



Rt Hon Robert Buckland QC MP
Secretary of State
Ministry of Justice
102 Petty France
London SW1H 9AJ

20 April 2020

Dear Secretary of State

There are, sadly, a great many of us who believe that the published NPCC and College of Policing guidelines around exercise and permissible distances to travel to do so, will make managing COVID-19 more difficult, as well as cause untold anxieties across rural communities.

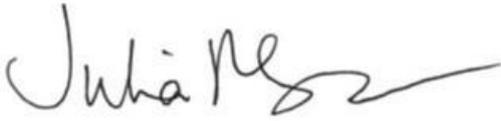
We are writing to you because the NPCC and College of Policing have issued guidelines based on CPS charging advice, which comes under your jurisdiction. Rewriting the NPCC / College of Policing guidance cannot be done in isolation. We therefore call on you, working with your colleagues, to urgently review the CPS charging advice, with particular reference to the impact this will have on all communities, including rural communities, and to ensure the key message remains: stay home, save lives.

Between the signatories of this letter, we represent many millions of residents and thousands of businesses. We receive hundreds of concerned messages a day about people flouting the law, and there are great concerns that the new policing guidance will encourage even more people to carry out unnecessarily long journeys to exercise in rural areas, which will in turn put increased pressures on rural police forces and communities. It is specifically the guidance on length of travel versus length of exercise that is likely to cause problems in the battle against COVID-19 and has a particular impact on the rural communities we represent. We, like you, want our countryside to remain safe for communities to use and for people to be able to take vital exercise near to their homes.

Given the above, we ask that the CPS advice, and related advice and guidance, be urgently reviewed. The CPS advice seems to be the foundation stone for how other guidelines are produced and how the police are expected to enforce the Government's emergency legislation, and should therefore be looked at first. The key message needs to remain: stay home, save lives. Anything which complicates that message is unhelpful.

As this is a matter of huge importance for communities across the country, we will be releasing this letter to the media. We look forward to hearing from you shortly.

Yours sincerely,



Julia Mulligan
Chair, National Rural Crime Network



Stuart Roberts
Deputy President, NFU



Mark Bridgeman
President, CLA



Tim Bonner
Chief Executive, Countryside Alliance

cc Martin Hewitt, Chair – National Police Chiefs Council
Mike Cunningham, Chief Executive – College of Policing
Max Hill QC, Director of Public Prosecutions
The Rt Hon Suella Braverman QC MP, Attorney General