



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs

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Leader  
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Your ref: AW/TK 105  
Our ref: PO2023/20005/JM

Simon Tagg  
Leader

Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council [tracy.key1@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:tracy.key1@staffordshire.gov.uk) 6 November 2023

Dear Alan and Simon,

Thank you for your letter of 10 October to the Secretary of State about the effectiveness of the Environment Agency (EA). I am replying as the Minister responsible for this policy area.

The error with the hydrogen sulphide monitoring data collected by the Mobile Monitoring Facilities (MMFs) is regrettable. However, on discovery of this issue the EA has acted swiftly, openly and transparently.

In relation to Walleys Quarry specifically, the EA has taken steps to ensure the MMFs operating there are now doing so fully in line with the manufacturer's recommended calibration method. It has apologised to the local community and has also held a virtual public meeting on 9 October which was recorded. This recording as well as a series of follow up questions have been published on the EA's Walleys Quarry engagement site.

The error has not impacted the EA's regulatory actions at the site or the fact that the situation there has improved significantly. This issue does not affect the published plan to reduce emissions by capturing, containing, and destroying landfill gas. Indeed, as part of its ongoing work on 19 October the EA issued another enforcement notice against the site operator in relation to the capping work at the site.

I know how important it is to have confidence in the measurements of hydrogen sulphide at Walleys Quarry and other sites, and I have asked my officials to help provide expert technical assistance to the EA on this matter.

I continue to have confidence in the regulatory work of the EA and do not believe a public inquiry is necessary.

Thank you once again for taking the time to contact us about this important issue.

**REBECCA POW MP**