

# Rt. Hon Elizabeth Truss MP

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House of Commons

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2020

Good afternoon,

A huge thank you to everyone who is working so tirelessly for the good of the nation to beat coronavirus. The Norfolk spirit is characteristically strong and I am confident we can get through this difficult time. It is tremendous to see the community effort in Swaffham, Thetford, Downham Market and the surrounding villages with local organisations coming together to support one another.

The government is working nonstop to make sure the UK is protected both in terms of health and financial well-being. I am working closely with Norfolk County Council, the lead authority locally during this pandemic, to ensure the most vulnerable in the constituency are identified and support is given to them. I am also working with New Anglia LEP, Norfolk Constabulary, health providers, local leaders, businesses and the self-employed to ensure they have all the relevant information in relation to government support.

As Secretary of State for International Trade I am negotiating with government leaders and industry around the world to secure the relevant provisions we need in the UK - ensuring we keep trade and supply of essential goods. If you want to follow the latest Trade updates please see my [Twitter](#)

On Thursday 17th April, the government determined that current lockdown measures must remain in place for at least the next 3 weeks. The government will continue to monitor the data on the impact of the virus.

Please continue to stay at home to help our NHS and save lives.

As ever - please do not hesitate to contact me and my office if you need any help or assistance:  
[elizabeth.truss.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:elizabeth.truss.mp@parliament.uk)

## **Local support and Norfolk County Council**

All Norfolk MPs and local services are working closely together to help everyone. Norfolk County Council is taking the lead for Covid-19 response in Norfolk with relevant details, regular updates and key information found on the following links:

- [How to support your neighbours, and community](#)
- [How to access support if you need it](#)
- [Information for care providers](#)
- Education – [support at home](#)
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You can also sign up with [Voluntary Norfolk](#) to help support the local community and volunteer in Norfolk.

## **NHS**

It has been incredible to see everyone clapping for the NHS and front line staff in united support and

gratitude. Amazing to also see how many people have signed up to volunteer to return to work as part of the Coronavirus response in the NHS. If you previously worked in the NHS and feel that you could return, please click [here](#) for information on the Returning Clinicians scheme. If you feel that you could help the NHS as a Volunteer Responder register [here](#).

### **PPE and Supply Chain**

I am working hard to ensure that the UK receives PPE stock that it needs to face the coronavirus- and was pleased to secure shipments of vital stock, including paracetamol and facemasks. But locally and across the county help is still needed- if you or your business can help in relation to offers of assistance re. property, logistics, food supply, other equipment, and so on, please see the following links:

- Government, the [New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership](#), Local Authorities and other partners are working together to ensure we respond to the needs of our business community, the issues it faces and the wider impacts on the local economy. If you are a business and can help with services, vehicles or other resources, please email [covidbusinessresponse@voluntarynorfolk.org.uk](mailto:covidbusinessresponse@voluntarynorfolk.org.uk) and the LEP at [supply.chain@newanglia.co.uk](mailto:supply.chain@newanglia.co.uk) with your offer.
- Please [click here](#) to register your business and advise how your business might be able to help with the response to coronavirus.
- If you wish to get in touch regarding existing ventilator stock, please contact [existing.ventilators@dhsc.gov.uk](mailto:existing.ventilators@dhsc.gov.uk)
- Or contact me with your organisations details [elizabeth.truss.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:elizabeth.truss.mp@parliament.uk)

### **Personal Finance, Business and Self-Employment Support**

Please be assured that the Government will do whatever is necessary to protect business and jobs. As part of the national effort to tackle COVID-19, the Chancellor announced the UK's single most significant post-war economic intervention to protect people's jobs and incomes. [This online portal](#) set up by the government is a place you can find answers to some common questions plus more information about the available business support schemes and when they might be rolled out.

#### **Key points:**

- **The Chancellor has extended the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) eligibility date to 19 March 2020. Individuals originally had to be employed on February 28 2020.**
- **The government is extending the CRJS that is keeping millions of people in jobs by a further month – until the end of June – to reflect the continuing social distancing measures.**
- Businesses will receive government grants worth up to 80% of wages to keep workers in jobs- enabling them to furlough staff. The **CJRS** will pay up to £2,500 per worker each month, helping those who are self-isolating or caring for loved ones. Please note- business do not have to make up the other 20% of wages.
- **The Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme** can be accessed [here](#). The government will make a Business Interruption Payment to cover the first 12 months of interest payments and any lender-levied fees. This means smaller businesses will benefit from no upfront costs and lower initial repayments. The government will also provide lenders with a guarantee of 80% on each loan.
- **VAT payments** for the next quarter will be deferred, so no business will pay any VAT for the next three months - a direct injection of £30bn of cash to employers
- **Self-employed** people can claim 80% of their (up to £2,500 monthly) salary. This scheme will allow you to claim a taxable grant worth 80% of your trading profits (up to a maximum of £2,500 per month) for the next 3 months – if necessary, the scheme will be extended. Please visit [this link](#) for further details

- Guidance for **business premises** can be found [here](#) to see which businesses must close, and the exceptions to those requirements.
- If a company is an **essential business**, it is important that they operate within the government guidelines to keep yourself and your employees safe. Please check them out [here](#)
- **Universal Credit** standard allowance and working tax credit basic element to rise by £1000 for a year. Additionally, the Government has taken a number of steps on Universal Credit, making it more accessible for the self-employed and more generous overall. It is also already the case that people can get an advance payment almost immediately after they claim if they need one, so they do not have to wait five weeks if they have pressing bills to pay.
- The Government has also announced measures to **help people with the cost of living** during this unprecedented time. People can benefit from a three-month **mortgage holiday** and deferring the next three months of VAT, alongside further measures to **protect renters** and to help people with their **energy bills**. On top of this, the Government has also deployed extra resources into local authorities to help those who are most vulnerable with things like **council tax bills**, which can be a large bill for families every month.

#### **Where you can find help and further information**

[The Federation of Small Business](#) has also provided a useful guide for self-employed people and small businesses.

[The New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership](#) is also providing support for local businesses, email [growthhub@newanglia.co.uk](mailto:growthhub@newanglia.co.uk) or telephone 0300 333 6536 (Mon- Fri 9am-5pm)

[The Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme](#)

[This is a useful tool](#) in seeing what support is available for your business.

My [website](#) now has live updates with the latest announcements and government advice.

Please contact me if you have any questions, or need personal or business assistance during this challenging time: [elizabeth.truss.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:elizabeth.truss.mp@parliament.uk)

Best wishes,

Liz