

Huw Irranca-Davies MP
Minister for the Natural & Marine Environment, Wildlife and Rural Affairs
Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Noble House
17 Smith Square
London
SW1P 3JR

Dear Mr Irranca-Davies,

The inclusion of a Draft Marine and Coastal Access Bill in the Queen's Speech

Congratulations on your appointment. As you are no doubt aware, you join the department at a critical time in the development of new proposals to create a right of access to the English coast, a project with the potential to deliver huge benefits to the nation's health, wealth and wellbeing.

The Ramblers' Association has been campaigning for increased coastal access for many years and we were delighted when DEFRA announced that it would be legislating to create a new long distance coastal route with spreading room.

It is now vitally important that these proposals are taken forward and a Draft Marine and Coastal Access Bill appears in the Queen's Speech this December. Great momentum has built behind the Bill, generated by a tremendously positive governmental lead and strong support from ourselves and other campaigning organisations representing environmental, wildlife and countryside interests like the National Trust, the RSPB, and the British Mountaineering Council, both locally and nationally.

As an active walker, and member of the Ramblers' Association, I know what a positive difference this initiative would make for me. I firmly believe it will help solve all kinds of problems with gaps and obstructions that degrade existing coastal access, and how valued the route would be by members of the public.

The only way we can secure the real and lasting benefits that a legal right of coastal access will bring is to make sure that it is included in a Marine and Coastal Access Bill in the Queen's Speech this December.

Please do all you can to make this happen.

Yours sincerely,