

Speech: Matt Hancock's speech at the 10 Downing Street charities reception

Hello and welcome to Number Ten.

Firstly, I'd like to apologise that I'm not the Prime Minister...

But it's an honour to address so many people who do so much, working tirelessly every day, to make life better for the citizens of this country.

For this I would like to thank you and this is a view that is shared by the Prime Minister and the whole Government.

All of you in this room have made a valuable contribution to society, and have helped improve life in your communities through your charitable work.

I applaud all our charities – not only those in the room here today.

Every parliamentarian is aware of the amazing work you do. Just last Friday I was at a Cancer Research UK store in Newmarket in my constituency, where I heard about the fundraising and the research that they do.

After the visit, one of my colleagues who was on the visit came up to me and said that without cancer research funding she wouldn't be here today.

You do a huge amount to help people in their communities, and respond to those in need wherever they find them.

We all share a mission.

Whether it's in Government, the public sector or the charitable sector, we are all in our jobs to serve the public and to improve people's lives. That is what gets us out of bed in the morning.

We all want the same results, and we will achieve them so much more effectively, if we work together. There is so much we can do.

I believe the future lies in greater collaboration, not only between charities and Government, but with business too.

You have all played your part, whether it's through fundraising, donating, volunteering or making a corporate contribution.

My brilliant colleague Tracey Crouch announced in November that she intends to develop a Civil Society Strategy. I really hope that you will work with her to make this happen.

And just like you found the door today open, my door is always open to you.

Thank you so much again for all your work – this reception is the very least that we can do for you all. Have a wonderful afternoon.