Do you agree with the definition of a high hedge as set out in the Bill? If not, please provide details:

1. Response: We agree with the definition as stated but would also add that in addition to barrier to light it also includes prevention of enjoyment of previously available views and where the hedging causes devaluation of the property.

Do you consider that other forms of vegetation should be covered by the provisions of the Bill? If so, please specify why:

2. Response: Individual Christmas trees which when put in the garden after Christmas can grow to an enormous height and spread in as little as 10 years.

Do you have any comments on the proposed approach to dispute resolution as set out in the bill?

3. Response: Provided that light barrier, view enjoyment and devaluation of property are included in the deliberations that is fine. I would like to see proper advice on what is reasonable steps taken to resolve disputes before applying for a resolution. i.e. What if the grower says he never received any approach or letter of complaint, how can that be proved?

Do you have any comments on the enforcement procedures proposed under a high hedge notice?

4. Response: Where a notice has been served and remedy carried out by the grower or the council, it should be incumbent on the grower to keep the height at the agreed level and not have the complainer in a position to go through the complaints procedure again and again year after year and once agreed there should be no further costs to the complainer should further breaches on the same complaint occur.

Do you have any comments on the proposed fees and costs?

5. Response: We feel it is right to have a fee to recover some of the costs of applying for resolution to discourage timewasters but feel it should be capped at £200 or should be a one off fee which would not have to be paid again if a complaint has to be lodged in future situations over the same hedging dispute.

Are there any aspects of the systems used in other jurisdictions which should be included within this bill?

6. Response: We are not aware of other systems.

Are there any aspects of this Bill which would impact positively or negatively on equality of opportunity?
7. Response: The appeals procedure is a concern to us, if the grower would be able continue to appeal decisions indefinitely prolonging the serving of a notice to comply. There should be a limit on the number of appeals and a time limit for decisions.

Any other issues relating to the Bill which you wish to bring to the attention of the Committee?

8. Response: If a grower is causing dispute which affects multiple homeowners is it possible to enter a shared application for resolution ie: Our problem grower affects all 6 occupants of our building and also some surrounding houses on 3 sides of the offending property.