

THE MAIN COMPANIES INVOLVED IN OPENCAST / SURFACE MINING IN THE UK
(as at 22/6/15).

This is a list of the companies / organisations that LAON believe either have an interest in surface mineable coal or are surface mine operators:

Argent, This is an LLP. It started life as a developer before being bought by the British Telecoms Pension fund in 1997. It now styles itself as a property developer but has a 50% share in Miller Argent, formed as joint venture with Miller Group (see below) to gain planning permission and then mine the Ffos-y-Fran opencast site. Miller Argent now seeks permission for the Nant Llesg site. In 2012, Argent underwent an internal reorganisation and became ArgentLLP.

However little mention is made of their coal interests on their website @ <http://www.argentllp.co.uk/portfolio/>

Banks Group This is a family owned firm which mines coal among other things in NE England and Scotland. It has worked closely with Lord Ridley who owns the Blaydon Estate in Northumberland on which currently two opencast sites are being worked, Brenkley Lane and Shotton. They also operate the Rusha site in Scotland. In addition they are also planning to the mine the 5m Highburn site nr Druridge Bay in Northumberland, but no planning application has been submitted. Here is a link to their web site: <http://www.banksgroup.co.uk/>

Buccleuch Estates has expressed an interest in surface mining coal and coal bed methane from the Canonbie Coal Field in SW Scotland. Buccleuch Estates is owned by Scotland's largest land owner the Duke of Buccleuch. Here is a link to their website: <http://www.buccleuch.com/>

Celtic Energy is a non listed company operating in Wales at a number of sites, which has a recent history of leaving rather large holes in the ground. Here is a link to their website: <http://www.coal.com/>

Hargreaves Services is a quoted company. With the collapse of Scottish Coal and ATH Resources it raised £40m via a rights issue and bought out the

mining rights on a number of Scottish opencast sites. It also operates a small site in NE England, Well Hall Farm and is appealing over the non granting of planning permission for the Field House Farm site at Pittington near Durham. On behalf of the Tower Colliery it is also surface mining this site in Wales.

According to Hargreaves 2014 Annual Report, these were the major shareholdings in the company:

Name	Percentage of shares owned
Artemis Investment Management	12.16%
Shareholder Value Management	8.98%
Schroder Investment Management	7.85%
Gordon Banham (Group Chief Exec)	6.50%
M&G Investment Management	5.74%
Fidelity Worldwide Investment	5.61%
J O Hambro Capital Management Group Limited	4.92%
NFU Mutual	4.47%
Octopus Investments	3.20%

This is a link to their website @ <http://www.hsgplc.co.uk/>

Kier Group are a quoted company who operate one surface mine I believe in Scotland at Greenburn

Miller Argent See comment on Argent above

Miller Group is a major Scottish house builder and developer who also own 50% of Miller Argent. There is not much info about their coal interests on their website here @ <http://www.miller.co.uk/default.aspx> , but buried away in their financial reports is information about how profitable Ffos-y-Fran is for them.

According to this news item dated 5/2/15, the following companies / organisations have a shareholding in Miller Group:

GSO Partners, part of private equity giant Blackstone Group,

Royal Bank of Scotland's West Register Investments,
Lloyds Banking Group's investment arm Uberior
Equity and Noble Grossart Investments

UKCSMR, Coalfield Resources, Harworth Estates, Harworth Group & Pensions Protection Agency / Fund

These are interlinked bodies because all but the Pension Protection Agency were once part of UK Coal plc, or its ex employees of UK Coal plc who operate the successor companies.

UKSMR is a successor company to UK Coal Surface Mining, which itself was a successor company to UK Coal plc (see below). UK Coal surface Mining went into pre packaged administration in 2014. UKSMR is currently responsible for working these sites: Minorca, Lodge House and Butterwell Disposal Point. It has it is believed recently gained approval for two more sites, Shortwood Farm and Bradley, but there is no confirmation that UKSMR intends to develop these sites.

Harworth Estates was the old property arm of UK Coal plc before it went bust in 2013. It had retained ownership of a considerable land bank (now 28,000 acres) which was sold when the Coal Corporation was privatised in c1991. Some of this was brown field land, but much LAON believe overlies shallow coal deposits. Some of this land has subsequently been used for opencast mining such as the following green field sites which have been, or are still surface mine sites, Huntington Lane, Longmoor, Lodge House, Minorca for example. Where land has been sold off, such as the formally proposed sites at Highhorn, Great Oak and Sharleston, all green field sites, Harworth Estates retained the mineral rights.

Coalfield Resources has turned out to be a temporary company formed after the collapse of UK Coal plc. At the time UK Coal plc went bankrupt with debts of more than £1.2bn, the Pension Protection Agency was called in to try and secure the interest of those due to be and actually were beneficiaries of pension funds that dated back to pre privatisation days. The temporary solution was for the Pension Protection Fund to take a 75% share holding in

Harworth Estates and for Coalfield Resources, who were a publically quoted company, to own the other 25%. Subsequently, after raising money and paying £150m to the Pension Protection Fund in March 2015, a new company Harworth Group emerged. The Pension Protection Fund retains a 25% share stake in the Harworth Group.

Pension Protection Agency / Fund

This Government Agency takes over the financial responsibility for running company pension funds when the parent company goes bankrupt. It manages the remaining assets held by the company pension fund on behalf of current and future beneficiaries. It currently is the major share holder in the Harworth Group which LAON believes owns some land because of its suitability for surface mining (see above)