

TAKE FIVE

Your guide to
Environment Agency
Inspections



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TAKE FIVE | ENVIRONMENT AGENCY INSPECTIONS

Your guide to Environment Agency Inspections.

Receiving a letter from the Environment Agency (EA) announcing an inspection has the potential to spark anxiety in any farmer, no matter how on top of their farm's activities they are. The Things Planning and Environment team specialise in supporting landowners and agriculture specialists in all areas of planning policy and have produced the following tips to make sure you are ready for when the inspector arrives.

1. Setting the right tone

If you do receive an inspection letter, be proactive and assess your farm's potential strengths and weaknesses. Open a line of communication with the EA early on and set a co-operative tone as this will help you to put forward your narrative on your business both during and after the inspection.

2. Give inspectors access to inspect

Inspections can often take a full view of the business so make sure you can demonstrate consistent and safe farming practices, as well as robust risk management. This means giving inspectors unobstructed access around the farm to see whatever they want unhindered.

3. Make sure the paperwork is in order

Inspections are not just about what happens on the farmyard and ensuring your records are up-to-date and available for inspection is a very simple way to give officers a good first impression. This doesn't just help to make the process smoother but also demonstrates your capability as a business owner.

4. Be prepared for potential next steps

Most EA inspections are simply to check that the business' practices are current and don't often lead to further action. If, however, the EA do find something that they are not happy with and you are invited to a PACE interview, you should look to take legal advice as soon as possible. Should you be handed any sanctions, such as to remedy any environmental harm caused, it is important to remain cooperative.

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5. Check legal expenses insurance cover

An investigation of this type may cause businesses severe disruption so make sure you check your insurance policies promptly to see if there is cover for legal expenses or remediation costs. Where necessary, taking early legal advice can ensure that you proceed on the right footing and give you the best chance of avoiding prosecution.



Would you like to know more?

Thrings' [Planning and Environment lawyers](#) have extensive experience in navigating complex local and national planning policy legislation and have successfully supported commercial and residential applications through the approval and appeal processes.