



All-Party Parliamentary Group on Rural Services

Tuesday 13th May 2025 at 13.30 – 14.00

In-person in Room N, Portcullis House

1. Attendance:

Sarah Dyke MP (Chair), Sadik Al-Hassan MP, George Freeman MP, Anna Sabine MP, Roz Savage MP, Martin Wrigley MP, Charlotte Cane MP, Dr Juan Anzola (attending on behalf of Kieran Mullan MP) and Theo Clark from the Office of Sarah Dyke taking the minutes on behalf of Kerry Booth.

2. Apologies for Absence:

Lord Carrington, Ellie Chowns MP, Mims Davies MP, Lee Dillon MP, Sarah Green MP, Bishop of Hereford, Danny Kruger MP, Julie Minns MP, Jesse Norman MP, Vikki Slade MP.

3. Additional Apology:

An apology was conveyed on behalf of Kerry Booth, CEO of the Rural Services Network and Secretary of the APPG, who was unable to attend due to an ACL injury. The Chair, Sarah Dyke MP, extended her thanks to all members for their continued dedication and commitment to the APPG.

4. Approval of Previous Minutes – Circulated to members attending:

The notes of the previous meeting [Minutes-APPG-21-01-25.pdf](#)

5. Election of Officer:

Caroline Voaden MP was unanimously elected as Treasurer and Officer of the Rural Services APPG. All five MPs present voted in favour of her appointment.

6. Upcoming Monthly Briefings:

The Chair, Sarah Dyke MP, outlined the Rural Services Network's intent, led by Kerry Booth, to initiate a series of monthly briefing sessions for APPG members and their staff. Each session will concentrate on a key priority area of the APPG's work, namely:

- Fair funding for rural areas
- Affordable housing
- Access to rural transport
- Access to health and social care services
- Enhancing rural skills

The briefings are provisionally scheduled to take place at the end of each month. Members in attendance expressed strong interest in participating in these sessions.

Discussion Points Raised:

- **Fair Funding:** George Freeman MP underscored the urgency of addressing fair funding disparities, noting from his governmental experience that urban areas had received a 240% increase in funding compared to their rural counterparts. He expressed a strong interest in collaborating with Sarah Dyke MP and Kerry Booth on raising concerns with the rural funding formula, particularly to mitigate the entrenched isolation and deprivation in rural communities.
- **Affordable Housing and Energy Efficiency:** Charlotte Cane MP raised the issue of poor housing conditions in rural areas, highlighting the inadequacy of Housing Energy Performance Certificates and the prevalence of fuel poverty. She emphasised the need for these concerns to be central to the briefing on affordable housing. Additionally, she noted the higher cost and increased flood risk associated with new housing in rural areas.
- **Mental Health:** Mental health in rural areas was a key theme raised by George Freeman MP, Sadik Al-Hassan MP, and Sarah Dyke MP. They advocated for its inclusion in the health and care briefing session and supported the idea of a targeted campaign by the APPG in partnership with the Rural Services Network. Both Sarah Dyke MP and George Freeman MP noted previous collaborations with RABI on mental health initiatives in rural communities.

7. Date of Next Meeting

To be confirmed.

8. Meeting concluded at 13:40.