



PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE
WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AT

22 February 1984

Dear Patrick,

*JTB
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As you know I felt that there was insufficient business to justify holding a Legislation Committee meeting this week, and we therefore need to deal by correspondence with your proposals in memorandum L(84) 13 about the handling of the Recreational Gardening Bill which Lord Wallace of Coslany introduced on 30 January. I understand that it is listed for Second Reading debate in the Lords this Friday, although it is uncertain whether it will be reached.

You explained in your memorandum that the Bill would impose a number of specific duties on local authorities and on Central Government, such as the formal registration of people who wished to rent allotments and the acquisition of sufficient land to satisfy demand, and the publication of annual statistics and waiting lists, respectively. I agree with you that this is not a good time to impose further duties on local authorities, and that in any case the management of allotments is best left to local discretion. I see from John Belstead's letter of 20 February to you that the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food take very much the same view. I also understand that Willie Whitelaw and Bertie Denham are content with your proposal that at Second Reading in the Lords the Government should indicate that it cannot support any form of Recreational Gardening Bill at this stage; and that if the Bill nevertheless reaches the Commons it should be blocked. I am therefore content to give L Committee's agreement to your proposals.

I am copying this letter to other members of L Committee, John Belstead, Sir Robert Armstrong and other recipients of memorandum L(84) 13.

JOHN BIFFEN

The Rt Hon Patrick Jenkin MP
Secretary of State for the Environment