



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

May 2018

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about sky lanterns.

I understand your concerns and am certain that this question is being taken very seriously indeed. You may be interested to know that the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) commissioned a report into the potential for sky lanterns to cause harm to farm animals. It concluded that it is not possible to quantify any damage to animal welfare in ways that would justify a ban, but it did indicate that there was a significant danger of fire.

Defra has been working with other Government departments in considering options for mitigating risks and discouraging the use of these lanterns. The report suggests that voluntary action taken by, for example, the hospitality sector, as well as publicity by Defra to raise public awareness of the potential risks, does work and Ministers will continue to focus on it.

I also welcome more recent safety guidance from Defra for the use of sky lanterns, and would urge people to follow it. Any future action to regulate the use of sky lanterns will need to be proportionate to the problem and backed by reliable evidence.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Chris".

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY