

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

4th April 2017

Jew Constituent,

RE: ANCIENT WOODLAND.

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of ancient woodland.

I agree with you that ancient woodland is a precious habitat, and would note that the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) already contains protections for it. It states that planning permission should be refused for development that would result in the loss, or deterioration of, irreplaceable habitats, including ancient woodland and aged or veteran trees elsewhere. This can only be overridden if the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss.

The recent *Housing White Paper* went further, announcing a proposal to clarify planning policy on ancient woodland and aged or veteran trees, upgrading their protection to the same level as the green belt. I have been assured that Ministers will consider everyone's views and develop this further.

Furthermore, Ministers want to protect and enhance our woodland habitats. Over 11 million trees were planted in the last Parliament and there is a pledge to plant a further 11 million in this one. England's woodland cover is now expanding at a rate that has not been seen since the fourteenth century.

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 PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE