



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

February 2018

*Dear Constituent,*

Thank you for contacting me about firearms licensing.

I can assure you that I am not opposed to the possession of firearms generally and I certainly recognise that the overwhelming majority of firearms are used responsibly. Controls must be proportionate and administered fairly. Indeed, I am glad that the Government has a track-record of avoiding knee-jerk reactions when it comes to gun control. Here in the Daventry area, country pursuits are something I think it is important to defend as a part of our community life.

As you will be aware, the working group was established to improve the arrangements between GPs and the police in relation to information sharing about the medical suitability of firearm certificate holders, with a view to strengthening public safety. Members of the working group are wide ranging, and include the Home Office, police representatives, BMA, RCGP, GMC, Department of Health, BASC, BSSC, Countryside Alliance, National Gamekeepers Organisation and Information Commissioners, among others.

When police write to each GP to check on an applicant's medical suitability to hold a firearm or shotgun licence they ask the GP to place a firearms marker on the patient's record so that the GP can advise police if a person begins to suffer from a relevant medical condition during the (five year) life of the certificate. If the police do not receive a response from a GP within 21 days of their request for information about an applicant's health, they can progress with the application. Applications are considered on a case by case basis, taking into consideration all available information.

Revised guidance was developed as a result of the group's work. The Government has been clear that the arrangements would be kept under review and this includes looking at how the arrangements are working in particular areas and speaking with interested parties.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

**CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP**  
**MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY**