

The Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
Secretary of State
Defra
Nobel House
17 Smith Square
London SW1P 3JR

14th September 2017

Dear Mr Gove,

The Uplands Alliance: Creating a Brighter Future

I am writing to update you on an exciting collaborative venture bringing together the diverse parties with a passion for England's Uplands who sadly too often are at loggerheads. The purpose is to create a future for the uplands where those who own and manage our Uplands can through viable enterprises deliver better for society.

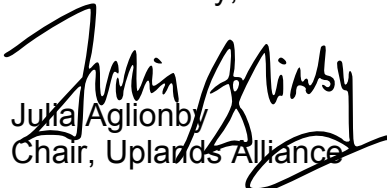
The Uplands Alliance, whose Secretariat is provided by Defra, embraces all forms of land management, from farming and forestry, to sporting, recreation and conservation. Over the winter of 2016/17 we held workshops in four venues across England. Over 300 people participated and while we mostly worked hard in small facilitated groups we also had high profile speakers to challenge and inspire the conversation. These included Helen Ghosh, Minette Batters and Dieter Helm.

I attach the summary report from these four workshops which formed the basis for a successful bid to the Prince's Countryside Fund. This two year project will implement our two core findings:

- Public money should be focused on delivering public benefits and we need to empower hill farmers to run viable businesses on this premise
- The Uplands are fantastic but undervalued. With 70 million visits each year to the Uplands current BPS and Pillar 2 payments to hill farmers equate to only £3.30 per visit. We need to explain to policy makers and the public what the uplands provide and how they could enhance their offer.

Currently we are developing our engagement plan and I, and our Vice Chairs, Robin Milton (NFU) and Patrick Begg (National Trust) would much appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely,


Julia Aglionby
Chair, Uplands Alliance