

October 2018

Dear Constituent

Thank you for contacting me about the possibility of using the UK's future agricultural policy to support the development and maintenance of paths, and the 'Your Path Awaits' campaign by Ramblers.

Leaving the EU creates a once in a generation opportunity to design a domestic agricultural policy that will stand the test of time. Starting from first principles we can bring in innovative new ideas to support investment in healthy, sustainable British food production and do much better for farming, the environment and animal welfare.

The Government proposes to move to a system of paying farmers public money for public goods. The principal public good it anticipates the system promoting is environmental enhancement, but the consultation document Health & Harmony also proposed public access as a public good that could be funded.

Ministers have consulted widely with farmers and others and will publish a response shortly. I hope that you and Ramblers were able to participate in this exercise and make your views heard.

Outside the Common Agricultural Policy we will have an opportunity to use public money to reward environmentally responsible land use, as well as maintaining and enhancing high standards of animal welfare. I am convinced that we will make the very most of this opportunity and ensure that our best days as a food and farming nation lie ahead of us.

I have a record of supporting more access to the countryside. I am confident that the Government sees an opportunity to increase access in the coming years.

Yours sincerely



Richard Benyon