16th November. 2012-11-09 Dear Sir,

I enclose my letter which I have already sent to the Parliament ---- It will make my reason for writing clear!

In answer to your requests for submissions to the provisions of the “High Hedges Bill”

1 Why only “High hedges”? Deciduous trees planted in the wrong place can be as much if not more of a problem.

2 As you can see from the enclosed letter the answer would be definitely “Yes”!

3 No.

4 I appreciate the fact that it is difficult to legislate for trees already planted but why not bring in a law which supports the fact that ‘A tree should not be planted nearer to a house or boundary wall/fence than its eventual full-grown height’?

Another problem which is going to arise is the fact that trees may in time cut out light from solar panels on roofs. Perhaps this would be a good time to deal with this problem also. It actually looks as if this will happen to our house within a year or two. What is the legal answer?

5 No

6. Not that I know of.

7. Not that I know of.

8. There seem to be very little that can be done even although a tree may be causing damage and/or distress to neighbours. The issue of fairness comes in here ---- see enclosed letter!

Yours sincerely,

Muriel G Thompson
Dear Mr McDonald,

I have just read in the newspaper of your intention to bring in a Bill controlling the height of evergreen hedges bordering neighbouring properties. Wonderful! There are so many selfish neighbours who simply ignore requests for consideration of their neighbours that a Bill is sorely needed.

BUT why stop at evergreen Leylandii?
Let me put you in our picture (I say “our” because this affects more than one neighbour.)

We live in a small street --- formerly a lane where the houses have been built in what was the end of the gardens of larger houses. Our gardens are small but very well cared for (mine is a prize winning garden, being twice “Best in Inverclyde” at our local Show.) --- with ONE exception. One of the houses is a large house, divided into two flats with no garden at the front. At the back, which is shared, there is a long strip only about 1 and 1/2 metres wide by approximately 10 metres long (this runs along our fence) and belongs to the upstairs neighbour. The family downstairs look after the communal area as well as their own part.

This “strip” has always been left as a weed and snail farm. Except for one thing. The owners planted a Silver Birch tree in it some years ago! They refuse to do anything at all with it and the result is that now, it is about 15 mtrs high, has roots going under all our properties (we have been warned that they might interfere with sewage and water pipes, gas, electricity and television cables but they still turn a deaf ear.

The upstairs couple never use the garden area as they go away in the summer but now the tree is this height our gardens are in shade for a great part of the day --- which is a real shame considering how little sunshine we get. In the Autumn we spend every day removing leaves etc and disposing of them. As I am now 75 yrs old this is becoming more and more arduous.

The recommended area for planting a tree is a distance equal to the final height of the tree away from houses or boundary walls/fences. The word “recommended” means nothing to people who don’t care. We need a law to prevent this happening again and a law which will help people like us to exert some pressure on people like this to remove a tree which has a potential height of 30 mtrs and should be in a forest!

One way would be to put the responsibility on to the garden centres to inquire where such a monster is to be planted and tell the prospective buyer of the law.

I very much look forward to hearing from you and any law which will help to improve our lives!

Yours sincerely,

Muriel G Thompson.