

Ruth Jones MP

House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

02 October 2026

Dear Ruth,

Thank you for your letter of 15 September and for the Committee's on-going work in relation to industrial legacy and contaminated land. I was very concerned to see the evidence uncovered by the recent *Buried* documentary and I am grateful for the important work undertaken to bring these issues to light including via your committee's hearing on 10 September. I recognise and understand the concerns and anxiety those living near affected sites are experiencing.

As you rightly point out, the contaminated land regime is devolved in Wales. As such, responsibility for testing sits with local authorities and for certain special sites with Natural Resources Wales (NRW). Nevertheless, I have written to the Chief Executives of NRW and Welsh Water asking them to outline the steps that they are taking to assess risks and take appropriate action including through testing.

I note that Public Health Wales (PHW) has concluded that testing Polychloride Biphenyls (PCBs) in blood is not recommended as a public health action. This is because it does not provide a reliable means of assessing an individual's exposure to contamination or the potential health impact.

The relevant agencies, including the UK Health Security Agency, Department of Health and Social Care, the Welsh Government and Public Health Wales are already working closely together on public health protection and health security matters. The principles and governance structures underpinning this co-ordinated approach are set out in a jointly agreed framework. See: [Public health protection and health security: provisional common framework - GOV.UK](#).

The Scottish Government, Northern Ireland Executive and the respective national public health agencies for Scotland and Northern Ireland are also a part of this arrangement giving a UK-wide, four nation approach. A UK Four Nations Health Protection Oversight Group (HPOG) provides the strategic direction of this framework with a UKHSA chaired Environmental Public Health Programme Board supporting collaboration. As well as ensuring a co-ordinated approach across the UK, this enables the Devolved Governments and relevant agencies to discuss common issues, programmes of work, share learning and good practice. This is agreed and delivered under the Common Framework through the strategic UK Health Protection Committee and the operational Health Protection Oversight Group (HPOG), including various Sub-Groups of which the Environmental Public Health Programme Board is one.



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I am grateful to the Committee for continuing to highlight these important issues and for the evidence it has gathered.

Yours sincerely,

Rt Hon Stephen Kinnock MP
Secretary of State for Wales