

The casualties of lock down

Lockdowns are setting us back. Here are some of the areas where we need to advance.

1 More people working for themselves and building small businesses

Lockdowns ban many from working at all, and impair the working of many others. Small businesses are being driven into debt, and entrepreneurs being forced to ask if they can continue. Meanwhile the Treasury threatens them with IR 35 clamp downs. Let's find ways of getting more back to work with a fairer tax regime.

2 Restoring Town Centres.

A second lock down of non food retail stores accelerates the switch to on line and will lead to the loss of many more shops. High Streets will contract or close down under the pressures. Let's find ways to re open them.

3. Levelling up the country

More people with professional and administrative jobs on good salaries live in London and the South east. Many are able to work from home and continue on the same salaries. More people with jobs that are at risk or have reduced pay for reduced working live in areas that need to level up. It is easy for people like government advisers and Ministers whose income is guaranteed whatever the circumstances to decide on a lockdown which does not cost them work and income.

4. Running sensible public finances to avoid burdening future generations

Today the government rightly offers substantial subsidy to companies and money to individuals who are banned from working. Tax revenues will be badly damaged again by lock down. We cannot go on like this indefinitely. The way to get the deficit down to more sensible levels is to get us all back to work.

5. Promoting prosperity and growth

I campaigned in the General election on my slogan of Prosperity not austerity, with policies of promoting more opportunity, enterprise and ownership for the many. These aims seemed entirely at one with the Conservative party's national Manifesto.

We now have an economy badly scarred by the first lock down, with incomes and output well below 2019. We need to get on with the job of rebuilding as soon as possible.