

The letter I'd write to Michael Gove

Published: January 14, 2026, 5:49 pm

Michael Gove [has suggested](#) that the EU is not willing to negotiate on Brexit. If I was in Brussels this is the letter I might be inclined to send him:

Dear Mr Gove

We have noted your suggestion that we in the European Union are not willing to negotiate with the United Kingdom at present. We thought it appropriate to let you know that we do not agree.

We are willing to meet with you, and hold discussions at any time, but we note that your Prime Minister has not sought to meet us.

We also note that there is in place a draft agreement that we spent three years negotiating with the government of which you, and your Prime Minister, were a part for much of that time.

We are, of course, aware that this agreement did not meet with the approval of the House of Commons, which disappointed us and your previous Prime Minister.

However, we also note that as yet we have not heard from you as to the changes that you would like to make in this agreement, barring the abolition of the Northern Ireland backstop, which we reluctantly included in that agreement in the form in which it is stated at the specific request of the Prime Minister that you previously served.

We note that this is now unacceptable to you, but would draw it to your attention that it was always agreed to be a precondition of these talks that there should be no breach of the Good Friday Agreement, which a hard border in the island of Ireland would be. We have always been open to viable alternative arrangements to such a border, but as yet we note that you have not been able to offer any, and as such we are not willing to renegotiate this clause present, but the fault is not ours: we have been patiently awaiting your viable proposals on this issue for a long time, and still do so.

In the circumstances, we would politely suggest that we have proven our willingness to

negotiate on an issue, not of our choosing, over a long period of time and that in that case your suggestion does appear inappropriate.

If you would like to return to the negotiating table, with viable and workable propositions that we can consider in a spirit of mutual cooperation to seek to resolve the issues that we face we should be pleased to see you in Brussels at any time.

Best regards

etc

If only.....