



The Tidy Britain All-Party Parliamentary Group

Tinderbox Britain

1st November 2022, 15:00-16:00
Room N, Portcullis House

Minutes

Speakers

Allison Ogden-Newton OBE, Chief Executive of Keep Britain Tidy

Greg Ashman, Deputy Commissioner, London Fire Brigade

Present

Selaine Saxby MP (Acting Chair)

Simon Fell MP (Vice Chair)

Heather Wheeler MP

Guests

Paul Thomson, City of London

Tristan Vetta, City of London

Tony Leach, Parks for London

Ed Stannard, Parks for London

Lizzie Kenyon, Keep Britain Tidy

15:07	Welcome and introduction Selaine Saxby MP, Acting Chair
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ms Saxby MP welcomed members to the meeting and thanked Kevin Hollinrake MP for entrusting her with the role of acting chair and

	<p>congratulated him for his appointment as Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Saxby MP outlined her interest in the issue of single-use BBQs with regards to multiple fires that have been caused within her own constituency. She thanked Keep Britain Tidy for their nation-wide campaign to ban disposable BBQs and for their support of her Private Members' Bill, which has also received widespread support from her colleagues. • She thanked the fire services for their prompt responses to the multiple fires that occurred this summer, after receiving the highest number of callouts since Second World War. • Ms Saxby MP introduced speakers Greg Ashman (Deputy Commissioner, London Fire Brigade) and Allison Ogden–Newton (CEO, Keep Britain Tidy) to the meeting.
<p>15:05</p>	<p>Private Members' Bill to mitigate the damage caused by disposable barbeques</p> <p>Selain Saxby MP, Acting Chair</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Saxby MP announced that the Private Members' Bill to mitigate damage caused by disposable BBQs will be heard in the Chamber on 22nd November. • Mr Fell MP asked for his signature to be added to the Bill. • Alongside the risk of fires caused by single-use BBQs, Ms Saxby MP outlined the additional risk of increased littering becoming a burden on local communities. • Mr Fell MP highlighted that in his local constituency of Barrow and Furness, there were many examples of fires causing injuries to children on beaches alongside other accidents caused by disposable BBQs which he will forward to Ms Saxby MP. • Tony Leach (Parks for London) asked whether there might be a risk to poorer communities who use disposable BBQs to keep warm in the winter?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greg Ashman attested to numerous cases of people using disposable BBQs in tents and houses.
<p>15.15</p>	<p>The impact of wildfires on the London Fire Brigade Greg Ashman, Deputy Commissioner, LFB</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greg Ashman briefly outlined his 30-year career with the London Fire Brigade, including as lead investigator into the Grenfell Tower tragedy. • He gave a timeline of events from the 18th – 19th July 2022, where the LFB received double the number of callouts in a single week compared to the previous year. On 19th July, the LFB declared a major incident with some fires requiring up to 30 fire engines to bring them under control. Additional resources were required from the Essex Fire Service. • The UK Met Office issued a red weather warning as temperatures rose above 40°C in the capital. The LFB shared messages with the public on how to reduce fire risks, as the heatwave had caused grassland and open spaces to become extremely dry. This advice included the safe disposal of rubbish (particularly glass bottles that can magnify sunlight) and to not use disposable BBQs on open/public land. • In July 2022, the LFB wrote to all London local authorities asking them to join them in their call to temporarily ban single-use BBQs in all public parks and open spaces. Following 19th July, the London Fire Commissioner called for a total ban of all disposable BBQs which was supported by several major retailers who pledged to remove them from sale, including Aldi, Marks & Spencer, Southern Co-op and Tesco. • In August 2022, Assistant Commissioner for the London Fire Brigade, Jonathan Smith, went out on social media repeatedly asking people not to litter and not to use disposable BBQs. The LFB continued to battle grass fires throughout August as the hot weather persisted. • Some of the key takeaways included the effectiveness of proactive communication in keeping members of the public and media informed via live incident reporting and safety messaging, alongside the decision to step up the LFB’s campaign against the use of disposable BBQs. The LFB have subsequently begun a review of this major incident to see how they can improve responses for future, in light of a warming climate.

15:25	The need for a shifting perspective on litter in the face of a heating climate Allison Ogden-Newton, CEO, KBT
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allison Ogden-Newton thanked everyone involved in this important discussion – a matter that she has campaigned on for many years. She welcomed Ms Saxby MP’s Private Members’ Bill and hoped that it would receive support from both sides of the House. She thanked Greg for his presentation and highlighted how wildfires have become mainstream in the media this year, with Autumn Watch reporting over 700 wildfires this summer alone in the UK.• She called on members to support Keep Britain Tidy’s campaign for an outright ban on so-called disposable BBQs and to #BanTheFlamingThings.• Following a statement released earlier this year by climate scientists from the LSE’s Grantham Institute, Allison reiterated that the UK can no longer think of itself as a “cold country” and that we must urgently implement a Heat Risk Strategy in order to mitigate the increasing risks to human and animal lives.• Allison warned of the impacts on local authorities of disposable BBQs and that even with cooling emollient, these items take many hours to cool down and are disposed of or left whilst still at risk of reigniting. In a recent survey conducted with Keep Britain Tidy’s local authority network members, 71% of councils reported that they had needed to pay repair costs for damage caused by single-use BBQs.• In addition to causing damage to precious wildlife and habitats, examples of devastating injuries include those sustained by Toby Tyler, who had stepped in sand after a disposable BBQ had been removed and who subsequently bears physical and mental scars 2 years on.• Allison praised Greg for his presentation and outlined steps that we can take to aid the fire service in their plight to put an end to unnecessary wildfires. She called for the inclusion of glass in a Deposit Return Scheme and the outright banning of sky lanterns and disposable BBQs. As has been shown by examples in other countries, this could remove up to 90% of glass from litter.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She highlighted the quick responses from supermarkets to address the issue and has had positive conversations with retailers who are prepared to find permanent and meaningful solutions. Keep Britain Tidy received a record number of support from councils in their recent survey on disposable BBQs, with 88% of local authorities wishing to see an intervention. Allison stressed that we cannot ignore this issue and must accept that regulations must come into play to protect both the environment and the public.
<p>15:35</p>	<p>Questions</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tony Leach, Parks for London, voiced his concern that the Private Members Bill is asking to ban disposable BBQs only in specific areas and questioned why a blanket ban hadn't been called for? • Ms Saxby MP confirmed that it is a first step in the right direction and that the Government are taking incremental steps towards addressing this issue. • Allison expressed her support for Ms Saxby MP's Bill and that it will allow us to progress the conversation with retailers. • Ms Wheeler MP questioned whether councils have the power to issue a local edit? • Tony confirmed that they can but that they still need to be enforced. • Tristan Vetta, City of London, highlighted that many incidents happen at night and that a number of local authority areas are understaffed. He supported Greg's claim that public messaging is very effective. • Lizzie Kenyon, Keep Britain Tidy, highlighted opportunities for behavioural research so that we can understand motivating factors and how the public respond to different messaging. • Paul Thomson, City of London, shared that increased fire risks have been reported by Epping Forest, as people from homes without gardens have come to cook there alongside an increased number of smokers spending time in the woodland. Despite supersized signs highlighting fire risks, these activities are still taking place. The City of London has also invested in more specialist fire equipment which they are sharing with their colleagues

	<p>in Essex. They would welcome joint messaging with Keep Britain Tidy to educate people on fire risks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Saxby MP highlighted how Storm Eunice sparked quick action and that we need to think about how we use the red weather warnings in a similar way to drive behaviour change. • Greg suggested that we could use incremental amber warnings to highlight where certain activities could be permitted. • Allison highlighted that different countries around the world are taking steps to protect their environments from fire risks and that we must do the same, albeit incrementally. • Greg reminded members that fire does not discriminate and when conditions are dry, it will spread quickly.
15:55	<p>Summary, closing remarks and AOB Selaine Saxby MP, Acting Chair</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Saxby MP thanked members for their contributions and added that she looks forward to keeping the conversation going in the lead up to and after the Private Members' Bill on 22nd November. She encouraged members to share resources and promote work through public messaging.



Keep Britain Tidy provides the secretariat for the Tidy Britain APPG