



# THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF LAND CONTAMINATION

THUR 15<sup>TH</sup> OCT 2026 | 09:00 – 17:15 | THINKTANK BIRMINGHAM SCIENCE MUSEUM, B4 7XG



It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to The Changing Landscape of Land Contamination conference, a collaborative event which brings together professionals from

across the geoenvironmental and contaminated land community.

The challenges facing our sector continue to evolve at pace. New regulatory requirements, technological advances, emerging contaminants, sustainability considerations and changing societal expectations are all shaping how we investigate, assess and manage land contamination. As practitioners, regulators, consultants and researchers, it is essential that we remain informed, adaptable and engaged with these developments.

Today's programme has been carefully designed to address many of the most pressing issues currently influencing our profession. From updates to BS 10175 and the evolving legal framework surrounding waste and liability, to emerging contaminants such as PFAS, advances in dissolved methane assessment, sustainable management practices and developments in asbestos monitoring, the breadth of expertise represented here reflects the complexity of the challenges we face.

One of the strengths of the AGS is its ability to bring together specialists from different disciplines to share knowledge, challenge thinking and promote best practice. The panel discussion this afternoon epitomises that approach, offering technical, environmental and legal perspectives on the sector's future direction.

Whether you are an early career professional or a long-standing industry expert, I hope you find today's presentations informative, thought-provoking and valuable. Most importantly, I hope the discussions throughout the day help strengthen the connections and collaboration that continue to drive our industry forward.

Thank you for joining us, and I wish you an enjoyable and insightful conference.

**Geraint Williams, AGS Chair Elect and Associate Technical Director, HKA**

## PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

### 09:00: REGISTRATION

**09:30: SESSION 1** Chaired by Geraint Williams, Associate Technical Director at HKA and AGS Chair Elect

#### OPENING ADDRESS

Geraint Williams, Associate Technical Director at HKA and AGS Chair Elect

#### BS10175:2026: A PROFESSIONAL APPROACH TO THE INVESTIGATION OF POTENTIALLY CONTAMINATED SITES

Professor Paul Nathanail, Director at Land Quality Management

#### WHEN IS WASTE NOT A WASTE? THE CRIMINAL CONSEQUENCE IF YOU GET IT WRONG

Dr Anna Willetts, Partner at Gunnercooke and Samantha Riggs, Barrister at 25 Bedford Row

### 10:50: REFRESHMENT BREAK

**11:25: SESSION 2** Chaired by Stephanie Cox, Director of E3P and Member of the Executive Committee for SoBRA – Early Careers

#### UPDATING THE DoE INDUSTRY PROFILES

Dr Rob Sweeney, Technical Director at CL:AIRE

#### THE BENEFITS OF MEASURING DISSOLVED METHANE FOR INTERPRETING GROUND GAS RESULTS

Pagen Spooner, Geo-Environmental Consultant at EPG (The Environmental Protection Group)

### 12:40: LUNCH

**13:40: SESSION 3** Chaired by Dr Rob Sweeney, Technical Director at CL:AIRE

#### PANEL DISCUSSION LAND CONTAMINATION: MEETING TECHNICAL, SOCIETAL AND LEGAL EXPECTATIONS

**CHAIR:** Professor Paul Nathanail (Director at Land Quality Management)

**PANELLISTS:** Pagen Spooner (Geo-Environmental Consultant at EPG), Dr Anna Willetts (Partner at Gunnercooke), Christopher Swainston (Independent Contaminated Land Consultancy and Training), Barry Mitcheson (Associate Director at WSP) and Dr Paul McMahon (Associate Technical Director, Geosciences at RSK)

#### A CASE STUDY OF RSK GEOSCIENCES' APPROACH TO DEVELOPING AND APPLYING SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND HOW THIS LINKS TO INTEGRATING CLIMATE RISK AND RESILIENCE

Dr Paul McMahon, Associate Technical Director, Geosciences at RSK

### 15:20: REFRESHMENT BREAK

**15:55: SESSION 4** Chaired by Claire Dickinson, Director at Geo-Environmental Matters and SiLC PTP Member

#### DEVELOPMENTS IN THE REMEDIATION OF PFAS IN SOILS AND WATERS

Dr Cecilia MacLeod, Managing Director and Co-Founder at Anthera Remediation Technologies

#### WHY DO WE NEED TO RECONSIDER OUR APPROACH TO ASBESTOS IN AIR MONITORING DURING REMEDIATION?

Steve Forster, Director at Remedia Group

#### CLOSING ADDRESS

Geraint Williams, Associate Technical Director at HKA and AGS Chair Elect

### 17:15: EVENT ENDS

## SESSION CHAIRS AND SPEAKERS



**GERAINT WILLIAMS BSc, MRSC, CSci, MEnvSc, FGS, APAEWE**  
AGS Chair Elect and Associate Technical

### Director at HKA

Geraint Williams is Associate Technical Director within the Environment and Climate Change Division at HKA. He is Chair of the AGS Business Practice Working Group and Chair Elect of the AGS. He also serves on EH/4, British Standards Technical Committee on Soil Quality and acts as AGS's representative on the National Brownfield Forum. Geraint will be chairing session one.



**PROFESSOR PAUL NATHANAIL CGeol SiLC**  
Director at Land Quality Management

Paul is now in his fourth decade of being

involved in risk-based land contamination management. He has combined consultancy, advisory and academic teaching and research and is known for providing independent insights into contentious land contamination challenges in the UK. He is the lead author of key guidance on topics including the S4UL generic assessment criteria, bioavailability, asbestos and PFAS. Paul is past chair of the SiLC Register Board of Directors, the National Brownfield Forum and is a member of BSIEH/4 and ISO TC190 Technical Committee on Soil Quality. He led the drafting of BS ISO 18504:2017 and contributed to the updated BS10175:2026.



**DR ANNA WILLETTS**  
Partner at Gunnercooke

Anna is an environmental criminal lawyer, specialising in defence work in the waste and recycling industry. She is dual-qualified, having completed a PhD in geochemistry and worked as an environmental consultant before qualifying as a lawyer. Anna represents waste and recycling businesses and directors who are prosecuted by the regulators (Environment Agency and local authorities) for environmental and waste offences. She is a Past President of the Chartered Institution of Wastes Management and a Trustee of the Board. She is also Co-Convenor of UKELA's Waste Working Party and sits on ESA's Waste Regulation Group.



**SAMANTHA RIGGS**  
Barrister at 25 Bedford Row

Samantha is a regulatory barrister specialising in

defending companies and individuals in environmental, financial and regulatory matters and providing compliance advice. She has particular expertise in waste management and is fellow of Chartered Institution of Wastes Management (FCIWM) and is co-chair of the Central Committee for London Southern Counties. She is recognized for her specialist knowledge in waste management and recommended in Legal 500 as "the leading – and best junior – in the area of [environmental law] with a deep technical understanding of the waste industry" and Chambers & Partners say "Clients value her practical and commercial advice as well as her fearless defence skills".



**STEPHANIE COX**  
Director of E3P and Member of the Executive Committee for SoBRA – Early Careers

Stephanie Cox is a Director at E3P, a multidisciplinary environmental consultancy with offices in Manchester and Birmingham. She is an experienced practitioner in contaminated land and environmental risk, known for delivering proportionate, technically robust solutions aligned with industry guidance. Stephanie is a member of the Executive Committee of the Society of Brownfield Risk Assessment (SoBRA), where she leads the Early Careers portfolio, supporting professional development, engagement and knowledge-sharing across the brownfield sector. Stephanie will be chairing session two.



**DR ROB SWEENEY**  
Technical Director at CL:AIRE

Rob is a chartered scientist through the Royal Society of Chemistry and a Professional Member of the Chartered Institute of Editing and Proofreading. He has over 25 years' experience in land and water contamination with CL:AIRE, and previous environmental experience drawn from two research positions in waste management and water

treatment. Rob manages CL:AIRE's advisory group – the Technology and Research Group and is responsible for quality control in all CL:AIRE's publications. Rob will be presenting and also chairing session three.



**PAGEN SPOONER**  
Geo-Environmental Consultant at EPG (The Environmental Protection Group)

Pagen is a Geo-Environmental Consultant with three years' experience, specialising in Ground Gas Risk Assessments and bespoke monitoring across sites including landfills, coal mined areas and contaminated land. She undertakes extensive fieldwork, data interpretation and develops robust conceptual site models with a proactive approach to improving monitoring practices. She is a fellow of the Geological Society, a member of SoBRA as well as an active member of the SoBRA Early Careers subgroup.



**CHRISTOPHER SWAINSTON BSc (Hons) PGCE CGeol FGS CL:AIRE QP MIAH SMAGS Independent**

### Contaminated Land Consultancy and Training

Chris has over 30 years' experience in geotechnical and geoenvironmental sectors, contributing to major projects including Buncefield, the Dome, Westbury, Sizewell C and Sandridge. As a CL:AIRE Qualified Person, he is a recognised industry expert who has authored and delivered numerous technical papers, guidance documents and presentations for organisations including BSI, AGS, CIRIA, SoBRA and the Geological Society of London. Chris is widely respected for his practical approach to managing ground risks and his commitment to advancing industry best practice.



**BARRY MITCHESON**  
Associate Director at WSP

Barry is an environment consultant with over 25 years' experience in contaminated land consultancy. He has project managed and provided technical

support for all aspects of land quality assessment for a wide range of sites. He is a SiLC and ASOBRA for Human health and Vapour. He has been actively involved in a range of industry initiatives and publications including on VOCs, Waste assessment, Soil Gas, Asbestos, Site conceptual model and the recent industry profiles.



**DR PAUL MCMAHON**  
Associate Technical Director, Geosciences at RSK

Paul is an Associate Technical Director

designing and delivering internal geotechnical training, establishing apprenticeship pathways, mentoring colleagues and providing consultancy support on complex projects. Graduating in Civil Engineering in 1982 he earned his PhD for Cement Stabilised Minestone in 1985 at Sunderland Polytechnic. His principal areas of expertise are soil mechanics, laboratory testing, foundation design, earthworks, ground improvement, retaining walls and slope stability. Paul's career, 25-years in industry and 25-years at university, covers civil and geotechnical engineering with some contaminated land experience. As an Approved ICE (Institution of Civil Engineers) Mentor, Paul is Head of Profession for Civil Engineering across the entire RSK Group.



**CLAIRE DICKINSON BEng, CEng, CGeol, MIOM3, FGS, SiLC Director at Geo-Environmental Matters and SiLC PTP Member**

Bringing over 35 years of experience in UK land development, Claire is a contaminated land specialist (Registered SiLC) with a background in geotechnical engineering, specialising in ground risk management advice. Over the last 19 year she has chaired over 10 CIRIA project steering groups for their contaminated land programme. She co-authored the recent update of CIRIA's popular Environmental Good Practice Guide and is part of the research team producing an online resource for the CIRIA's Soil Community of Practice. Claire is a member of the SiLC PTP and jointly leads their Climate Change and Sustainability Sub-group. Claire will be chairing session four.



**DR CECILIA L. MACLEOD, BA, MS, PHD, FRSC, CCHEM, CSCI**  
Managing Director and Co-Founder at Anthera Remediation Technologies

Dr MacLeod an environmental geochemist with over 40 years' experience, assessing and remediating sites affected by contamination. Cecilia has worked on PFAS related issues at Buncefield Oil Terminal and Guernsey Airport. Dr MacLeod recently founded Anthera Remediation Technologies Ltd to commercialise an photocatalytic oxidation process for the mineralisation of PFAS.



**STEVE FORSTER BSC, MSC, CENV, FGS, MIENVSC**  
Director at Remedia Group

Steve has approaching 40 years' experience

in the investigation, assessment and management of asbestos in buildings and on land. He authored CAR-SOIL (CL:AIRE, 2016), industry guidance interpreting the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 as applied to contaminated land, in conjunction with the HSE. He co-authored Assessment and Control of Asbestos in Soil Part 1: Protection of personnel working on ground investigations and Part 2: Protection of personnel working in geotechnical and geoenvironmental laboratories (AGS, 2021). Steve developed and delivers (CL:AIRE) industry-focussed training for professionals working within the brownfield land sector, with well over 2000 candidates having received training since 2016.

### CONNECT TO WIFI



**NETWORK:** AGS Land Contaminated Conference  
**PASSWORD:** AGS2026!



**DATE:** Thursday 22nd April 2027  
**LOCATION:** One Great George Street, London  
**TIME:** 09:00 – 20:00

We're pleased to announce that the AGS Annual Conference will return once again to One Great George Street in London's Westminster in the spring.

Centred around the theme of resilience, the event will bring together industry leaders, technical specialists and emerging professionals to explore four primary themes:

- Climate resilience, geohazards and extreme weather
- Brownfield regeneration and industry innovation
- Waste, materials reuse and technical geotechnical solutions
- Digital transformation, regulation, skills and future capability

The Annual Conference will welcome 240 professionals from across the industry for a day of technical insight, discussion, collaboration and networking. Chaired by AGS Chair, Alex Lee (Partner at HKA), this full day, CPD event will showcase the latest industry developments, research and best practice, while providing valuable opportunities to connect with colleagues, clients and sector leaders. The day will conclude with an extended drinks reception in the Great Hall, offering further opportunities to continue conversations and strengthen professional connections. For details, sponsorship packages and to register, scan the above QR code.

## PRESENTATIONS

### BS10175:2026: A PROFESSIONAL APPROACH TO THE INVESTIGATION OF POTENTIALLY CONTAMINATED SITES

**Presented by Professor Paul Nathanail, Director at Land Quality Management**

Most investigations of potentially contaminated sites support the planning system or the Part 2A Contaminated Land regime. Why? To ensure development is safe and the land is in a suitable condition for that development. What? The UK Land Contamination Risk Management guidance spells out the information regulators require from preliminary and quantitative risk assessments as well as remediation verification reports. How? Alongside technical guidance on site characterisation, risk assessment and remediation are Standards ensuring site investigations are carried out in a way that ensures the information they supply to the characterisation, assessment and verification steps is robust and a reliable basis for decision making. BS10175 has a long pedigree and the incremental improvements in its latest update ensure it is highly relevant to today's efforts to build homes, infrastructure and industry – especially on post-industrial brownfield sites.

This presentation will include the use of polls. To access them, please scan this code when instructed.



### WHEN IS WASTE NOT A WASTE? THE CRIMINAL CONSEQUENCE IF YOU GET IT WRONG

**Presented by Dr Anna Willetts, Partner at Gunnercooke and Samantha Riggs, Barrister at 25 Bedford Row**

This session will cover end-of-waste and non-waste, and the misclassification of waste. As well as the regulators' sometimes narrow and closed-minded interpretation of the law, there can also be misunderstanding by regulated as well as regulators of what is often a complex and technical area of law. Coupled with HMRC's powers to reclaim vast sums of money in tax where they see fit, this session aims to explore how regulated industry can protect itself and ensure compliance.

### UPDATING THE DOE INDUSTRY PROFILES

**Presented by Dr Rob Sweeney, Technical Director at CL:AIRE**

This presentation describes a project to update 15 of the industry profiles created by the then Department of Environment (DoE) over thirty years ago. The 15 profiles draw on information from the original documents and update them for contaminant groups such as per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and present the information in a simple interactive matrix, with further information available on each profile as an individual page. The presentation will cover the reasons for updating the profiles, the content of the new profiles, the review process used to ensure accuracy, and the next steps.

### THE BENEFITS OF MEASURING DISSOLVED METHANE FOR INTERPRETING GROUND GAS RESULTS

**Presented by Pagen Spooner, Geo-Environmental Consultant at EPG (The Environmental Protection Group)**

This session will explore why dissolved methane matters and when it poses a risk to a site. It will look at where uncertainties remain in current sampling approaches drawing on from recent research and Environment Agency guidance on "Methods for Sampling and Analysing Methane in Groundwater" and will expand on the limitations of these methods both onsite and in the laboratory. Finally, the presentation will consider how dissolved methane probes can provide clearer, more reliable data to support risk assessment and design decisions, using past and recent case studies. This presentation builds on Pagen's winning entry at the 2024 SoBRA Winter Conference Early Careers Poster competition, based on her dissolved methane case study.

This presentation will include the use of polls. To access them, please scan this code when instructed.



### SAVE THE DATE

The AGS, in collaboration with SiLC, are hosting a free-to-attend event to celebrate International Women in Engineering day on **23rd June 2027**. More details to follow.

### A CASE STUDY OF RSK GEOSCIENCES' APPROACH TO DEVELOPING AND APPLYING SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND HOW THIS LINKS TO INTEGRATING CLIMATE RISK AND RESILIENCE

**Presented by Dr Paul McMahon, Associate Technical Director, Geosciences at RSK**

The revised standard BS 10175:2026, published in January 2026, requires consideration of sustainability as an integral part of the site assessment process and advocates adoption of Sustainable Management Practices (SMPs) originally developed by CL:AIRE (2021). RSK Geosciences has developed and implemented its own SMP tool as part of their commitment to embedding sustainability in project delivery. The digital tool is designed to help our project teams identify, track, and showcase best practice and focuses on two main aspects: enhancing the sustainability of delivery of geoscience projects; and supporting our clients to achieve more sustainable outcomes for land development and management. A key aspect of the latter is integrating climate risk and resilience into geo-environmental assessments as required by LCRM.

### DEVELOPMENTS IN THE REMEDIATION OF PFAS IN SOILS AND WATERS

**Presented by Dr Cecilia MacLeod, Managing Director and Co-Founder at Anthera Remediation Technologies**

Per and PolyfluoroAlkyl Substances (PFAS) are receiving increasing regulatory attention in the UK and Europe with estimates of the cost of clean-up in the UK alone range from £428 million/year (if discharges were stopped today), to £9.9billion / year (if current level of discharges continue). The Environment Agency has determined that there are approximately 10,000 sites in the UK which may be contaminated with PFAS. PFAS management has relied on sorption technologies such as GAC, IEX and incineration. In this presentation, Cecilia will discuss a cost effective and sustainable approach to PFAS management for both soils and waters.



ALAN BEATTIE

### WHY DO WE NEED TO RECONSIDER OUR APPROACH TO ASBESTOS IN AIR MONITORING DURING REMEDIATION?

**Presented by Steve Forster, Director at Remedia Group**

Monitoring methods for land contaminated with asbestos should ensure that remediation work does not cause unacceptable impacts outside the site. This means considering people and places nearby, like homes, schools, workplaces, and public spaces. Using only occupational-level sensitivity in monitoring may not offer enough assurance.

CL:AIRE is preparing industry guidance that introduces a strategy using high-volume, low limit of quantification (HiVe-LLOQ) asbestos air monitoring when managing soils contaminated with asbestos. The goal is to present a clear framework connecting field monitoring practices with the latest understanding of asbestos risks, environmental exposure pathways, and the practical needs of remediation projects.

### PANEL DISCUSSION

#### LAND CONTAMINATION: MEETING TECHNICAL, SOCIETAL AND LEGAL EXPECTATIONS

**Chaired by Professor Paul Nathanail (Director at Land Quality Management)**

**PANELLISTS:** Pagen Spooner (Geo-Environmental Consultant at EPG), Dr Anna Willetts (Partner at Gunnercooke), Christopher Swainston (Independent Contaminated Land Consultancy and Training), Barry Mitcheson (Associate Director at WSP) and Dr Paul McMahon (Associate Technical Director, Geosciences at RSK)

This panel discussion will explore the key challenges currently shaping the land contamination sector, bringing together a range of expert perspectives from across the industry.

Topics will include waste classification and management, landfill considerations, the application and interpretation of DoE profiles, and the growing importance of

emerging contaminants. The panel will also examine the role of methane in groundwater and the associated environmental and technical implications.

In addition, the session will consider the evolving legal and regulatory landscape, providing insight into how policy and liability are influencing decision-making in practice.

By combining technical, environmental and legal viewpoints, this discussion will offer a holistic overview of the complexities facing professionals working in land contamination today, along with practical insights to support informed and effective project delivery.

To submit a question to the panel, please scan this QR code.



## SPONSORS

### GROUNDSURE

Groundsure provides data to gain insights on environmental risks for site assessment and development. Our unique, unrivalled library includes the largest historical land use data, current and historical mapping and unique datasets. Additionally with Groundsure Explorer, geotechnical clients can integrate site risk data into their project workflow seamlessly and easily.  
[www.groundsure.com](http://www.groundsure.com)



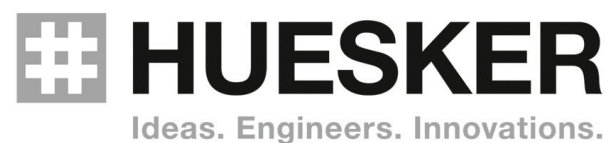
### ALS

ALS provides laboratory testing services across water, soil, and air matrices, as well as specialised testing for contaminants, nutrients, and microbial pathogens. Leveraging state-of-the-art instruments, robust quality systems, and a worldwide network of experts, ALS delivers accurate, reliable, and timely results that enable clients to make informed decisions and maintain compliance with environmental regulations.  
[www.alsglobal.com/en-GB/UK/environmental](http://www.alsglobal.com/en-GB/UK/environmental)



### HUESKER

HUESKER is a market leader in the manufacture of geosynthetics. Its products and services provide solutions for earthworks and foundations, roads and pavements, environmental and hydraulic engineering. We pride ourselves on constantly innovating to create more sustainable solutions and reduce the risks associated with ground engineering.  
[www.huesker.co.uk](http://www.huesker.co.uk)



### EIJKELKAMP FRASTE UK

Eijkelkamp Fraste UK specialises in delivering high-quality drilling equipment and soil investigation solutions. Combining Fraste's innovative drilling rigs with Eijkelkamp's expertise in environmental and geotechnical tools. We provide reliable equipment and services for industries such as construction, mining, and environmental monitoring, ensuring precision, efficiency, and sustainability across projects.  
[www.efrigs.co.uk](http://www.efrigs.co.uk)



### NORMEC i2 ANALYTICAL

Normec i2 Analytical delivers comprehensive services, including environmental chemistry, materials and geotechnical testing, site services, and air testing across industries. Supported by strong customer service and efficient in-house logistics, Normec i2 Analytical provides accurate results and expert advice to support informed decisions and regulatory compliance.  
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### GEOENVIRO SOLUTIONS

GeoEnviro Solutions is a UK-wide site investigation specialist providing geotechnical and geoenvironmental services for construction, infrastructure and redevelopment projects. Based near Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, GeoEnviro delivers Phase 1 desk studies, Phase 2 ground investigations, contamination risk assessments and remediation strategies, providing the data and insight needed to manage contaminated land with confidence.  
[www.geoenvirosolutions.com](http://www.geoenvirosolutions.com)



## AGS EARLY CAREERS POSTER COMPETITION 2027

### HOW CAN WE ATTRACT THE NEXT GENERATION OF PROFESSIONALS INTO THE GEOSCIENCE INDUSTRY?

The geotechnical and geoenvironmental industry plays a vital role in delivering sustainable infrastructure, managing environmental risks, and shaping the built environment. However, attracting the next generation of professionals remains one of our biggest challenges.

This year, we're inviting Early Career Professionals to share their ideas on how we can inspire more people to pursue a career in geoscience.

Your poster can explore:

- Why geoscience can provide an exciting and rewarding career
- Common misconceptions about the industry and how they can be challenged
- Ways to improve awareness of geotechnical and geoenvironmental careers among students, graduates and career changers
- The role of mentoring, outreach, social media, work experience and education in attracting new talent
- Practical tips for showcasing the diverse opportunities available within the profession

Posters should be creative, informative and thought-provoking, helping to inspire the next generation of geo-professionals.



For full details and  
entry information  
scan the QR code.

The winner will receive a £100 Amazon Voucher, free entry to the AGS Annual Conference on 22nd April 2027 in London and have an interview regarding their winning entry published in AGS Magazine which reaches over 7,800 industry professionals six times a year. Ten runners up will win free entry into the Annual Conference, and all posters submitted will be displayed at the Annual Conference.

To enter, email your A3 poster alongside your full name and company to [ags@ags.org.uk](mailto:ags@ags.org.uk) before Friday 26th February.



## NOTES



SPECIALIST IN LAND CONDITION