



# Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

**Miatta Fahnbulleh MP**

*Minister for Devolution, Faith and Communities*  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
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Our reference: MC2025/30555

Tom Chance  
Chief Executive  
Community Land Trust Network  
34-35 Butcher Row  
Shrewsbury  
SY1 1UW

18 November 2025

Dear Tom,

Thank you for your email of 29 October regarding the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill and Environmental Assets. I am responding as this matter falls under my Ministerial portfolio.

Environmental assets are often treasured places that communities use to connect to each other and nature. I am grateful for you writing to me to ensure that they are properly protected through the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill.

As I mentioned at Committee stage of the Bill, our intention is for community right to buy to be used to protect a range of assets that have an important purpose for the local community. Many environmental assets, as well as other categories of assets such as heritage and cultural assets, will be in scope of the policy despite not being specifically included in the definition of assets of community value set out in section 86B of schedule 27 of the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill.

It is important that the policy is focused on those assets that already play an important part in community life, and is not used as a general vehicle for environmental protections. The statutory guidance that will accompany the policy will be important for setting out expectations for how it is delivered by local authorities, and we will be using this to establish clear guidelines for listing environmental assets.

Whilst assessing the community value of some environmental assets, such as parks and allotments, will be easier for local authorities, we are aware that decision-making may be more complex for other assets such as community farms. The guidance will illustrate when such assets may be in scope, for example if they currently or previously provided employment for the community or a social outreach programme. This will guide local authority decision-making and ensure appropriate assets are included in the policy.

I was interested to read about Poets Neuk in Scotland, which sounds like an excellent example of a community taking ownership of local land for wider community benefit. I understand that Poets Neuk was purchased through the right to buy land to further sustainable development powers introduced through the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016. These powers permit communities to apply to the Scottish Ministers to exercise compulsory purchase rights to purchase land for sustainable development, and we are not planning to introduce similar powers in England.

I appreciate your concern in seeking to ensure environmental assets are adequately protected. I am confident that through statutory guidance we will ensure that environmental assets that further the communities interests as outlined in the Bill are listed. My officials are developing this guidance and would be happy to meet you at a convenient time to discuss this with you.

Thank you for taking the time to write on this important matter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Miatta', followed by a long, horizontal, wavy line that extends to the right.

**MIATTA FAHNBULLEH MP**

Minister for Devolution, Faith and Communities