



Department  
for Environment,  
Food & Rural Affairs

Emma Hardy MP  
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State

Seacole Building  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DF

T: +44 (0) 3459 335577  
E: [correspondence.section@defra.gov.uk](mailto:correspondence.section@defra.gov.uk)  
W: [gov.uk/defra](http://gov.uk/defra)

Ian Andrews  
Head of Environmental Health  
Chartered Institute of Environmental Health  
Chadwick Court, 15 Hatfields  
London, SE1 8DJ  
[i.pickering@cieh.org](mailto:i.pickering@cieh.org)

Our ref: PO2026/06365/SH

17 April 2026

Dear Ian,

Thank you for your letter of 16 March to the Secretary of State about local authority permits. I am replying as the Minister responsible for this policy area.

A key point you raise is that your members are reporting difficulties with the fees set within the current regime and you asked whether Defra would also consult, following the recent Welsh Government consultation on an inflationary uplift to Welsh fees.

Defra has consulted on proposals for significant reforms and cost reviews of the environmental permitting system for industry. In recognition of the difficulties faced by local authorities, a key proposal for this consultation was a review of the system for setting local authority permit fees and charges to better deliver cost recovery, increasing the speed of permitting and creating a more automatic and predictable system. We are reviewing the responses and plan to publish a response in due course.

Within this consultation, we outlined our proposal to consult on an inflationary uplift for English local authority permit fees, and whilst Welsh Government consulted separately, the approach to uplifting costs of permits was developed in close collaboration with Defra. We also plan to consult as soon as possible; however, we recognise that cost burdens are currently of particular concern for businesses. With this in mind, we are reviewing the appropriate time to consult

We welcome your offer of collaboration, and officials will be in contact in the coming weeks.

Thank you for contacting the Secretary of State about this important issue. I trust this response has answered your queries.

Yours sincerely,

**EMMA HARDY MP**