

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP**  
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



**HOUSE OF COMMONS**  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

17<sup>th</sup> January 2017

*Dear Constituent,*  
**RE: CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS.**

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of civil partnerships.

The *Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013* had a specific focus on extending marriage to same sex couples who could not previously marry. The Act did, however, stipulate that there should be a review of civil partnerships in England and Wales.

The Government carried out a full public consultation on the future and operation of civil partnerships in 2014, receiving almost 11,500 responses, during which a range of views were expressed. The majority of respondents were against broadening civil partnerships to include opposite sex couples. In 2016, the decision not to extend civil partnerships to opposite sex couples was subject to judicial review that found the current system does not discriminate against heterosexual couples. The case has recently also been heard in the Court of Appeal and we are awaiting the outcome.

Some people have expressed concern that the continued availability of civil partnerships for only same sex couples could result in inequality and unfairness for opposite sex couples. On the other hand, many feel that now marriage is available for all couples, the need for civil partnerships falls away. There is, of course, the option for all those in a civil partnership to convert it into a marriage; however, I recognise that not all couples in civil partnerships wish to do this. I believe it is sensible for the Government to wait for the legal proceedings to conclude, and to get a sense of the impact of extending marriage to same sex couples, before deciding on the way forward for civil partnerships.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

*with best wishes,*

*Tom*

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP**  
**MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT**  
**CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**