

**From:** Andrew Edgington <[andrew.edgington77XXXgmail.com](mailto:andrew.edgington77XXXgmail.com)>

**Date:** 28 February 2014 17:10:19 GMT

**To:** Steve Webb MP <[steveXXXstevewebb.org.uk](mailto:steveXXXstevewebb.org.uk)>

**Subject: Re: Litter**

Dear Steve,

Thank you for passing my concerns to Louise Ellman. I would be grateful if you could pass this response back to her.

Obviously it would be better if people didn't 'drop litter in the first place' and we should be discouraging them from doing so. I would be interested to see details of any specific planned expenditure by HA on such 'discouragement', alongside evidence of expenditure on litter clearance.

Of course, none of this alters the fact that the HA has a legal duty to keep the network free of litter, and it is obviously failing in its duty. The HA is clearly not managing its agents/contractors properly, and it strikes me that the Secretary of State is not managing the HA properly either.

Mr Silverman has made some very detailed, accurate and powerful points about the way HA is conducting itself in this area and he deserves a proper response and not the same old excuses.

If Mr Dalton thinks people will be impressed with his statistic of 200,000 sacks then he is mistaken. I regularly drive onto the M32 at Junction 1. The slip road verges have not been cleared for at least two years and I have photographs to prove it. I recently used Junction 11 of the M5 at Gloucester and it was disgusting. If you haven't had a look for yourself, I suggest you glance out of your car window next time you join a motorway.

The HA has had extensive experience of litter clearance and it is totally possible to implement a safe system of work. There are many many areas of work that are dangerous but essential.

Over several years of taking an interest in the subject of litter ( I coordinate a litter picking group of volunteers in my home village) I have to say I have seen hardly any genuine interest in this matter from politicians and senior officials of local authorities or central government. Complaints are made; acknowledgements are given: letters are passed on; replies are prepared by officials; excuses are made and nothing happens.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Edgington

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On 28 Feb 2014, at 16:18, "Steve Webb MP" <[steveXXXstevewebb.org.uk](mailto:steveXXXstevewebb.org.uk)> wrote:

Dear Andrew,

I have received the following email from Louise Ellman MP in response to your concerns about litter on the verges of motorways and slip roads. She explains that the Select Committee has spoken with both Mr Silverman and the Chief Executive of the Highways

Agency as part of their evidence-gathering, and you can see the Highways Agency's views online.

I hope her reply is useful.

Yours sincerely

Steve Webb MP

Dear Mr Edgington,

You recently wrote to Steve Webb MP regarding motorways and litter. Mr Webb passed your email onto me as you requested.

The Committee is aware of Mr Silverman's recent submissions on this subject and the Committee secretariat have spoken to him directly on this subject. On Monday, the Committee heard evidence from Graham Dalton, the Chief Executive of the Highways Agency. During the session the Committee asked him directly about his views on litter and the motorways. Mr Dalton mentioned that the Highway's Agency collects 200,000 sacks of litter every year and works closely with local authorities to maintain standards on trunk roads. He said litter collection could be expensive and dangerous and would prefer to prioritise spending on discouraging motorists from dropping litter in the first place. You can listen to his evidence on the Transport Committee's website:

<http://www.parliamentlive.tv/Main/Player.aspx?meetingId=14942&player=windowsmedia>

A transcript of the session will be available on the website by the end of this week.

Yours sincerely,

Louise Ellman MP

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Dear Steve,

I live at 35 The Land, Coalpit Heath, Bristol, BS36 2LJ. I am writing to you as my MP about the continued littered state of the verges alongside our motorways. You will be aware of this if you drive along the M32 and look at its slip roads, particularly the junction near Frenchay. The condition of these roads is a national disgrace in spite of the fact that the government has an obligation to ensure that they are kept clear of litter.

The Commons Transport Select Committee is currently carrying out an inquiry into the Strategic Road Network/ Motorways in England. The Clean Highways campaign (led by Peter Silverman) have tabled a submission which deals specifically with motorway litter. It identifies the relevant management failings within the Highways Agency and the reforms required to tackle the problem.

As you will be aware from previous correspondence, I have written to the Highways Agency about the M32 several times and feel that they are only really interested in fobbing me off with the usual line about this being the responsibility of the contractor. In my view contract oversight is very weak, and at the heart of the problem.

The committee is under no obligation to consider Peter Silverman's submission. If you share my concerns I would be most grateful if you could therefore bring it to their attention, possibly by forwarding this e-mail to the Chair, Mrs Louise Ellman, or to another member of the committee.

Kind regards

Andrew Edgington