



July 2021

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about the impact of the Coronavirus outbreak on young women.

We must do whatever it takes to protect jobs and livelihoods across the UK. I share your concern about the impact of the pandemic on women and I am committed to ensuring that the leaps forward we have made for women's equality are not reversed.

I am encouraged that the Government has introduced a range of measures to support people's livelihoods throughout the pandemic, and I know that many of these are providing vital support to young women.

The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) is one of the most generous and comprehensive support schemes in the world and has protected more than 11.5 million jobs. To continue to support employers who face lower demand due to COVID-19, and to support jobs, I am pleased that this scheme has been extended until September in response to national restrictions.

It is also welcome that the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme (SEISS) has been extended until September, and since March 2020 has helped 2.7 million people, with claims totalling £19.7 billion. As you may know, the amount of the scheme grant is determined based on the applicant's average profits from self-employment in the previous three tax years, as reported through their tax returns. By calculating the grant on average of three years of profit, the scheme effectively supports people who saw a drop in profits for any reason, including pregnancy.

Those who are ineligible for the CJRS or the SEISS may still be eligible for other elements of the £280 billion package of support available, including the temporary increase of Working Tax Credit (WTC) and Universal Credit (UC). The £20 per week uplift to UC and WTC will remain in place until September 2021.

I am reassured that my colleagues in Government are actively monitoring the impact on young women of Covid-19. It is important to note that equality legislation protects women in the workplace. This requires that employers must not discriminate based on gender or pregnancy and maternity in the workplace, and this law continues to apply.

I am also aware of what a challenging time the spring lockdown was for many parents who juggled home-schooling with working from home. I am exceeding proud of the monumental efforts parents went to continue their children's education from home. I am delighted that returning children and young people to face-to-face education was the first step in easing national restrictions, and that schools and colleges have now re-opened.



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I hope this offers some reassurance about the range of support, including for young women, that has been put in place. I will continue to follow this matter closely as we continue to proceed with the Prime Minister's roadmap to reopening.

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