Dear Ewen,

I am writing to correct evidence supplied to your Committee on the implementation of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act. On 10th October, Defra’s supplementary written evidence was published on the Committee’s website (NER0079). At paragraph 17, we said, according to the 2010 external review of section 40 of the Act:

'It concluded that of over 90 local authorities who responded to an on-line survey, 66% were aware of the duty and 57% reported a beneficial impact on biodiversity through the delivery of their functions'.

It appears that in our editing some text has gone astray. The text should refer to page 13 of the review¹ and read as follows:

'It concluded that of over 90 local authorities who responded to an on-line survey, all were aware of the duty and 57% reported a beneficial impact on biodiversity through the delivery of their functions'.

66% refers to the proportion of Local Authorities who felt the duty had raised the profile and visibility of biodiversity (page 19 of the review).

The correction does not change the remaining text in paragraph 17; the key point being that awareness is high, and there are a range of activities that have been instigated by the duty. It is important however that our quoted facts and figures are correct.

I look forward to the session on 16 January.

Yours ever,

John