

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

20th November 2020

New Comment,

RE: PEAT BURNING

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of peat burning; your comments upon which I have read with great interest.

I understand your concerns on this issue; unfortunately because of my existing Parliamentary commitments, I was unable to attend the debate on the subject at Westminster Hall on 18th November.

The impact of rotational burning of vegetation on blanket bog continues to be hotly debated by academics, scientists, land managers and everybody involved on all sides. I know, however, that healthy peatlands have an important role to play in cutting greenhouse gas emissions and helping the UK reach its net zero target, so I am pleased that £640 million has been committed through the Nature for Climate Fund to restore 35,000 hectares of England's peatland by 2025.

My Ministerial colleagues have always been clear of the need to phase out rotational burning of protected blanket bog to conserve these vulnerable habitats and the intention has always been to legislate if a voluntary approach failed to deliver. From speaking with them, I know Ministers are currently considering legislation and the next steps which can be taken. In the meantime, however, it is encouraging that real progress is being made in promoting sustainable alternatives.

I agree that restoring and better managing our peatlands is absolutely essential for nature recovery and tackling climate change. I know that the Committee on Climate Change has highlighted the particular need to restore blanket bogs. For that reason, Ministers are committed to publishing an English peat strategy that sets out the direction for restoration, protection and sustainable management.

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

With best wishes,

Tom

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE