



Letter to The Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP

Announce a new National Plastic Health Impact Research Fund in the Autumn Budget on 27 October

Dear Chancellor,

The UK urgently needs a National Plastic Health Impact Research Fund.

There is now clear consensus across the UK that your Autumn Budget on 27 October is the perfect time to announce the measure.

There is growing concern that plastic may be harming our health. For example, we know that the presence of persistent particles that the body can't break down, including micro- and nano-plastics, is associated with chronic disease including rheumatoid arthritis, diabetes, and cardiovascular and respiratory diseases.

Despite this concern, research into plastic's impact on our health is drastically underfunded. In contrast, over the next 20 years, £2.3 trillion will be invested in plastic production, doubling the amount generated, tripling the amount flowing into our ocean and significantly increasing all our exposure to plastic.

The Government is right to set out Britain's ambition to be a world leader in research and development across health, life-sciences, and manufacturing. And allocating £15 billion to achieve this in 2021/2022 was crucial.

Along with more than 80 NGOs, scientists and MPs, Common Seas is asking the Treasury to allocate £15 million of funding towards urgent research into the human health impacts of plastic. This would represent just 0.1 percent of Whitehall's total R&D spend.

Like people across Britain, I agree with such a call. And I passionately believe a National Plastic Health Impact Research Fund should be included in the Autumn Budget later this month.

Yours sincerely,