



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

March 2019

*Dear Constituent,*

Thank you for contacting me about serious violence.

We must break the deadly cycle of violence that devastates the lives of individuals, families and communities. Obviously I welcome the Government's Serious Violence Strategy, which sets out its response to recent increases in knife crime, gun crime and homicide. It outlines an ambitious programme working with a range of Government Departments and partnerships across a number of sectors such as education, health, social services, housing, youth services, and victim services.

Backed with £40 million of Home Office funding, the Strategy marks a major shift in the Government's response to knife and gun crime. It strikes a balance between prevention and robust law enforcement with a new £22 million Early Intervention Youth Fund for community projects to help young people live lives free from violence. The strategy identifies the changing drugs market, in particular the devastating impact of crack cocaine, as a key driver of the violence harming communities, and announces a range of powerful actions to tackle the issue of 'county lines' and its implications for drugs, violence and exploitation of vulnerable people. That includes £3.6 million to establish a new National County Lines Co-ordination Centre. This is something of obvious importance to us in Northamptonshire.

The strategy is not solely focused on law enforcement, but also depends on partnerships across a number of sectors. Early intervention can help catch young people before they go down the wrong path, encouraging them to make positive choices. The announcement by the Home Secretary of a £200 million youth endowment fund is extremely welcome. The fund will provide support for those young people most at risk of serious violence.

This strategy represents a step change in the way Government responds, and I welcome the focus on early intervention and prevention to help steer young people away from crime in the first place, while putting in place measures to tackle the root causes of the problem.



Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

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

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