



Bell House
Kelsale
Suffolk
IP17 2PB

December 6th 2018

Dear

A 'Meaningful Letter' in consideration of The 'Meaningful Vote' Tuesday 11 December 2018

We are the **Suffolk EU Alliance**, one of two anti-Brexit activist groups in the county. We built a vast, active and vociferous cross-party membership based on wanting a continued relationship with EU. However as it became clear the original vote was tainted with so many issues, we feel at absolute liberty to be swept up with the ever-growing campaign for a People's Vote.

As our representatives, an MP's primary duty is to act in the interest of your constituents and the nation. Your service in government and your political career is of secondary importance. Your next steps will be closely scrutinised by your voters here in Suffolk and will form your lasting legacy.

You are in the midst of five days of significant debate of the Prime Minister's proposed withdrawal deal. It is very clear that Parliament is divided at least three ways, both between the parties but crucially within the Governing Party.

This division reflects the nation and the close referendum result. It has not since healed due to Theresa May and her Government pursuing an extreme Brexit rather than seeking a compromise that reflected the close result.

She continued in the face of growing evidence through polling that the country's view on Brexit had been reversed, and despite the result being tainted by a number of legal actions taken against the Leave campaigns, with their largest donor currently under criminal investigation.

A number of damning economic assessments on the impact of Brexit, including the Government's own analysis also failed to give the government pause to reconsider. A study published this month by the LSE and Kings College have shown the UK economy will take a very substantial hit and will likely face a recession even if the deal is the 'best possible' for the country, as Theresa May asserts this one to be.

In addition, the UK's action in leaving this partnership will significantly weaken the EU and its ability to react at a potentially crucial time to a number of security threats. It faces a political and military challenge from Russia as well as economic challenges from both China but especially the USA.

So we have a very clear question for our Suffolk MPs: **Why would any country continue to pursue Brexit when it is so clearly going to result in potentially catastrophic self-harm?**

A hard Brexit is no longer an option, truly it's not. Your answer should discuss, following the most recent events, the several ways this can be avoided. The Advocate General of the European Court of Justice has provided a legal opinion that the UK can unilaterally revoke Article 50 and remain in the EU if it chooses to. In addition, Dominic Grieve's amendment to the Withdrawal Agreement means that Parliament now has greater control of the route forward once, as seems inevitable, Theresa May's deal is rejected. Both give the opportunity for our MP's to seize the moment and get something positive out of what has been an unedifying spectacle ever since the plan to hold a referendum all those years ago was announced.

Given all of these issues and challenges, it is only right that MPs now find a way to vote to remain in the EU to serve the national interest. But an MP's duty does not stop there. They must find out exactly why those who still want to leave the EU want to do so. Then they must devise policies to alleviate the alienation those voters feel and enact them forthwith. If Parliament cannot determine the matter, then a People's Vote should be held.

If you need convincing, MPs have, by triggering Article 50, done more than is sufficient to take into account the views and grievances of those who voted to leave in 2016. But exploration of the consequences has evidenced that leaving will damage the national interest and our nation's standing in the world, whether on the outline terms of the agreement just reached, or by leaving with no agreement.

The 'Meaningful Vote' is the first in the forthcoming steps that YOU are being entrusted with. Be wise in how you use this opportunity. Prudence, wisdom and courage are now key as you consider how to protect our union and future relationship with the EU. We reiterate, if in conclusion Parliament still cannot decide what is best for the country, perhaps the people should be allowed to make the choice. But this time let's do it properly!

In the spirit of a more positive future.

Sincerely yours,

Julia Ewart (*Chair*)

Signed on & behalf of the Membership & Supporters of the Suffolk EU Alliance

C.C. East Anglia Daily Times - Editor Brad Jones
CEO Suffolk County Council - Nicola Beach
Suffolk County Council - Leader Cllr Mathew Hicks
Suffolk County Council - Chairman Cllr Michael Ladd
All Suffolk County Council Cllrs
Leader East Suffolk DC - Cllr Steve Baker
Leader Ipswich Borough Council - Cllr David Ellesmere
Leader Babergh & Mid Suffolk District Council - Cllr John Ward
Leader - Forest Heath District Council - Cllr James Waters
Leader - St Edmundsbury Borough Council - Cllr John Griffiths MBE