

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.”

“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.”

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



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



**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. ”



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. ”



**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

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“

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

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“ 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

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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. ”



**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. ”



**Stuart Anderson MP –
Wolverhampton South West**

MPs Back News Media During Coronavirus Outbreak

“

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**

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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**