

Redhill Landfill's consultative meeting 24th September 2014

Geoff Soper from E & J Soper Ltd represented the estate at the twice yearly consultative meeting attended by Biffa & Biogenie managers, environmental & planning officers, councilors and local representatives.

Biffa said they had now increased the density of the drainage infrastructure in their landfill cells and reduced the active cell to its smallest possible size, to combat the 'Redhill Stink' problems.

A Surrey environment officer was disappointed that local smell complaints had increased recently after declining from a peak early in the year*

Biffa said they had little control over incoming drivers, but would look into asking them not to speed on local roads after dropping off their 1st load in the morning. It seems they try to maximize round trips to the landfill in a day. (The lorry queue for next morning's entry to the site had already started at 6:30pm that night)

I pointed out that Biogenie's contaminated soil facility (SRF) on top of Redhill's landfill had planning permission restricting its soil piles to a maximum of 3mtrs, inside the screen of their 3mtr grassed bund. I showed photos showing that Redhill's skyline was not of grassed downland, as planned, but of raw piles of Biogenie's contaminated soil, far higher than 3mtrs. They said they would abide by the 3mtr maximum soil pile height in future.

I asked if Biffa and Biogenie could get their digger drivers to park more considerately after and lower their digger arms below cab height, so that at weekends & evenings, the grassed downland views from the Holmethorpe & Redhill are not unnecessarily dominated by bright orange machines. The digger's cabs are 3mtrs high so by lowering arms they need never to be visible behind the SRF's 3mtr bund. Biffa said they would talk to the drivers and look at better parking places.

I asked why Biogenie is not covering any of their contaminated soil biopiles above Redhill. By contrast, Biogenie's home website in Canada, clearly shows all Biogenie's biopiles in Canada & France are fully covered. I pointed out that in provinces of Canada and Australia the use of uncovered biopiles is illegal and a US government funded biopile manual said biopiles must be covered and holes in covers sealed immediately to prevent contaminated soil dust, air pollution from hydrocarbon evaporation & the saturation of the aerated biopile soil. Biogenie's own Canadian website states they cover biopiles to provide air protection. Biogenie replied they do cover biopiles elsewhere, but it is not a legal requirement in SRFs in their home province of Quebec or in France. Biogenie said they did start by covering biopiles at their other two UK SRFs, but now do not. They claimed different conditions apply at Redhill than in France & Canada. (I disagree and ask about this again?).

Biffa said that there was no Redhill grants recently supplied from the landfill tax levy (which Biffa & all landfill's have to pay in to). They'd like the fund to be used locally and asked if there were any local projects that could apply.

Local residents continue to suggest a footpath in the field parallel to Nutfield Road outside Watercolour's entrance. It would bypass the dangerous lorry pinch point which has no pavement and would link the two footpaths within the Mere into a walking circuit. The nature reserve is currently not supporting the use of their land for this, but there seemed general support between planners, councilors, residents and Biffa to push for this needed footpath link (perhaps paid for by the Biffa fund). The strip required would be small and a hedged-off footpath would likely increase biodiversity of the current rough grassland, not reduce it.

- *Surrey Mirror reported the residents continued to smell problems a few days after the meeting <http://tinyurl.com/mhxmfyd>
- Reports of bad smells to be made on 0800 807060
- Details of local funding available at www.biffa-award.org
- I requested a visit to see the SRF which can treat 4,500 heavy lorry loads' of hazardous soil, currently in uncovered piles, on the hill-top above Redhill every year until 2031 (90,000 tons). If anyone's interested and wants to visit the landfill or the SRF, please ask.



The photo above shows the height of the soil at the Redhill landfill site