ltd taking the lease (the Nicholson report and contaminant determination are included in the evidence). Cheshire East previously undertook methane chamber remediation (2017–2019).
- Confirmed water contamination: ALS Environmental sampling on 10 May 2017 (ALS report COV/1388180/2017) returned highly elevated benzene results in drains adjacent to the 15th hole: 3,240 µg/L at the drain near the bridge, 212 µg/L and 87.7 µg/L at nearby drains, while upstream reference at the 5th hole was <0.10 µg/L. The 3,240 µg/L benzene result is orders of magnitude above UK drinking water environmental safety criteria.
- Broad contaminant suite: The Atkins 2007 report identified a very large number of contaminants (c. 152 analytes of concern) associated with the buried wastes. Nicholson/Atkins documents identify multiple pollutant linkages (including VOCs, phenols, metals and ammoniacal nitrogen) that may reach Birchenwood Brook via leaching and lateral groundwater migration.
- Recent mobilisation: A major flood in November 2022 and subsequent collapse / failure of the site drainage and culverts has, in my view, materially mobilised contaminants (the surface sand/cover cap over the waste has been washed away in places and preferential flow

pathways have formed). I also know that there were 13 methane chambers across the site which required remediation; there is evidence these features and the drainage network have been compromised.

- Current risk: The combination of a documented waste mass, recent drainage failure, flood mobilisation, and the very high local benzene reading indicate an active discharge of contaminated leachate to controlled water (Birchenwood Brook) and a credible risk to human health (via vapour/inhalation near hotspots, dermal contact and potential downstream exposure) and to aquatic ecology.

#### Requested actions

Given the above, I request that the Environment Agency please:

1. Treat this matter as urgent and allocate an incident number. Please confirm receipt of this letter and the attached evidence and provide the incident reference.
2. Conduct (or coordinate) an immediate site inspection and review of the attached evidence (ALS report, Nicholson and Atkins extracts, lease excerpt, remediation records and photographs) and advise on immediate containment measures (for example deployment of absorbent booms/absorbents, temporary diversion or emergency blocking of contaminated outfalls).
3. Arrange/advise urgent confirmatory sampling by a U K A S a c c r e d i t e d laboratory (VOC/BTEX, TPH, phenols, PAHs, metals and ammonia) with vapour monitoring (benzene gas sampling or PID screening) at the hotspot (drain by 15th hole/bridge), upstream reference and downstream transect, and at bank sediments and any nearby groundwater monitoring points.
4. Liaise with Cheshire East Council regarding the prior contamination determination and the 2017–2019 remediation works, with a view to: (a) reviewing whether prior capping/remediation met Part IIA requirements; (b) confirming remedial validation records; and (c) coordinating responsibilities for remediation and emergency actions.
5. Identify and notify any downstream water abstractions, private water supplies or public receptors at risk and recommend immediate public health precautions (signage, restricting access, stopping irrigation or use of course water).
6. Provide guidance on short term protective actions for the site owner/occupiers and for public health authorities, and confirm whether the Environment Agency will attend and/or commission a licensed contractor for containment/remediation.

#### Attachments provided

- ALS Environmental Ltd test report COV/1388180/2017 (water VOC results, 10 May 2017) — full pages.
- Nicholson report extracts (contaminated ground and pollutant table).ge
- Atkins 2007 report extracts (intrusive results and list of analytes; remediation options summary).

- Lease excerpt indicating dates and relevant clauses.
- Photos and notes documenting drain/culvert condition and flood impacts (where available).

#### Closing and contact

This situation poses a real and immediate risk to controlled waters and potentially to public health. We urge the Environment Agency to treat this as a high priority incident and to advise on immediate steps and lead responsibility for containment and remediation. Please contact me at your earliest convenience so we can provide any further information or cooperate with EA site teams.

I look forward to your prompt acknowledgement and the incident reference.

I am writing to you in a personal capacity, can you supply me proof of receiving these readings enclosed, you can see from the email from Paul Mickleburgh that he was passing them to you, I believe that this site is a total cover up as it is totally not fit for public use, Cheshire East have done nothing and I don't think they are feeding you the environment agency the correct information, I don't believe they do any tests through all the boreholes, hardly any water tests, advertised as an award winning reclamation scheme, in Nov 22 no tests done after the 15th fairway being covered in water, no visits from Sally Shaw the councils environmental representative, she has not been near since Dec 8th 2022.

I am taking the council to task for misrepresentation, failure to do anything when the flood came in Nov 2022 to clear up the contamination, failure not to disclose the John Nicholson report the day before we took over.

Yours faithfully,

Anthony Richard Minshall

Cc: Paul.Mickleburgh@cheshireeast.gov.uk(Cheshire East Council)[Insert any local water company contact if known]

(Attachments: ALS report COV/1388180/2017; Nicholson extracts; Atkins 2007 extracts; lease excerpt; photos)