

Emergency Response and Recovery

Tuesday 26 November 2024

What are we doing

- An overview of the underlying geology has been provided and a specialist team remains available
- Our team are undertaking repeat surveys to understand the dynamic system. We continue to monitor for atmospheric and subsoil gas, and the transfer of ground to air gas
- Monitored changes in atmospheric pressure and increased rainfall on 18th and 19th November
- Interpreting the data and gaining a better understanding of the baseline levels for the area.



Our data (initial readings from 29th October)

- Observing fluctuations in readings over time
- Methane in soil 29th October
- To note:
 - Above baseline on Wagstaff Cl
 - Above baseline Glenrose Av (outside/edge of cordon)



Latest data (BGS methane in air)

- Outside BGS
- In air measurements
- 22nd November



Latest data (BGS soil gas)

- Soil gas readings
- 22nd November
- Periodic extensions to the survey to the west of Cleat Hill assist with building an understanding of background in ground gas values



Summary

- We recorded consistently lower in-ground methane and gas flux following the rainfall on 18th and 19th November. Whilst this may be due to the high clay content of the soil and its ability to swell and close migration pathways, further, seasonal monitoring would be required to confirm this.
- Whilst pressure change response to ground gas/ flux readings is likely to be immediate there may be a delay in any in-ground response to changes in temperature.
- Ground water has accumulated in the sub-surface, which impedes monitoring at some locations.
- Given the consistency in the recent readings, it has been agreed that the BGS will reduce the monitoring frequency to three days per week.
- The priority of BGS remains providing a robust set of data that the incident response coordinators can use in their decision-making, with our team remaining on site to continue monitoring work and collecting further readings.

Cordon Update

- Police are continuing to maintain the outer cordon around Cleat Hill in order to keep the public safe, this is following advice from the technological cell based upon residual risk that remains on site.
- The cordon will remain in place for public safety until we can confirm that the natural gas levels have stabilised.
- Advice from the police and other agencies involved in the incident response is therefore to remain outside the 100-metre cordon, whilst multi-agency work is continuing.
- The existing process for residents to book appointments through the local authority to return to properties temporarily remains unchanged. Those residents who have pre-booked appointments through Bedford Borough Council will not be asked to sign the advisory note, or be read this. They will continue to be supported by local authority and staff from MRSL who will undertake a reading of gas levels in properties ahead of a return.

- If you choose not to follow the advice and seek to enter the cordon outside of the current pre-booking process, police officers at the scene will be asking you to read and sign an advice notice to confirm you recognise you are entering the cordon at your own risk.
- If you refuse to sign the advice note, the notice will be read to you and will be recorded on the officer's body worn video.
- The footpath on Rhineland Way does not fall within the 100-metre cordon and will now be re-opened for use.

Risk Assessment Update

- Risk assessment process
 - Assessment Criteria
 - Quality Assurance/Standardisation Process
- 34 structural assessments of homes completed as of 25/11
- 50% Risk Assessments fully completed and awaiting quality assurance
- Monitoring solution update
 - Procurement order placed
 - Emergency service response protocol in development
 - Aim to begin installation on 5/12 and 6/12