

Our ref:

Your ref:

Date: 18th July 2021

Mr George Eustice MP  
Secretary of State for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs

By e-mail only: [george.eustice.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:george.eustice.mp@parliament.uk)



Castle House  
Barracks Road  
Newcastle-under-Lyme  
Staffordshire  
ST5 1BL

Dear George

**Walleys Quarry Landfill Site, Newcastle-under-Lyme Staffordshire**  
**Support for Residents Suffering from Odours**

You will be aware from previous correspondence that Newcastle residents continue to suffer from the effects of foul odours arising from the Walleys Quarry landfill site in the Borough. This has been the subject of a 10-minute rule by your colleague Aaron Bell MP, and adjournment debate, and indeed has this week been raised at Prime Minister's Questions.

Since January the Council has received over 18,000 complaints about this matter, and the Environment Agency has received over 32,000 complaints in the same period. Air quality around the Walleys Quarry site is now continuously monitored by 3 monitoring stations, and this data is analysed by experts at Public Health England, and the output from this does not make comfortable reading. Hydrogen Sulphide concentrations at some of the stations are above the World Health Organisation "annoyance" level for up to 53% of the time, and never less than 10% of the time. Other stations are recording lower levels, but still at concentrations which are above the "annoyance" threshold for significant portions of the time. Residents are living with this day in and day out, with disturbed sleep, headaches, nose bleeds, and mental health impacts being routinely reported. Public Health England have indicated that the longer this situation prevails, the more they will be concerned about the cumulative impact of the gas on health in the community.

I have asked my officers to prepare a scheme which would allow residents who are most affected by the exposure to Hydrogen Sulphide to be afforded some respite, as might be provided to other people living in stressful situations. A copy of the proposal is attached. You will see that this is not an overly generous scheme, affording those affected to one weekend respite break away from their home every six months. Even cautious estimates as to the demand still put such a scheme beyond the resources of a small district Council.

That this problem exists at all is due to two issues – a landfill operator who has not run their site as it should have been run, and a regulator, in the form of the Environment Agency, who have taken their eye off the ball and allowed the operator to get away with it for too long. My residents are living with the consequences.

I am writing to you today to ask that you work with the other relevant departments and secure, for Newcastle-under-Lyme, the funds required to provide the respite provision set out in the attached proposal.

I would also like to invite you to visit Newcastle under Lyme to see at first hand the situation that my residents are enduring.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Simon Tagg', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**Councillor Simon Tagg**  
**Leader of the Council**  
[simon.tagg@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:simon.tagg@staffordshire.gov.uk)

Cc Aaron Bell MP for Newcastle-under-Lyme