

MPs Back News Media During Coronavirus Outbreak

“The country’s news media - broadcast, print and online - are fulfilling a vital role ensuring people receive accurate and timely health advice from the NHS and Public Health England during the pandemic, so everyone understands how important it is to follow the advice to stay at home in order to protect the NHS and save lives.”



**Rt Hon Oliver Dowden CBE MP –
Hertsmere and Secretary of State for
Digital, Culture, Media and Sport,
Conservative Party**

“It is really important that people are able to access local news to gain an understanding of what is going on in their area.

Newspapers are absolutely vital when it comes to reporting on some of the key messages that we all need to take on board so we can tackle this virus. I hope some clarity and guidance can be issued to make sure it is understood that newspaper deliveries can – and should – still take place.

...
Home deliveries are an important part of this battle to keep people self-isolating.”



**Rt Hon Gavin Williamson CBE
MP – South Staffordshire and
Secretary of State for Education,
Conservative Party**

“The Maidenhead Advertiser is a highly respected local newspaper and so it is right that the Government has offered support through a number of schemes which have been welcomed by Baylis Media Ltd.

However, an extension of the business rates holiday to local publishers would help to ease the considerable pressure they are currently facing and enable local newspapers to continue to produce trusted news and information at this time.

As a vital part of the local community, we must make sure The Maidenhead Advertiser can remain open for business.”



**Rt Hon Theresa May MP –
Maidenhead, Conservative Party**

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“We need to do everything we can do in order to make sure we have a viable local newspaper when we come through the other side of this crisis.

Local newspapers are the lifeblood of our society. They connect often vulnerable people with local care-givers and news of what is going on outside their front door.

I would call on every local authority, everyone involved in the distribution and sale of these newspapers, to help make sure that we still have local newspapers worth their names.

We don't want to go down the same road that America has done, where they have seen literally hundreds of local newspapers disappear in short order.”



Julian Knight MP – Solihull and Chair of the House of Commons Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee, Conservative Party

“The only way we are going to get through this safe and strong is if we pull together, and we can't do that unless we are listening and talking to each other. Local news is absolutely essential in making sure that happens.

If we want good morale and community cohesion during this struggle then we need local news like never before.”



Rt Hon Liam Byrne MP – Birmingham, Hodge Hill and Shadow Minister (Digital, Culture, Media and Sport) (Digital Economy), Labour Party

“Local newspapers have never been more hard-pressed economically. But never more valuable to the community than today, during this crisis.

It is absolutely essential that advertisers, owners and the government put their shoulder to the wheel now to ensure these hugely valued local papers survive.”



Rt Hon Andrew Mitchell MP – Sutton Coldfield, Conservative Party

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“ The Romford Recorder is a lifeline for so many in our community who don't necessarily access the internet need to be kept informed about what's going on in Romford and Havering.

We need our local paper to continue as a source of valuable news and information for everyone, including MPs! ”



**Andrew Rosindell MP, Romford,
Conservative Party**

“ Local newspapers provide a key platform for information and advice, update residents on the situation in their communities and for those self-isolating at home, a link to the outside world. ”



**Rt Hon Elizabeth Truss MP
- South West Norfolk and
Minister for Women and
Equalities, and Secretary of
State for International Trade,
Conservative Party**

“ One of the businesses that the government have said should stay open is newsagents, and there's a good reason for that.

People need to stay well informed both on national matters but also on local matters that affect Norfolk and the surrounding area. ”



**Jerome Mayhew MP, Broadland,
Conservative Party**

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“ At the moment, having that newspaper come through the door to keep abreast of what’s happening is something to enjoy and look forward to.

It’s really comforting and gives you a routine of ‘here comes the paper’, I’ll sit and flip through that for a couple of hours. I’m fully supportive of that. ”



**Duncan Baker MP, North Norfolk,
Conservative Party**

“ I have always thought the local press is important. I grew up in Newham and we had our paper home delivered for as long as I can remember.

The Recorder is an important source of local information, particularly during this time. ”



**Lyn Brown MP, West Ham and
Shadow Minister (Treasury),
Labour Party**

“ Delivery services may never have been so important if done safely.

And local papers across the country, like our EDP and Evening News, are working hard to help the community stay connected. ”



**Chloe Smith MP – Norwich
North and Minister of State
(Cabinet Office),
Conservative Party**

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“ It is shocking that so many newspapers are fighting for their survival because of the coronavirus. Many towns and boroughs are at real risk of losing their once thriving local paper.

The extra cost and logistics of running a newspaper during a crisis like this are proving too difficult for many smaller media companies, so the government must look closely at how it helps support local newspapers carry on producing news in the coming weeks and months.

For many the local newspaper is their most trusted source for community news. And crucially our local papers are essential to holding local politicians to account.

Nobody wants to see their local paper disappear overnight, that is why I'll be encouraging the government to intervene and offer them any support they might need.”



**Dame Margaret Hodge MP – Barking,
Labour Party**

“ For newspapers, there is a move towards online but there are an awful lot of people who do still rely on their daily newspaper for updates and for highlighting the community support out there as well, which is so important.

In some of the more far flung parts of Norfolk and Suffolk, the internet connections are not possibly as good as they should be and that does put a much greater emphasis on newspapers.

The other thing is that those providing newspapers can do so while complying with social distancing arrangements and they should do so, but also if they're going daily they can spot if there are issues such as curtains left drawn or milk bottles uncollected, and they can flag those up.

That's really important and I'm very supportive of that.”



**Peter Aldous MP – Waveney,
Conservative Party**

“ Local newspapers like the Ilford Recorder are the bedrock of democracy.

Regional newspapers like the Evening Standard and national papers are never going to bring a level of scrutiny of our local council and decision makers or offer the connectedness that local news gives to our community by reporting on the good news, the bad news and everything else that goes on in Redbridge. It's really important as everyone is going through a hard time that everyone still supports their local paper.

The local paper is not only a way for us all to stay in touch with each other but we'd be lost without it. We wouldn't have the faintest idea what's happening around us.

It would be a tragedy if local papers like the Ilford Recorder were a casualty of Covid-19.”



**Wes Streeting MP – Ilford North,
Labour Party**

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“ Local papers like the Ham and High / Brent and Kilburn Times are the lifeblood of our communities.

As we face long periods of social isolation to tackle coronavirus, local papers have the power to bring our communities together. It is through local papers that we will keep abreast of what is happening in our nearby hospitals. And local journalists will be the ones holding our councils to account for the support they must now deliver to the individuals and businesses who will suffer.

“We are lucky to have such a strong local press in Hampstead and Kilburn, but we will only have it as long as we are prepared to fight for it. I will always stand up for our local papers and do everything I can to support them through this crisis.”



Tulip Siddiq MP - Hampstead and Kilburn and Shadow Minister for Early Years, Labour Party

“ Local newspapers are a vital part of how we receive news and information in our community, and I would hate to see them fall victim to the current crisis like so many other small businesses – that’s why I am urging residents to continue supporting the Barking and Dagenham Post and the Romford Recorder.

The government have introduced a number of employment support measures but many local papers are still folding – this week I will be contacting the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport to see what offer the government can make to support local newspapers.”



Jon Cruddas MP - Dagenham and Rainham, Labour Party

“ It’s a really tough time at the moment, for everyone here in Ilford - but I’ve been inspired by the solidarity and willingness to help one another through. Part of that community spirit is hearing the good news stories happening across Ilford. Ilford Recorder has been brilliant in highlighting the work of volunteers, community groups, MPs and councillors to help those in need.

Now, they need your support - so make sure you support our local newspaper, by buying a copy, or ordering one to be delivered to your home, so we can get through these difficult times, connected by powerful stories about what’s really happening in our community, and that those with power are rightly held to account be a strong local newspaper.”



Sam Tarry MP – Ilford South, Labour Party

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“

Local newspapers such as the East Anglian Daily Times and Ipswich Star play a vital role in reporting key messages, helping to communicate essential information and keeping local residents connected with what's going on.

As we try to tackle this national emergency, it's essential that people follow the Government's advice to stay at home, protect our NHS and save lives. Home deliveries are an effective way of helping people to stay at home and stop the spread of the virus, whilst at the same time supporting our local shops.

As long as sensible precautions are being taken, such as deliverers wearing gloves and maintaining social-distancing advice, I hope that newspaper deliveries will still take place here in Suffolk.

”



Dr Dan Poulter MP - Central Suffolk and North Ipswich, Conservative Party

“

More than ever before all of us are conscious of how much we depend upon other people. More than ever before each of us realises the importance of keeping in touch and keeping informed.

Local newspapers are part of the glue that binds a community together — that allows people to share both in their neighbours successes and their sadness. Above all local newspapers keep people informed about what is important in their own local area. At a time when isolation and rumour are causing real fear and uncertainty, the safe delivery of accurate local news is an essential part of how we can get through this crisis together.

”



Barry Gardiner MP – Brent North and Shadow Minister (Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy), Labour Party

“

At a time like this it is vital that people can find out what is happening in their local area and news organisations have a vital role to play.

While the news is available online, many people do not have access to that. And many of those who do not have access are those who are older and rely on the newspapers themselves for the news.

It is very important that there are people who are able to deliver these papers to households to ensure those who are self-isolating do not feel any more cut off than they are.

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Tom Hunt MP – Ipswich, Conservative Party

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“ The local paper - in our area the EDP and the parish magazine - is both a vital source of information for local communities and a community of support in itself.

Medics say the risk from newspaper delivery is infinitesimal. Let's keep washing our hands and keep the local paper delivery. ”



George Freeman MP – Mid Norfolk, Conservative Party

“ Local news organisations are very important for communities, especially for those people who are self-isolating.

And it is very important that those who are not online are able to get their news delivered so they do not risk going out themselves - or face the prospect of feeling even more isolated than they are. ”



Will Quince MP – Colchester and Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Department for Work and Pensions), Conservative Party

“ It is very important that people are able to get the news about what is happening in their communities - and for many of those who are having to stay at home at the moment their daily delivery is very important. Many don't have other ways of getting the news.

It's also good exercise for those delivering the newspapers and at the time they are being delivered there aren't many other people about at the moment.

And from what I understand, newspapers are not likely to be able to carry the virus so people should not worry about that. ”



Jo Churchill MP – Bury St Edmunds and Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Department of Health and Social Care), Conservative Party

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“ It is important that local newspapers are able to be safely delivered into the community. Whilst there is a significant amount of information and news available online, it is important to remember not everyone uses the internet or social media.

Continuing self-isolation is critical to help protect the NHS and save lives, but, for some, the weekly local newspaper is a vital part of helping keep people connected with the outside world. Please continue to stay home, protect the NHS and save lives.

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**Selaine Saxby MP – North Devon,
Conservative Party**

“ During this public health crisis, a great way to ensure you are up to date with the latest health guidance and local news in your area is to get a local paper delivered to your door.

Not only is it perfectly safe to do so, it is encouraged by the Government and WHO so that you keep in touch with your community and stay informed.

”



**Neil Parish MP – Tiverton and
Honiton, Conservative Party**

“ Local journalism plays an important role in communities across East Devon and never more so than now. The World Health Organisation has confirmed newspapers can't pass on coronavirus, and it is completely safe to keep reading them.

We must continue to buy our local newspapers to support journalists working hard to share information about the virus and report stories which make a difference in East Devon.

”



**Simon Jupp MP – East Devon,
Conservative Party**

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“ For anyone who isn’t digital, or who just likes reading words on paper rather than on-screen, a physical newspaper like the Mercury’s print edition is the best way to keep in touch with what’s happening in and around Weston during the lockdown.

I’ve spoken to the Editor to make sure their deliverers are keeping themselves and everybody else safe, by wearing gloves, for example. And, so long as they do, they’re providing a vital lifeline for people who can’t get out and about.”



John Penrose MP – Weston-super-Mare, Conservative Party

“ Our local news outlets are hugely important – especially at a time like this in a rural community like Somerset. Things are changing so rapidly, and I applaud the local media for ensuring the community are still getting the important information in these exceptionally difficult circumstances.

We are all doing our part to protect the vulnerable through this crisis, and often those who are not connected online rely heavily on print media. This makes it more vital than ever that everyone can access the important updates – not just those with access to a smart phone or computer.”



James Heappey MP – Wells and Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Ministry of Defence), Conservative Party

“ Local newspapers play an invaluable role in our local communities. The Comet and I have broken major local and national stories together over the years, ran campaigns and been at the heart of our town. More people than ever get their local news from their local paper and it is a huge source of support for those who are lonely or isolated.

It is how local community groups and charities tell their good news stories and bring a smile to us all. I know many of us will miss the Comet and we have to make sure it can be delivered to as many homes as possible.”



Stephen McPartland MP – Stevenage, Conservative Party

MPs Back News Media During Coronavirus Outbreak

“

In the current circumstances, the Hunts Post has an extremely important role in the reporting of accurate and up-to-date news and guidance. Particularly as through its delivery network it can reach many people who may not have access to online sources of information.

With more people potentially feeling isolated from their usual community networks as a result of the need to stay at home, the Hunts Post is delivering a vital service to our communities through the provision of local news and appropriate guidance and advice. ”



Jonathan Djanogly MP,
Huntingdon, Conservative Party

“

I am sure that my constituents will find reading their much-loved local papers a comfort and welcome relief during the Covid 19 crisis. They will be able to read heart-warming stories about the generosity of volunteers and the great local response.

The papers map the life events of local people and give the real news. I welcome the effort being made to keep up the home deliveries (wearing gloves) and know that many people will also check the e-editions. We must keep local news. ”



Rt Hon Sir Oliver Heald QC
MP - North East
Hertfordshire, Conservative
Party

“

Local media plays a critical role in keeping people informed about events and developments in their communities.

I know the Royston Crow is a highly respected and valued local paper - and I know how influential it is. It is really important that we all support our local newspapers. ”



Anthony Browne MP –
South Cambridgeshire,
Conservative Party

MPs Back News Media During Coronavirus Outbreak

“ In the present crisis, the role of newspapers, radio and television is absolutely vital in ensuring that people know what is happening and that they receive regular updates on what the government is asking us all to do to keep everyone.

The safest way to receive your newspaper is to have it delivered - and many local shops are doing an excellent job in keeping our communities going, including maintaining newspaper deliveries. ”



**Richard Bacon MP -
South Norfolk,
Conservative Party**

“ As a local MP, the job of local newspapers is to scrutinise us and hold us to account. That can be uncomfortable sometimes!

However, there is no doubt that we need local newspapers not just through this crisis but afterwards as well. I will be working with HM Treasury to see if more support can be given. ”



**Bim Afolami MP -
Hitchin and
Harpenden,
Conservative Party**

“ It's vital that residents can continue to receive trusted local news whilst self-isolating and I whole heartedly support this campaign to ensure that local newspapers can continue to be delivered, as per global health advice. Local newspapers are a great source of facts and information in all climates, but especially now as fake news and misinformation can wreak havoc.

In St Albans and across the country, there are wonderful stories emerging about the strength of community spirit and local newspapers can ensure that we all share in those uplifting and heart-warming stories from the safety of our own homes. ”



**Daisy Cooper MP – St
Albans and Spokesperson
(Digital, Culture, Media
and Sport), Liberal
Democrat Party**

“ I'm supportive of local news and the job that they're doing in trying to make sure people are kept informed, engaging people with their local communities, and aware of best practice.

The dissemination of reliable information at a time when we're all so isolated has become more important than ever.

I think it reminds people of the importance of local news - there are many outlets who have gone under and it should remind us people can use radio, TV and the internet if they're able but local news papers are crucial. ”



**Clive Lewis MP -
Norwich South and
Shadow
Minister (Treasury),
Labour Party**

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“As someone who much prefers a hard copy newspaper to reading them online, I would hate to see anything that prevented the Grimsby Telegraph from making its way both to newsagents and those who want it delivered through their letter box.

Clearly I wouldn't want to put people who deliver papers at risk but it doesn't seem likely they would infringe on any of the social distancing rules and as long as the message is reinforced that they must abide by government guidance, I would have thought there wouldn't have been any major risk. ”



**Martin Vickers
MP –
Cleethorpes,
Conservative
Party**

“My simple view is that we have to apply some common sense here. We need to do what we can to keep everything running - our newspapers, our democracy, our industry - as best we can without taking any risks. That is entirely possible on a newspaper round. When I did a newspaper round it was that early in the morning that I never met anybody.

Even if I did it wouldn't be very difficult to maintain social distancing. Two metres is perfectly possible. It seems to me it would be unwise to rush to this and in so doing potentially damage permanently an institution which lots of people rely on, mainly local newspapers. ”



**Rt Hon David Davis
MP- Haltemprice and
Howden, Conservative
Party**

“At this time when many people who do not use online services run the danger of feeling especially cut off and lonely, having access to the full range of local media - from local newspapers to local radio - is all the more important.

I hope that a common sense means of maintaining local newspaper deliveries is found that meets the current public health needs of fighting Covid-19. ”



**Dame Diana
Johnson MP-
Kingston-upon-
Hull North,
Labour Party**

“Local newspapers are the backbone of our paper services in our country and during the outbreak of COVID-19, local newspapers like the Hull Daily Mail are a vital service for many who live in constituencies like mine.

For those having to self-isolate local newspapers are often the only news information they will receive, which is why it is vital to see those papers still going to print so nobody is left without the critical news that they need during this time. ”



**Karl Turner MP –
Kingston-upon-Hull
East and Shadow
Minister (Transport),
Labour Party**

MPs Back News Media During Coronavirus Outbreak

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The current crisis with many shops closed and the public being asked to stay home poses a huge threat to newspapers around the country.

The Express & Star is a vital part of life in the Black Country. From the smallest local story to the biggest international news it is part of how we see ourselves and the world around us.

The Government has stepped up to help a number of sectors through this unprecedented crisis through rate relief and I hope this can be done for local newspapers too.

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**Rt Hon Pat McFadden MP -
Wolverhampton South East,
Labour Party**

“

Local newspapers are providing a valuable public service in keeping people informed during this crisis.

The Government has come up with a pretty spectacular package to keep things moving, and it would be nice to see publishers included in this policy.

”



**Jane Stevenson MP -
Wolverhampton North East,
Conservative Party**

“

These measures are all about keeping the economy afloat and getting businesses the support they need.

We need the media to be disseminating this vital information. They are essential and we are not going to get the message out without newspapers.

I think extending the business rates holiday to publishers is certainly something that I would like to see the Government consider.

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**Stuart Anderson MP –
Wolverhampton South West**

MPs Back News Media During Coronavirus Outbreak

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Our local newspapers are providing vital services in disseminating a lot of very important information, both digitally and in the traditional sense.

Any industry which is doing a vital role during this crisis deserves support. The Government should think very carefully about extending the level of support to the newspaper industry. ”



**Daniel Kawczynski MP -
Shrewsbury and Atcham,
Conservative Party**

“

At this critical moment of national crisis, local newspapers and other media groups are providing essential information to the public. It's vital they continue trading given that they do such a valuable role.

If they are suffering as a result of a significant reduction in income, like the retail and hospitality sectors, I think there is an argument for them getting some extra support. ”



**Rt Hon Philip Dunne MP –
Ludlow, Conservative Party**

MPs Back News Media During Coronavirus Outbreak

“ At times like these, particularly when much of the information that seems to be flying around the internet is false or in some cases designed to be misleading, a trusted source of local news like local newspapers is vital. ”



**Rt Hon Robert Goodwill MP –
Scarborough and Whitby,
Conservative Party**

“ Local news is a lifeline to communities, and for most of us, we are able to keep up to speed online if we can't pick up a paper. But for some of the most vulnerable, a copy of the Post through their door is their only link to vital local information.

I'm keen to keep this lifeline open for as long as the advice says it's safe. But I also know that the Council are doing all they can to keep people safe, and prevent the spread of Covid-19. So if their advice is that deliveries must for a short time stop, we should remember why they've taken the decision - and work with them to find alternative ways to keep people informed. ”



**Kerry McCarthy MP – Bristol East,
Labour Party**

“ Covid-19 is posing new challenges on a daily basis, especially for those in our community who have little or no family support and don't access their news online. The Post has been doing sterling work in its print edition to keep residents informed.

Ensuring that these people are still reached with local news and information is important, and if safe to do so, it is of course a good thing to see deliveries of newspapers continue. But we also have a duty to listen to medical advice, and understand that councils are acting to protect these people too. If they remove permits on the advice they have, we need to work with the superb local support networks that running locally to find other ways to get the print news through letterboxes. ”



**Karin Smyth MP – Bristol South,
Labour Party**

MPs Back News Media During Coronavirus Outbreak

“ We know you will agree that local media is essential to our democracy as one of the most trusted sources of information for our constituents as well as challenging and holding us as politicians to account.

In this time of crisis, not only is it vital that local newspapers are supported to provide information to people, but also to support those who are in isolation to keep in touch with their local communities. ”

A quote from a letter sent by 23 cross-party MPs across Yorkshire to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

“ Local newspapers like the Somerset County Gazette and other media outlets provide a vital service especially in times of emergency such as we find ourselves in now. They can be invaluable to local communities providing accurate and timely advice as well as essential information.

They are playing a key role in getting out the message that it is vital for people adhere to the guidance, regarding staying at home in order to protect the NHS and save lives. ”



Rebecca Pow MP - Taunton Deane, Conservative Party

“ There has never been a more important time for good quality local newspapers. They provide vital information, let us know what's happening around us when we are staying at home and keep community spirits up.

That's why I am urging residents to continue supporting our local papers.

I'm also calling on the government to immediately commit to spend more of their advertising budget in the Cambridge Independent and Cambridge News and extend the 100% business rates holiday for retail, hospitality and leisure businesses to news publishers. ”



Daniel Zeichner MP – Cambridge, Labour Party

MPs Back News Media During Coronavirus Outbreak

“ Local newspapers play a hugely important role supporting our communities. They provide trusted news and information to many of our constituents.

They are needed more than ever during the current crisis, but they are facing significant challenges due to a sudden drop in advertising revenue and the difficulty in getting newspapers into people's hands. ”



Judith Cummins MP – Bradford South and Shadow Minister (International Trade), Labour Party

“ Local journalism is so important at a time like this.

People need to know where to turn, and what's happening in their area. In Furness, with our tight-knit community, this is more true now than ever.

As we are physically isolated, people are reliant on a vibrant local press to keep us together. ”



Simon Fell MP - Barrow and Furness, Conservative Party

“ Local newspapers like the Farnham Herald and Haslemere Herald are the golden thread running through our local communities. They give us identity and are a lifeline for older residents who do not use the internet.

We must give them the time to develop new, sustainable business models that allow their vital role to continue in the online world. ”



Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP - South West Surrey, Conservative Party

MPs Back News Media During Coronavirus Outbreak

“ Local papers like the Herald and the Post here in East Hampshire are key community assets – if you lose your local paper that’s an asset lost forever. The Reception Year photos, clubs and societies, readers’ letters, local sport, targeted and informative ads that help businesses grow – what the local papers cover is important and special, and just isn’t the same on the internet.

In the current crisis we are seeing local media at the heart of mobilising this huge volunteering wave, and at a time when almost everything is changed, the familiarity of the local paper is comfort for many. While quality local news has always been important, it has never been more important than it is right now.

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**Rt Hon Damian Hinds MP -
East Hampshire,
Conservative Party**

“ Strong scrutiny and reporting of local democracy is an important function of our local news media. In a growing age of online and digital media, we have to remember that a key section of our communities rely on local media to keep updated on key community issues. Residents often have a higher level of trust in local media services and this is in part down to the team of local journalistic talent. Our local newspapers highlights the work of small businesses, community groups and many other news stories which are important to real people.

During this difficult Covid-19 pandemic it is even more important for us to work together to support local newspapers like the South London Press. I will be doing my bit and I would urge local residents to continue to support and purchase local newspapers.

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**Florence Eshalomi MP – Vauxhall,
Labour Party (Co-Op)**

“ Getting the most up-to-date information out to communities is vital in these unprecedented times. The Sentinel and Stoke-on-Trent Live provide an essential service to the area, ensuring that everyone has access to the latest news and guidance. For the elderly who are self-isolating, and those who do not have access to online resources, the daily print version of The Sentinel is a lifeline which keeps people connected with what is happening not just nationally but also locally in Stoke-on-Trent.

We need to ensure that our local media can continue to operate effectively, including providing an essential delivery service, and that they have our full backing to continue their vital role in the difficult months ahead and beyond.

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**Jo Gideon MP – Stoke-on-Trent Central,
Conservative Party**

MPs Back News Media During Coronavirus Outbreak

“ The news media in Northern Ireland play a vital role in keeping our communities informed and in highlighting the range of activity that takes place on a daily or weekly basis. Whether it is reporting on sport, politics, civic engagement or social activity, our newspapers play a crucial part in maintaining community cohesion.

At regional level, the News Letter has performed this role for a number of centuries and is the oldest print newspaper in these islands. In my own constituency, the Ulster Star and the Dromore Leader weekly newspapers have provided a focal point for our local communities for many years and enabled public representatives like myself to communicate effectively with the people we speak for. This is a vital public service and should be supported at this time.”



Rt Hon Sir Jeffrey Donaldson
MP – Lagan Valley and DUP
Chief Whip, Democratic
Unionist Party

“ Local newspapers are at the heart of our communities. From providing news about the latest happenings in the borough, or reporting on the fortunes of our sports teams; they cover every part of life in our area.

They perform an important function in ensuring local scrutiny of politicians and public bodies takes place close to the people we represent and serve.

The local newspaper is quite simply a key part of the past, present and future in proud towns and villages across the country.”



Conor McGinn MP - St Helens North
and Opposition Whip (Commons),
Labour Party

“ The St Helens Star truly is a community paper. It sheds light on local issues, helps to raise community spirits, and most importantly keeps a check on those in positions of power. The Government needs to urgently present a package that will help local media that is so essential at a time like this.

It is important to know what is happening on a national level, but it is also crucial to be informed about what is happening in our neighbourhoods and on our councils. Democracy is healthier with an independent local paper, and we must do what is necessary to save The Star and other great local papers.”



Marie Rimmer MP - St Helens South
and Whiston, Labour Party

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In these difficult and unprecedented times, local newspapers such as the Westmorland Gazette are absolutely vital in keeping people up to date with what is happening around them.

It's important that both the Government and the public continue to support our local newspapers so that they can carry on delivering this key service.

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Tim Farron MP – Westmorland and Lonsdale, Liberal Democrats Party

“

At this difficult time, local newspapers are providing an essential service in publicising important information and keeping people in touch with the outside world, both through their hard copies and their digital presence.

The industry deserves our support, and I hope that the Government will extend the help it has given to other industries to ensure that local newspapers remain in business and home deliveries carry on.

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Rt Hon Owen Paterson MP - North Shropshire, Conservative Party

“

The South Wales Argus and other regional newspapers are invaluable resources for our constituents, and all the more so at a time of crisis when people are grateful for local information both in print and online - I know locally people look to the Argus first for updates on what is happening in our area.

I'd encourage the government to support the industry in any way it can at this incredibly challenging time.

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Jessica Morden MP - Newport East and Opposition Whip (Commons), Labour Party

MPs Back News Media During Coronavirus Outbreak

“ I am a firm believer in producing local news, which, without the Coronavirus pandemic, has faced great challenges in recent years.

Our local press is a key mechanism of accountability in local and regional democracy and gives a voice to local communities that would otherwise be absent.

Its value should not be underestimated and I call for support for the sector from U.K. Government.”



Nick Thomas-Symonds MP – Torfaen and Shadow Solicitor General, and Shadow Minister (Home Office) (Security), Labour Party

“ The Tottenham Independent is a shining example of the importance of protecting local newspapers.

It provides our communities with vital information about the local area, as well as offering much needed scrutiny on behalf of its readership.

The government should extend the business rates holiday to local publishers to keep them afloat during this unprecedented crisis.”



Rt Hon David Lammy MP – Tottenham, Labour Party

“ The production of high quality regional newspapers is so important at times like this Covid-19 emergency. We need to have local newspapers able to react and respond quickly in providing accurate information to inform local people.

The South Wales Argus is trusted by people across Gwent and they look to the paper to provide up to date news which relates to the area. To lose this would be a tragedy.”



Ruth Jones MP - Newport West, Labour Party

MPs Back News Media During Coronavirus Outbreak

“ In these unprecedented times, when we are all relying more than ever on trustworthy, informed and fair news reporting it is vital that we support our local newspapers.

The Hexham Courant is the cornerstone of Tynedale's local and community news and I back this campaign.

I will also be continuing to support the Courant where I can with public information adverts. We are all in this together, and we will get through it together. ”



**Guy Opperman MP – Hexham,
Conservative Party**

“ As you know, the Coronavirus is causing unprecedented disruption to businesses in every sector of our economy, including our local newspapers who are facing a collapse in advertising revenue which threatens their future viability.

A strong, independent local newspaper is a vital asset for any community. It informs the public, holds to account the powerful and helps bind local communities together. It is an essential part of our local democracy and our communities will be much poorer if our local newspapers cannot weather the storm of Coronavirus.

Moreover, in this age of misinformation and 'fake news' there is a pressing need for Government to communicate its advice to the public in a clear way, carried by trusted local institutions. That is why I am writing to ask if you Department will consider running a public information campaign in our local newspapers - to keep the public informed about the latest guidance while also helping to safeguard the future of our local press. ”



**Mayor Dan Jarvis MBE MP – Barnsley
Central, Labour Party**

“ Strong local communities benefit from a vibrant local media, they hold key decision makers to account, share vital news and information and set an agenda for growth and future optimism. We need trusted news more than ever and local media recruit, train and develop journalists who play a critical role in future society.

Local newspapers, radio and news sites are an important platform for businesses to connect with their customers, so my plea to advertisers is please continue to support your local media – remind your customers about the role you're playing in supporting your local community so that they know about your efforts when we return to better times. ”



**Andy Carter MP - Warrington South
& Chair of the All Party
Parliamentary Group for Media,
Conservative Party**

MPs Back News Media During Coronavirus Outbreak

“The important role of local newspapers is never more apparent than at times of crisis. We need to know what is going on, what help there is out there and we also need to feel connected to one another.

It's really important that we continue to support our local papers so that they can weather this storm and continue to play a vital role in our daily lives. ”



Simon Hart MP - Carmarthen West and South Pembrokeshire, Conservative Party

“In an age of fake news and conspiracy theories, the local press has become more important than ever.

With real journalists who are from our community and living among us, the local press can be trusted to report on the right issues and focus on the most useful information at this time.

Pembrokeshire is going through an incredibly challenging period and one way we can all help the community effort is to back our local papers. ”



Rt Hon Stephen Crabb MP - Preseli Pembrokeshire, Conservative Party

“The role of local newspapers such as the Portsmouth News, Hampshire Chronicle and Daily Echo, is absolutely vital in normal times and even more so during this national emergency. Once they are gone, their communities will be the poorer for it.

Help is needed and I support a business rates holiday for the industry. Newspapers are suffering from this crisis with plunging advertising income even though demand for local news is rising. We must recognise the important role all the media has to play in communicating with the population during this outbreak and step in and help.

Newspapers must also continue to be delivered because the risk of catching coronavirus through doing so is tiny. To have a trusted source of news coming through the doors is so important. ”



Mrs Flick Drummond MP – Meon Valley, Conservative Party

MPs Back News Media During Coronavirus Outbreak

“ Local media is important all the time but it really comes into its own at a time when peoples’ focus is understandably a lot more local and they have more time than ever to consume it.

The one, and only, positive out of all of this is the incredible big society we’ve seen swing into action to help those who need it.

Local newspaper are so important in spreading word of that and making us all feel that we’re not alone.”



Steve Brine MP – Winchester, Conservative Party

“ Local media including the print and online are vital parts of our society in normal times. In these unprecedented times their role is amplified as they provide a reliable and trustworthy source of information for local communities and individuals to rely on.

I have always been a strong supporter of local media and now more than ever their importance is critical. If some Government support is required during this crisis then it should be forthcoming.”



John Stevenson MP – Carlisle, Conservative Party

“ We need our local newspapers and allied media now more than ever. They are the lifeblood of our communities, especially in areas like Cumbria. They provide important information on the Covid-19 pandemic and importantly help people stay connected.

I am strongly supportive of Government schemes to help this sector at this time and encourage folk to keep buying their local paper, keep writing pieces for them and keep taking out adverts if they can.”



Dr Neil Hudson MP - Penrith and the Border, Conservative Party

MPs Back News Media During Coronavirus Outbreak

“ Now more than ever we need high-quality journalism. Having reliable news outlets helps people stay safe, provides reassurance and is the backbone of the national collective action to tackle a crisis.

This plays the important role of letting us know what is happening across the world. But it is critical, too, to have excellent local journalism so that we know what's happening across our city and what it means for our own lives.

For many of us this increasingly means consuming this content online, for others still the beloved delivery of a printed paper, but either way we must support local journalism. ”



Alex Norris MP - Nottingham North and Opposition Whip (Commons), Labour Party (Co-Op)

“ Since 1878 the Nottingham Evening Post has made an enormous contribution to informing the residents of Nottinghamshire about what's happening in our great county.

As we enter a period of self-isolation and social distancing, it's more important than ever that we try to maintain whatever links we can to our neighbours and wider society. Not everyone is internet savvy and local newspapers have a vital role to play in maintaining and fostering community spirit, keeping up morale, and getting us through these tough times.

I applaud the efforts of the staff of the Post to keep the paper running through this pandemic and I look forward to continuing to read its coverage of news and events in Nottinghamshire over many years to come. ”



Tom Randall MP – Gedling, Conservative Party

“ Newspapers play a vital role in all of our communities by acting as a trusted source of unbiased, reliable news.

It is crucial that publishers, local newspapers and journalists are given whatever support is necessary during this difficult time to ensure that we emerge from this crisis with a healthy newspaper industry still in place. ”



Nick Smith MP - Blaenau Gwent, Labour Party

MPs Back News Media During Coronavirus Outbreak

“ During 15 years as an MP -- and as an MSP and councillor before that -- I've always appreciated the vital role played by the long-established newspapers serving diverse communities in my wide, largely rural, constituency.

Local newspapers add much to community life by keeping readers fully informed of what's going on and, significantly, by providing accurate -- well checked -- information, which is even more important in these difficult times.

Their columns pull communities together by highlighting issues of concern, diligently recording events and championing good causes whilst promoting transparency in politics, local government and diverse public and private sector organisations.

Local newspapers are rightly high on my shopping list and are a great guide to local life, highlighting what our fellow citizens, of all ages, are doing. The excellent local journalism being produced during the current coronavirus crisis is typical of this valuable ongoing contribution. ”



**Rt Hon David Mundell MP -
Dumfriesshire, Clydesdale and
Tweeddale, Conservative Party**

“ I'm from a generation which was brought up in a digital and social media explosion but, despite that, I appreciate -- enthusiastically -- the value and impact made by the professional grassroots journalism sustained by our country's fantastic network of local newspapers.

Since being elected as a constituency MSP, I have witnessed, first hand, what a vital contribution the local print media makes in reaching, and helping shape, our communities. I feel my week's not complete -- and I'm missing out -- until I've read the local newspapers.

They are a reliable source of impartial community news, information and a platform for debate in which politicians, councils and numerous public bodies and other organisations are held to account.

Yes, digital technology is amazing, but, for many of my constituents, their local newspaper is a beacon and 'meeting place' at the heart of their community. Let's all make a modest investment in their future by buying each issue -- rather than reading someone else's copy. ”



**Oliver Mundell MSP –
Dumfriesshire, Scottish
Conservative Party**

“ My constituency is well-served by local newspapers and magazines, which enrich our sense of community by keeping us all informed of local events and issues whilst providing in-depth coverage and analysis.

It has become clear to me since being elected as MP for one of the country's largest constituencies that for a significant part of the population local newspapers remain a valued reliable source of news about their area.

Tragically, coronavirus is having a huge impact nationally, internationally and in our own communities.

I'm encouraged to see our local newspaper teams are rising to the challenge with their coverage -- not only providing accurate information but also responsibly highlighting serious issues as they arise.

I support them in their endeavours to deliver this useful, measured and important service to our communities. ”



**Rt Hon Alister Jack MP – Dumfries
and Galloway and Secretary of State
for Scotland, Conservative Party**

MPs Back News Media During Coronavirus Outbreak

“

Local newspapers play a vital role in communities up and down the country, including our own. In particular in a large and rural constituency such as North East Cambridgeshire, they provide an invaluable connection both within our local area and with the wider world.

They help us all stay up to date with the latest news most directly relevant to our families and our neighbours, and chart the lives of our towns and villages - from the school photos of achievements, the results of sports teams, performance of arts groups, to the latest business and council news, and wider charity and community events.

Whilst lots of people get their news from online sources, local newspapers provide reliable information and insight about the issues closest to home.

They are part of the fabric of our community, and even more vital at a time when we together face so many challenges as a result of this global health pandemic. ”



Rt Hon Steve Barclay MP – North East Cambridgeshire and Chief Secretary to the Treasury, Conservative Party

“

Our nation's newspapers, from local to national, remain one of the best ways of connecting communities.

Our local newspaper, the South London Press, does a fantastic job of keeping our community up to date with the news as well as being a great platform to help local firms, families and charities raise funds and campaign on the issues that matter.

The SLP's most recent campaign, 'Keep Calm and Support Each Other', has done so much to raise awareness of and co-ordinate our community in response to the Coronavirus.

It is absolutely vital that this industry receives the support it needs during this public health emergency so that our communities can remain informed and united. ”



Ellie Reeves MP – Lewisham West and Penge, Labour Party

“

At this time of national crisis we are writing to let you know how much we appreciate the work of the Wakefield Express Series.

With the newspaper at the very heart of our communities, we have always valued its accurate reporting and commitment to delivering quality news to residents across the district.

Now more than ever, the Wakefield Express is demonstrating its ability to reach out to residents and to encourage everyone to pull together.

We know how important it is that residents clearly understand how they can support the local, regional and national effort to help prevent the spread of this virus and to keep people safe.

As a Council we cannot do this alone and we recognise that our local newspaper and its staff are working tirelessly for the benefit of everyone in our district, to ensure people are fully informed and up to date on the latest developments. ”

The Leader of Wakefield Council, Cllr Denise Jeffery, and Wakefield Council Acting Chief Executive, Andrew Balchin.

MPs Back News Media During Coronavirus Outbreak

“

Local news outlets are hugely important to local communities and this is particularly true at a time of national crisis when the value of good quality local journalism cannot be overstated.

Whether it be through their traditional hard copy or increasingly through online channels local news resources, such as the Harrow Times, have the unique ability to speak to and for the communities they serve.

I understand that like many industries this sector has been harshly impacted by the economic consequences of covid-19 and I believe the Government should look to extending support to the local newspaper industry. ”



Gareth Thomas MP – Harrow West, Labour Party (Co Op)

“

As we focus on looking after our mental health over the coming weeks and months, local newspapers remain an important way residents can stay in touch with what's going on in their communities, especially if they don't use the internet or social media.

If you have gone shopping for essential items such as food, buying a local paper while you're there is fine. It is also safe to continue to have your local newspaper delivered. ”



Rt Hon Mel Stride MP – Central Devon, Conservative Party

“

Local newspapers – such as the South London Press – perform a vital role in bringing our communities together and keeping everyone informed. In Lewisham, they backed us all the way in our fight to save Lewisham Hospital, letting their readers know how they could join the campaign and updating them on developments.

Without local papers reporting on local issues, I fear we would lose something vital from our democracy. During the current Covid-19 crisis, we must do all we can to ensure our local media gets the support it needs and deserves. ”



Vicky Foxcroft MP – Lewisham, Deptford and Shadow Minister (Digital, Culture, Media and Sport) (Civil Society), Labour Party

MPs Back News Media During Coronavirus Outbreak

“ I am aware of the campaign by the News Media Association for news organisations to receive as much Government advertising spend as possible and to benefit from the business rate holiday which has been applied to other sectors.

I have raised the question of business rate relief but in the meantime I am fully supportive of the Government advertising as much as it can in newspapers such as the Henley Standard.

There are many key messages which must be conveyed to the public about staying at home, except under specific circumstances, and these must be repeated as often as possible so I am very enthusiastic about providing the advertising income these titles need in order to survive. ”



**John Howell MP – Henley,
Conservative Party**

“ Local newspapers such as the Bishop’s Stortford Independent, the Bishop’s Stortford Flyer and the Hertfordshire Mercury are integral to local community cohesion.

They provide a direct link between different parts of our communities and hold local MPs and those in authority to account in way nationals cannot. ”



**Julie Marson MP – Hertford
and Stratford, Conservative
Party**

“ The Glamorgan Gem plays a hugely important role in delivering local news. Particularly as one of the few free newspapers remaining, it keeps communities across the Vale of Glamorgan informed, helps people and groups to connect and is accessible to all.

Before, sadly, having to take the decision to temporarily close due to the Coronavirus pandemic, the Glamorgan Gem had been a fantastic source of information on the latest Covid-19 advice and guidance. I look forward to their return at the earliest opportunity so that they can continue their important job of keeping the Vale of Glamorgan up to date. ”



**Rt Hon Alun Cairns MP – Vale of
Glamorgan, Conservative Party**

MPs Back News Media During Coronavirus Outbreak

“ I am really worried about the impact of the COVID crisis on local media. Papers like the Barnet Times provide an invaluable source of local news and information. It would be a great loss to the community if they were to go out of business because of the coronavirus emergency lockdown.

I am urging the Government to ensure its economic package of support helps local papers, and brings them within the scope of the business rates holiday which has been announced.

The Government should also place ads in local papers to provide information to people on Covid-19 whilst at the same time providing vital funds to help keep these much valued local media outlets going. ”



**Rt Hon Theresa Villiers MP –
Chipping Barnet, Conservative
Party**

“ Local newspapers are a vital source of information about what's going on in the local community.

They're especially important now as many elderly and vulnerable people in our communities may not have access to the internet and depend on their local paper as a trusted source of information.

It's therefore hugely important that they're supported as much as possible during this time of national crisis. ”



**Mike Amesbury MP – Weaver
Vale and Shadow Minister
(Work and Pensions)
(Employment), Labour Party**

“ Our Chester newspapers are the go to news source - online and in print - for things that are happening in our area. These papers can't be fighting for survival at a time when sharing local news is so vitally important for keeping our communities informed and less isolated.

It's no surprise that journalists are one of the groups identified as key workers because local newspapers are the glue that keeps local communities together. I call upon the Chancellor to back local media and offer a package of support for them at this time. ”



**Christian Matheson MP - City of
Chester and Shadow Minister
(Cabinet Office), Labour Party**

MPs Back News Media During Coronavirus Outbreak

“ Local papers are the lifeblood of the community and we must do everything we can to support them and the journalists working to provide us with essential news in these difficult times. For many people receiving their paper is the only part of their week that has not changed. We are asking people to stay in, stay separated from family and friends and make huge changes to their daily lives and their local paper is the bit of normality – a small way they can stay connected.

The paper provides vital information, not everyone has access to the internet or social media, and local papers are a trusted source for many and can get those vital messages from the NHS, Public Health England across as well as all the local news people look forward to.

In this time of national emergency communities across Tatton are coming together, as they always do, and supporting each other and looking after the most vulnerable. The paper is keeping readers in touch with help that is available to them and reporting heart-warming stories which help us all in these unprecedented times. ”



**Rt Hon Esther McVey MP – Tatton,
Conservative Party**

“ Our great local Bucks Free Press is an historic and well-regarded publication. The team deserve our support through these difficult times.

Our paper is an invaluable source of local community news, keeping people aware of available services during the lockdown, especially for those without the internet and social media.

Please join me in backing the BFP! ”



**Steve Baker MP – Wycombe,
Conservative Party**

“ In launching their new title, the Amersham and Chesham edition, the Bucks Free Press has demonstrated great faith in the flourishing local communities within the circulation area of the Chesham and Amersham constituency.

The Free Press, with its innovation and enterprise, deserves our support at this crucial time. I welcome the move later this year to remove VAT on our newspapers, but we need to ensure that the print industry can survive the immediate crisis, so it can support and inform local people.

From my international work on the Council of Europe I know how important a responsible free press is to our democracies. That is why I value our local newspaper and its journalists. I hope it will thrive in this age of unreliable news sources that now often spread on social media with few checks and balances. ”



**Rt Hon Dame Cheryl Gillan MP -
Chesham and Amersham,
Conservative Party**

MPs Back News Media During Coronavirus Outbreak

“ Local papers play an extremely useful role in ensuring vital public safety messages around the COVID-19 outbreak, or indeed any other crisis, get through to people.

It is important all truly local titles survive this current crisis and carry on bringing people news from their area for many years to come. ”

“ Falling print sales and advertising revenue are hitting regional, local and independent news outlets very hard- and we have already seen a number of titles on the brink of closure. Local journalism plays a vitally important role in upholding our democracy by holding MPs like myself and the local council to account.

It also gives our local community groups and organisations a voice, and a space to celebrate the achievements of people from our borough. I'm calling on advertisers to do all they can to continue to support the sector.

Furthermore, I support the Shadow Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Jo Stevens' call for the Government's Public Information Service to provide much needed help to the sector through advertising public health information on COVID-19, providing a vital income as well as transmitting information as widely as possible. ”

“ I recognise the importance of local newspapers to the communities they serve and the vital role they play not merely in keeping constituents informed but as a campaigning voice for our towns and villages.

I recognise the incredible effort of journalists locally and the efforts to which they are going to continue the vital task of newsgathering under difficult circumstances. Equally I understand the important role advertising plays in funding the work of journalists across the country and the very real impact of the Coronavirus on this sector. ”



**Greg Smith MP – Buckingham,
Conservative Party**



**Charlotte Nichols MP –
Warrington North, Labour Party**



**Paul Maynard MP – Blackpool North
and Cleveleys, Conservative Party**

MPs Back News Media During Coronavirus Outbreak

“ I am very conscious that the Romsey Advertiser, the Hampshire Chronicle, the Andover Advertiser and the Southern Daily Echo are some of the most trusted news outlets in this area.

People look to their local papers for up to date and important information and at this time they need to support.

“ Local newspapers are a respected and trusted source of sound information to the local communities they serve. With the wild west of misinformation and disinformation on Twitter and the wilder excesses of some of the more sensationalist broadcast media the role of local newspapers is more vital than ever at this time of uncertainty.

Especially at this moment they are a lifeline to many elderly people who are staying at home on the advice of the Government. With newsagents allowed to remain open it is logical that home deliveries should be able to continue without interruption.”

“ I am shocked that the BCP Council might be contemplating such a counterproductive course of action by threatening to deny or withdraw work permits for young school age news distributors, which would lead to more visits to newsagents and also be cruel on those self-isolating.

I have written expressing my strong support for maintaining the status-quo. Never has a free press been more important.”

“ As a former journalist of 17 years, five of them working for a local newspaper, I fully appreciate the value of local news.

And at no time is this more important than during a crisis. To get this news, papers have to be delivered and I urge local authorities to allow under-18s to be able to continue with their rounds.

We are all in this pandemic together and local papers have a crucial role to play.”



**Rt Hon Caroline Nokes
MP - Romsey and
Southampton North,
Conservative Party**



**Rt Hon Conor Burns MP
– Bournemouth West
and Minister of State
(Department for
International Trade),
Conservative Party**



**Rt Hon Sir Christopher
Chope OBE –
Christchurch,
Conservative Party**



**Rt Hon Richard Drax MP – South
Dorset, Conservative Party**