



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

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By email: Jane_Perham@sandwell.gov.uk

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Dear Kerrie,

Thank you for your letter dated 14 January, to the Secretary of State, Rt Hon Kwasi Kwarteng MP, regarding the use of fireworks. I am replying as this matter falls within my Ministerial portfolio.

I would like to reassure you that the Government takes the issues associated with the sale and use of fireworks seriously. There is a comprehensive regulatory framework already in place for fireworks that strikes the right balance for people to enjoy fireworks, whilst aiming to reduce risks and disturbances to people and animals.

Existing legislation controls the sale, availability and use of fireworks. For example, there is an 11pm curfew in place for the use of fireworks, with later exceptions only for the traditional firework periods of November 5, Diwali, New Year's Eve and the Chinese New Year. Using fireworks outside the curfew hours is a criminal offence enforced by the Police and can lead to imprisonment and a substantial fine. There is also a 120-decibel noise limit on the fireworks available to consumers.

Current legislation restricts retailers to only selling consumer fireworks during seasonal celebrations as set out above. Retailers may only supply fireworks outside these traditional periods if they obtain a license from their local licensing authority. Local Authority Trading Standards work with retailers to ensure fireworks sold are safe, and they have powers to enforce against those who place non-compliant fireworks on the market. Trading Standards (and local fire and rescue authorities in metropolitan counties) can also enforce against those selling fireworks without an appropriate licence, for example, outside the normal selling period.

The Government has no current plans to place further restrictions on the sale of fireworks to the public, but we continue to monitor the situation. We have, however, been carrying out an ongoing programme of work on fireworks, in response to concerns raised by the public. This has included:

- Commissioning research by Ipsos Mori that provided evidence on consumer attitudes towards and behaviours around using fireworks in the UK. The key findings have informed our public awareness campaigns and support the need to educate consumers on fireworks use;
- Commissioning noise research to test the decibel level of commonly used fireworks, in response to issues raised around noise and disturbance. The objective of the testing work is to help us understand the decibel level associated with a range of fireworks and

whether they are compliant with the regulations. The results of the testing will be available in due course;

- Engaging with Local Authorities and animal welfare organisations to better understand what specific issues they face; and
- Engaging with the fireworks industry to consider what action they can take to promote consumer safety.

The Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) also runs an annual public awareness campaign on fireworks, working in partnership with animal welfare organisations, the industry and charities supporting vulnerable groups, to promote the safe and considerate use to the public. The campaign for the 2021 fireworks season had almost double the reach of previous campaigns promoting safe and considerate use.

Thank you for taking the time to write. I hope you finds this response helpful.

Yours sincerely,

PAUL SCULLY MP

Minister for Small Business, Consumers & Labour Markets
Minister for London