April 2020



Thank you for contacting me about support for Etsy sellers and the self-employed.

The Coronavirus is the biggest threat this country has faced in decades – and this country is not alone. All over the world we are seeing the devastating impact of this invisible killer. Which is why the Government is working to a scientifically-led, step-by-step action plan – taking the right measures at the right time.

During this difficult time for the country, we recognise the extreme disruption the necessary actions are having on people’s lives, their businesses, their jobs and the nation’s economy.

I am pleased that many Etsy sellers, particularly those with few materials needed for production, are able to continue operating, as so many work from home when producing their goods to sell online.     
  
I welcome that measures have been announced to help self-employed people, many of whom are especially vulnerable during this time.

These measures take the form of the Self-employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS), which seeks to match the support already afforded through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) by providing a taxable grant worth 80 per cent of a self-employed person’s average monthly profits over the last three years, up to £2,500 a month.

Like the CJRS, the SEISS will be open for at least three months and will be extended if necessary.

It is important that this Scheme is fair and that it benefits those whose livelihoods are genuinely at risk due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I understand that to achieve this goal, the SISS has been limited to those who having trading profits of less than £50,000, as determined by the year 2018-19, or an average of trading profits in 2016-17, 2017-18, and 2018-19. These profits must make up over half of your income in 2018-19, or by an average of the past three years.

I should add that, based on my understanding, self-assessment income tax payments that were due to be paid in July can be deferred to the end of January 2021.

I hope that these measures come as a welcome relief to those in self-employment who have been put in a difficult position during this crisis, I will continue to communicate to the Treasury the plight of the self-employed during the COVID-19 outbreak and follow this issue closely to ensure that the help promised is effectively delivered.

  
Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

**CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP**

**MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY**