

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP**  
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

10<sup>th</sup> August 2018

*New Constituent*

**RE: ANTARCTIC OCEAN SANCTUARY.**

Thank you for contacting me recently about establishing an Antarctic Ocean Sanctuary; your comments upon which I read with great interest.

This campaign has my full support, and I am delighted to tell you that the UK is one of the leading proponents of establishing a Marine Protected Area in the Weddell Sea. On our behalf, the Government will be advocating strongly for its adoption at the meeting in October 2018, of the Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, and I am assured that the new Foreign Secretary is fully behind this.

The UK leads the world on marine protection and is on track to deliver over 4 million square kilometres of protected ocean around the UK Overseas Territories by 2020. Together with existing Marine Protected Areas around the British Indian Ocean Territory, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands, and within the British Antarctic Territory, more recent developments have seen new and planned enhanced protections in waters around Pitcairn, St. Helena, Ascension, and Tristan da Cunha.

Closer to home, plans have now been set out to create 41 new Marine Conservation Zones across the UK, safeguarding almost 12,000 square kilometres of marine habitats and marking the most significant expansion of the UK's 'Blue Belt' of protected areas to date. The proposed protections, announced on World Oceans Day, will cover an area almost eight times the size of Greater London.

Some 50 zones have already been designated around England in 2013 and 2016, as part of the 'Blue Belt'. This third and final tranche will be designated within 12 months of the consultation which ran until the 20<sup>th</sup> July 2018, bringing the total area of protection to over 32,000 square kilometres. Considering other types of marine protected area, the total sea area under protection will amount to around 220,000 square kilometres, meaning almost two fifths of English seas will be protected.

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**