



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Rt. Hon. Boris Johnson MP  
Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street  
London, SW1A 2AA

28<sup>th</sup> April 2022

Dear Prime Minister,

We write as MPs representing rural constituencies, and members of the House of Lords with a keen interest in the success of the rural economy.

According to DEFRA figures, the rural economy is 18% less productive than the national average. Closing that gap would add up to £43bn in GVA, implying the creation of many good jobs and the strengthening of rural communities that are so often forgotten about in national policymaking. We note that the recent Levelling Up White Paper offered little to remedy the situation.

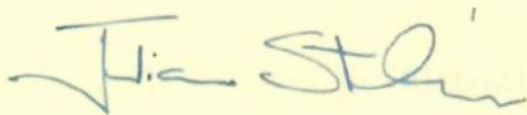
85% of rural businesses are not engaged in farming or forestry, and they often face structural barriers to their success. Given 23% of all businesses in England are based in the countryside (with many more in the other three nations of the United Kingdom), it is clear that the removal of those barriers could yield considerable economic growth, for the betterment of their local communities and the country as a whole.

Please find enclosed a copy of a new report by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Rural Business and the Rural Powerhouse. This report offers 27 recommendations to stimulate growth in the rural economy, most of which would require little or no new expenditure to implement. It follows a thorough inquiry which took evidence from over 50 trade bodies, campaign groups, business leaders and academics to better understand the needs of businesses operating in the countryside.

We write to ask that, at the forthcoming Queen's Speech, you will announce a Rural Economy White Paper specifically designed to unleash the economic and social potential of the countryside. We trust that, in turn, the 27 recommendations contained within this report will be considered for inclusion.

We hope you share our ambition for rural communities, and look forward to working with you to ensure their potential is realised.

Yours sincerely,



**Julian Sturdy MP**  
APPG Inquiry Co-Chair



**Lord Cameron of Dillington**  
APPG Inquiry Co-Chair

**Rt. Hon. Sir Geoffrey Cox QC MP (Con)**  
**Rt. Hon. Stephen Crabb MP (Con)**  
**Richard Drax MP (Con)**  
**Rt. Hon. Philip Dunne MP (Con)**  
**Ben Everitt MP (Con)**  
**Tim Farron MP (Lib Dem)**  
**Richard Fuller MP (Con)**  
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**Ben Lake MP (PC)**  
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**Ian Liddell-Grainger MP (Con)**  
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**Anthony Mangnall MP (Con)**  
**Anne Marie Morris MP (Ind)**  
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**Dr Andrew Murrison MP (Con)**  
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**Greg Smith MP (Con)**  
**Derek Thomas MP (Con)**

**Lord Carrington (Crossbench)**  
**Lord Curry of Kirkharle (Crossbench)**  
**Earl of Devon (Crossbench)**  
**Lord Harlech (Con)**  
**Earl of Leicester (Con)**  
**Baroness Mallalieu (Lab)**  
**Lord Taylor of Holbeach (Con)**