

President: Rt.Hon. the Lord Randall of Uxbridge Kt.PC.

Cllr Stephen Giles-Medhurst OBE
Leader
Three Rivers District Council
Three Rivers House
Northway
Rickmansworth
Herts WD3 1RL



26th March 2026

Dear Cllr. Giles-Medhurst,

Re: Protection and Restoration of the Green Belt

The Trustees of the Colne Valley Regional Park (CVRP) have asked me to write to you regarding your letter to Rt. Hon. Matthew Pennycook about National Planning Policy and its implication for TRDC. We note the Minister's reply, which doesn't appear to recognise the constraints in a local authority that is over 76% Green Belt.

The points you make align closely with the CVRP's campaign '*A Corridor for Life*' and we would like to take the opportunity to discuss the current situation with you in more detail.

We, too, invited Matthew Pennycook to tour the area to see the unintended effects of government policy at first hand.

By way of background, you will find our position set out in detail here:

<https://www.colnevalleypark.org.uk/project/campaign/>

In essence, we are lobbying for recognition of the Colne Valley Regional Park and seeking to restore the landscape to become one of the best green corridors around any city in the UK. Something residents of Three Rivers and the wider region can be proud of.

I must stress that this is a pro-countryside, not anti-development campaign. In our view, well-planned development could contribute positively toward protection and restoration of the CVRP at no cost to the public purse.

This campaign has already won considerable cross-party support from the area's nine MPs. It prompted a Parliamentary adjournment debate, during which Mr Pennycook clearly stated that the government recognises the value of the CVRP and that he shares the desire to see it protected.

In addition, the Minister for Nature, Mary Creagh, has asked Natural England to support the Colne Valley.

Unfortunately, we have also identified unintentional contradictions that mean the government's positive intention is thwarted by the way in which its associated policy is framed. For example: the government's land use framework, published earlier this

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month, shows excellent strategic thinking, allowing spaces for houses, nature, food production etc, but closer examination reveals this positive strategic work doesn't form part of the actual planning policy. Without this, the broader vision will be impossible to deliver in areas such as the CVRP that are subject to competing land uses.

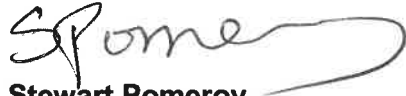
We are briefing the area's MPs and asked them to request the:

- Minister for Housing & Planning (Mr Pennycook) to make minor tweaks to NPPF that are needed to allow his stated ambition for the CVRP to be delivered.
- Minister for Nature to direct Natural England to prioritise protection for the important green corridors within the Colne Valley for people and wildlife, and to allocate resources to allow it to do this

We would now welcome an opportunity to talk to you about how your concerns about the release of Green Belt in unsuitable locations, and our *Corridor For Life* campaign can be mutually beneficial. We believe our arguments could be used to TRDC's advantage, stressing Green Belt in this area should be given a higher priority, since the CVRP has national importance for wildlife, which sets it apart from other areas of Green Belt around London – something that is already being acknowledged in government circles.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



Stewart Pomeroy
Colne Valley Managing Agent

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