



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Rt Hon. Rachel Reeves
Chancellor of the Exchequer
11 Downing Street
London, SW1A 2AA

17th November 2025

Dear Chancellor,

The impact of changes to Agricultural Property Relief (APR) on our farmers' mental health

We are writing to you ahead of the forthcoming Autumn Budget as Members of Parliament representing constituencies with significant farming sectors, home to proud and longstanding rural communities.

APR currently provides farming families with a crucial sense of security, ensuring that their property can be passed from one generation to the next. Reducing this security would force the sale of family farmland and ultimately diminish the amount of land available for food production while breaking chains of connection to the land which have rooted some families for centuries. In Wales 43% of agricultural workers are Cymraeg speakers, and the importance of protecting family farms to preserve our language and culture has been repeatedly affirmed by the Commission for Welsh-speaking Communities, most recently their 2024 report 'Empowering communities, strengthening the Welsh language'. As Chair of the Welsh Affairs Committee Ruth Jones MP said recently, "Our farms are by and large not wealthy tax evaders, they are farms made by families and for families."

Farmers are already facing immense challenges - from climate volatility and poor harvests to rising input costs and a growing uncertainty about the future. The proposed changes to APR have compounded these difficulties, fuelling widespread anxiety and unrest across the agricultural sector. We have spoken to constituents in their 80s who fear being unable to transfer their businesses before the proposed deadline, spouses who are struggling to support their partners through worsening mental health crises and people who work gruelling hours while seeing little profit for their labour.

Headline findings from the Farm Safety Foundation's September 2025 Annual Farm Safety and Wellbeing Tracker Survey reveal a deeply concerning decline in mental wellbeing among UK farmers. According to the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS), wellbeing levels have fallen to their lowest point in four years - particularly among farmers aged 61 and over.

Until recently, this older generation consistently reported wellbeing levels above the national average - an encouraging indicator of resilience in a demanding profession. However, this resilience is now in jeopardy. The latest data show a dramatic and deeply troubling collapse in mental wellbeing among this group following the Autumn 2024 Budget.

This is not a marginal decline; it represents a profound shift in the emotional health of some of the most experienced and vulnerable members of our farming community.

We would like to draw your attention to several cases brought to us by our constituents - just a few among many - which reflect the severe anxiety the proposed changes to APR are creating.

My dad died when I was 14, and I've put my whole life into building up my farm so I could pass it on. I'm 75 now and still working, but I've got no personal money - it's all tied up in the farm and the animals. I have to pass it on by next April and then live another seven years to avoid a £400,000 inheritance tax bill. On top of that, I can't take a living out of it - I've got nothing to live on. I don't really see much point in carrying on beyond April.

There is an injustice here. My father and uncle both own the land we farm. They are both in their early 70s and both have had work related head injuries earlier in their lives. This could mean a larger than normal amount of care will be needed for them later in life. Planning to mitigate the worst effects of the proposed IHT changes and their future care needs is therefore tricky.

We've been farming in Llansantffraid for nearly 100 years. We calculate that on the current policy proposed, the tax due would be huge and land would need to be sold. We pay our taxes, personally and on business, which is a part of life. But not being able to hand down a farm to the next generation (who work on it for below minimum wage) in full, due to ill thought out policies is just so soul destroying.

My husband initially and subsequently my son have worked hard to build a productive farm. The hours are irregular and the rewards small but the commitment and passion that goes into the work is immeasurable. The proposed changes come at a time when farmers are being marginalised and bombarded with bureaucracy in both senses of the word. So much is expected of them and scant or no regard is afforded to them

We therefore urge you to take these concerns into consideration ahead of the upcoming Budget, and consider the recommendations put across in the Welsh Affairs Select Committee's report: Farming in Wales in 2025: Challenges and Opportunities.

We would also welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss these important issues further.

Yours sincerely,

The image shows two handwritten signatures in black ink. The signature on the left is 'Steve Witherden' and the signature on the right is 'Andrew Ranger'.

Steve Witherden
MP for Montgomeryshire and Glyndŵr

Andrew Ranger
MP for Wrexham