

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP**  
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

20<sup>th</sup> August 2021

*Jean Comberant,*

**RE: UPLANDS**

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of our upland areas; your comments upon which I have read with interest.

First, I should like to assure you that I am committed to protecting our uplands, the wildlife that thrives there, and the people who live there too. Whilst we have no specific mountains or moors within the constituency of Corby & East Northamptonshire of which I am proud to serve, I am a keen walker and nature lover and I agree that our hills and valleys are an integral and important part of our landscape; both locally and nationally.

To that effect, restoring nature is crucial and I am pleased that the Prime Minister has committed to protecting 30 percent of the UK's land by 2030 and will be making nature a key focus of COP26. As well as this, the *Environment Bill* has been amended in the House of Lords to require a historic, new, legally binding target on species abundance for 2030, with the aim of halting the decline of nature in England.

As you may know, the UK is moving to a new agricultural system which will reward farmers and land managers for the work that they do to enhance the environment. The environmental land management schemes being introduced will pay for sustainable farming practices, the creation and restoration of habitats, natural flood management, species management, and making landscape-scale environmental changes, among other things. I know that the uplands provide rich opportunities for the provision of environmental public goods and will be well placed to participate in these schemes.

Peatlands are our biggest terrestrial carbon store and it is welcome that Ministers have published an 'England Peat Plan' which provides an ambitious framework to improve the management of these areas. Alongside this, a 'Trees Action Plan' sets out the long-term vision for the planting and management of woodlands and trees. These plans are underpinned by the £640 million 'Nature for Climate Fund' which will support a trebling of tree planting across England by the end of this Parliament and help to restore 35,000 hectares of peatland by the end of this Parliament.

Finally, I would like to assure you that raptor persecution is one of six national wildlife crime priorities. The Raptor Persecution Priority Delivery Group considers what action should be taken to prevent crime, gather intelligence on offences and enforce against it. The National Wildlife Crime Unit also gathers intelligence on illegal activities and provides assistance to police forces when required.