



April 2022

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about our peatlands.

Peatlands are an iconic feature of our landscapes and are the UK's largest stores of carbon. They also provide vital ecosystem services, supplying over a quarter of the UK's drinking water, decreasing flood risk, and providing food and shelter for rare wildlife. When peat is extracted or becomes degraded, the carbon stored inside the bog is released as carbon dioxide, contributing to climate change. With only 13% of them in a near-natural state, I welcome that the Government's 2021 England Peat Action Plan sets out how it intends to restore, sustainably manage, and protect our peatlands.

Peat is extracted in the UK for primarily horticultural purposes. I welcome the Government's consultation on peat in horticulture in England and Wales, asking for views on new measures to end the use of peat and peat containing products in horticulture in England and Wales, including a ban on the retail sale of peat by the end of this Parliament. This consultation also examines other measures, including mandatory annual reporting of peat sale volumes and the feasibility of introducing a point-of-sale charge for the purchase of growing media containing peat. It considers potential exemptions, including for scientific purposes and a maximum of peat allowed in certain products. I look forward to reading the Government's response to the consultation soon.

In the Government's Net Zero Strategy, there is the commitment to aim to restore approximately 280,000 hectares of peatland in England by 2050. The Government has increased funding to the Nature for Climate Fund to over £750 million by 2024-25, working towards its ambition to restore 35,000 hectares of peatland across England and treble woodland creation rates, by 2025.

Ministers are exploring future funding options through the development of our environmental land management schemes, including learning from the recommendations of the Lowland Peat Agricultural Taskforce.

I am aware that sustainable alternatives to peat, which are of comparable quality to peat-based products, are currently available. These are often made up of peat-free materials derived from more sustainable sources, such as wood fibre and bark, green compost, wool, coir and other materials. Work is ongoing to help those who have not already switched to peat-free products to do so. I am assured that my ministerial colleagues will work to develop and enact solutions to end the use of peat and peat containing products.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.



**Chris Heaton-Harris**  
Member of Parliament for Daventry  
House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA  
Tel: 020 7219 7048

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Chris'.

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