



**HOUSE OF COMMONS**  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

21<sup>st</sup> November 2023

*Dear Constance,*

**RE: FIREWORKS**

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of your concerns about fireworks; I have read your comments with interest.

While many people enjoy the use of fireworks on special occasions, I appreciate that others do not like them. Fireworks can, of course, be dangerous, and so it is right that the use and sale of them is controlled.

Firework regulations allow fireworks for home use to be sold during the traditional firework periods of Bonfire Night, New Year's Eve, Chinese New Year and Diwali. Suppliers who wish to sell fireworks outside the traditional periods must comply with stringent conditions before being granted a licence by their local licensing authority. This means the availability and use of fireworks outside the traditional periods has been greatly reduced.

Although there is some use of fireworks outside the traditional periods, the majority of people who use fireworks do so at the appropriate times of year and have a sensible and responsible attitude towards them.

In June 2022, the Scottish Government passed the *Fireworks and Pyrotechnic Articles Act*. This legislation introduced a fireworks licensing system, with mandatory safety training, for people wishing to purchase and use fireworks. It also introduces powers for local authorities to designate firework control zones, restrictions on the supply and use of fireworks, and a new offence to criminalise the supply of fireworks and pyrotechnics to under-18s. Being in possession of a firework or other pyrotechnic in a public place, or at certain places or events, without reasonable excuse, also becomes an offence.

The licensing and compensation scheme in the Act lacks clarity, however, with the Scottish Government stating this will be dealt with in future regulations. This is not good enough, as tackling firework misuse needs clear public understanding and the Scottish Government have not elaborated on how they will prevent the rise of a black market in fireworks as a result of the Act's provisions. Colleagues in the Scottish Parliament have assured us that they will work constructively with the Scottish Government and monitor the effectiveness of this new legislation.

Regulations allow the general public to buy and use certain categories of fireworks for family use and for private firework displays. These are classified as F2 and F3 and are available for sale to people aged 18 and over. All fireworks on sale to the public are required to comply with essential safety requirements, set down in UK law, which govern how they are made, tested and labelled.

Fireworks used for professionally organised displays, classified as F4, are available for sale only to people who have undertaken an accredited course of training in pyrotechnics and who hold relevant professional insurance.




It is up to local councils to decide whether or not to put on public displays. These are covered by health and safety legislation, which requires the display organisers to ensure the safety of the display operators, spectators, and those in the near vicinity of the display site.

Moreover, whilst there are no plans at the moment to place further limitations on the use of fireworks, the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) engaged with a wide range of views and developed an evidence base on the key issues that have been raised around fireworks, including noise, as well as anti-social behaviour, non-compliance, environmental impact, and the impact on humans and animals.

Following the review by the OPSS, I understand that the Government remains committed to promoting the safe and considerate use of fireworks through the effective legislative framework and through non-legislative measures. Any further restrictions on fireworks sold to the public by retail outlets could possibly lead to more individuals buying products inappropriately, through online social media sources or from outside the UK, which could drive individuals to source fireworks from illegitimate or unsafe suppliers, where products may not meet the UK's safety requirements.

The Government has previously run public awareness campaigns and worked with a variety of stakeholders, including animal welfare groups, to promote the safe and considerate use of fireworks to the general public, to ensure that those using them do so safely and considerately.

Once again, thank you for taking 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**