



October 2020

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about support for pubs during the pandemic.

I share your concern about the future of pubs and the hardship caused by the coronavirus outbreak. This is a very difficult time and I know how worried people are, not just about their health, but their livelihoods as well.

Pubs are important to our culture and communities and it has been good to see that many have reopened, even if they do close slightly earlier than most people would like.

Many people have expressed serious concerns for what lies ahead for pubs. I share these concerns and I know my ministerial colleagues do too. It is one of the reasons why the Chancellor introduced the Winter Economy Plan which puts in place further support to help tackle the challenges businesses like pubs now face. The Job Support Scheme will help participating business ensure employees on reduced hours earn a minimum of 77 per cent of their normal wages, helping keep people across the country paid and employed.

The temporary reduction of VAT to 5% is being extended by a further three months to the end of March 2021 and the Chancellor has announced we will also defer VAT repayments through a new scheme until March 2022. Businesses are also being given more time to access crucial loans alongside a more flexible repayment scheme for existing ones.

These new measures follow a robust package of support introduced since the start of the pandemic. No pub or other business in the hospitality sector will be required to pay business rates this year and HMRC has made it easier to claim back the duty on any beer thrown away as a result of pub closures.

Through the Business and Planning Act we have tried to help pubs to serve customers outdoors with temporary changes to planning procedures and licensing and the overarching Job Retention Scheme has rightly protected over 9 million jobs through the most difficult period of the pandemic.

And, of course, there is a part for everyone to play as well, in visiting and spending money in our local pubs.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.



**Chris Heaton-Harris**  
Member of Parliament for Daventry  
House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA  
Tel: 020 7219 7048

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Chris'.

**CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP**  
**MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY**