

Dear Liz,

Thank you and Ruth for getting in touch regarding the proposals for a visitor levy.

I agree with you that tourism is vital to our economy, both nationally and right here in Telford. England is one of the world's leading tourist destinations, attracting over 130 million visitors each year, and I believe that investment in the places that people visit will help to build on England's reputation as a world-leading destination. As Telford's MP, I'm very keen to do more to attract both international and domestic tourists to our beautiful town.

As you are aware, at Budget 2025 the Government announced plans for Mayors to be given the power to raise revenue locally through a new visitor levy on short-term overnight accommodation in their region. This is a groundbreaking step for the future of English devolution, with the potential to drive economic growth, including through support for our country's tourism sector. It's important to note that this proposal applies only to Mayors, and Telford & Wrekin is not a full member of the West Midlands Combined Authority. If these plans were introduced, the West Midlands Mayor would not be able to impose a visitor levy on our town without the approval of our local council.

Mayors and other local leaders are best placed to identify and invest in the projects and infrastructure that drive growth and make a place attractive for visitors and residents. But they need powers and funding to enable them to harness England's potential and unlock growth through investment. I believe that the visitor levy will bring greater prosperity to England's regions by empowering Mayors to deliver more long-term, locally led investment in transport, regeneration and cultural assets that can unlock growth and make places more attractive for residents, businesses and visitors.

I know that many well-known cities across the world already charge visitor levies. Giving local leaders in England the power to introduce a visitor levy in their area will therefore bring them up to speed with their international counterparts in New York, Milan, Paris, and Prague, as well as in Wales and Scotland. I want to stress that the Government will not compel any Mayor to introduce this levy, nor will central government reduce funding for Mayors if they decide to do so.

I understand that businesses and potential visitors may have concerns about the effects of a new levy, and I want to assure you that the impacts of the levy will largely be determined by local decisions. Mayors will decide whether to introduce a levy and, if so, consult on specific proposals. I know that the Government expects Mayors to engage constructively with businesses and their communities to hear their concerns.

The Government also ran a consultation to ensure that the public, businesses, and local government could shape the design of these powers. This consultation closed on 18 February 2026, and I look forward to the Government's response to the public feedback being published in due course.

Although it would be a matter for Mayors and our Council leader, my personal view is any levy should be modest – maybe a couple of pounds a night on a budget stay and each pound ringfenced to offset the demands on tourism in that local area. Here in Telford we welcome hundreds of thousands of people to the Ironbridge Gorge and wider Telford, and of course Shropshire is a magnet for tourism too; it's right and fair that the cost of operating visitor centres, increased litter collection as well as drawing people to an area in the first place is shared between the local community (through local taxes) and the visitor.

We live in the most amazing country and a truly special town – and we need to ensure international and domestic visitors feel welcome to spend their money in places like ours.

Best wishes,



Shaun Davies MP

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