

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

11th July 2018

Dear Constant,

RE: PLASTIC FREE PARLIAMENT.

Thank you for contacting me recently about the plastic free Parliament campaign; your comments upon which I read with great interest.

Without urgent action to cut demand, plastic production is likely to reach 34 billion tonnes by 2050, the majority of which will end up in landfill, or polluting the world's continents and oceans. Re-using and recycling plastics is critical. I am glad to tell you that the new 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment commits the Government to working to eliminate all avoidable plastic waste. It sets out a four-point plan for action at each stage of the product lifecycle: production, consumption, and end of life. All this will result in the reduction of the demand and use of non-recyclable plastic.

In relation to the Early Day Motion on the use of plastic in Parliament, I should firstly say that as a Parliamentary Private Secretary, I am not able to sign Early Day Motions, as doing so would likely be in breach of the Ministerial Code's rules on collective responsibility. However, in any event, I have general concerns about the effectiveness and expense of the EDM system, and I have attached a copy of an excellent article written by my colleague, Chris Heaton-Harris MP, which I feel succinctly sets out those concerns. I hope that this will be of interest to you, and essentially, I think it is much more effective to raise concerns directly with Ministers, both verbally, and in writing, rather than signing EDMs.

Having said this, none of Parliament's waste goes to landfill, with Parliament operating a mixed recycling scheme which captures paper, cardboard, plastics, and cans, resulting in the recycling of as much waste as possible. In addition, my colleagues continue to explore new opportunities to recycle and recover more waste.

In addition to this, I am pleased that Parliament is currently reviewing the use of single-use disposable plastics, and is actively involved in a range of initiatives and pilot schemes looking to reduce the amount of plastic thrown away on the estate. One example of this is the sourcing of a new reusable cup, which will be sold in both retail and catering outlets for visitors, as well as for pass holders. I hope that this will encourage people to think about the amount of plastic they use and will result in the reduction of plastic use across the estate.

Finally, in relation to reusable cups, aimed at reducing plastic waste, I was pleased to be able to raise the issue of disposable paper coffee cups at Prime Minister's Questions recently. In my question to the Prime Minister, I highlighted my recent visit to Amaray, a Corby based company, which has developed a 100 percent reusable, 100 percent recyclable, and cost effective, plastic alternative to these paper cups, that are far easier to recycle and can be recycled through standard curb-side recycling schemes, rather than going to landfill. Not only is it very pleasing to see a local business taking the industry lead in finding a solution, but I wanted to help generate greater awareness of their work and the product, and I am also encouraging the parliamentary authorities to commission these cups from Amaray, rather than continuing to use the paper alternative on the parliamentary estate.

LISTENING TO YOU - CAMPAIGNING FOR YOU

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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**