



I want to begin this month with a huge thank you to everyone in our communities who has done so much to help others through the coronavirus crisis. I have been so encouraged by the resourcefulness of communities, the way in which people have adapted to the circumstances, the support that has been given to the vulnerable, and the resilience shown over so many weeks.

Lockdown has gone on for longer than many of us imagined at first and I know that in some respects the initial community spirit has become jaded by our own weariness and frustrations. Many people are still worried about their health and others are frustrated and worried about their livelihoods whether in their own business or in employment. I am also aware of many concerns over the risks not of the virus but of the vacuum created with life on hold. These include concerns over missed education, missed health treatments, mental health and well-being issues and so much more. It was always going to be easier to go into lockdown than to come out and we need to move out with care for one another. The risk of a second wave of the virus is constant and we must not allow ourselves to be lulled into a false sense of security. Yet we must do what we can to return to normal, whatever that will be going forward.

When the prime Minister delivered his speech on recovery I know that the 'Build, build, build' slogan worried some people as they took it to be primarily about house building and were concerned that this might be uncontrolled. It is certainly not about uncontrolled development and indeed is very much wider. It is about rebuilding our collective lives, about investment in infrastructure that has been long called for – in schools, hospitals, and transport, and in turn in creating jobs and rebuilding our economy.

There has also been right and proper concern that we take this opportunity to rebuild with the environment in mind, a green recovery as it has been called. I have supported this and was pleased to see this coming through in the Chancellor's mini budget delivered on 8<sup>th</sup> July.

During this time when many people have been unable to work and so have had more time to themselves I have seen the number and variety of issues raised with me grow enormously. Over the last month, with the help of my team, we have dealt with over 3500 emails, this represents over a five-fold increase on more normal months. A large number of these have been helping people on individual issues and problems related to Coronavirus. With other emails it has been interesting to see the wide range of concerns on people's minds. Clearly planning and development concerns and environmental issues remain high on the agenda for constituents.

On many issues I make comment on my website so please do have a look. [www.johnhowell.org.uk](http://www.johnhowell.org.uk). If you have an issue that you would like to raise with me, if possible, please email me at [john.howell.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:john.howell.mp@parliament.uk). If you cannot email you can write to me at my constituency office - PO Box 84, Watlington, OX49 5XD. My staff all continue to work remotely, and all mail is diverted to my constituency office.

If you would like to receive my periodic electronic newsletters, and briefings on specific issues, please visit my website [www.johnhowell.org.uk](http://www.johnhowell.org.uk) and subscribe at the link on the home page.