

## We need more Conservative values

Yesterday was a good day. At last we got the announcement that most of the covid 19 restrictions are being lifted. The advice to work at home is being withdrawn. The threat of covid passports recedes. Mask wearing will become a matter for individual judgement.

One of the reasons why I am a Conservative is I believe wherever possible people should be free to make their own decisions about how they spend their lives and how much risk they run. Of course I agree we need a criminal law which provides deterrence and punishment for those who wish to harm others by violence or theft, but not a criminal law that extends into payment of your tv licence or how many people you invited into your home.

The government has done well to lead work on developing a vaccine and making it available so that most people have accepted it. This allows a return to more normal social contact and provides a reason for the government to roll back its extensive regulation of our daily lives. There will be considerable debate and study in the years ahead as we look back on the response to the pandemic. The world figures do not show any easy correlation between length and duration of lockdowns and less infection, intensifying the need for more study and discussion of what responses worked best to contain and overcome the virus.

Anyone worried about the continued presence of the virus can limit their own social contacts and can wear a mask. They can rely more on on line shopping and may be able to negotiate more homeworking with their employer. They can certainly keep their vaccination up to date, which seems to lessen the risks of catching a serious version of the disease. All this points to lifting all special restrictions , whilst the NHS continues to provide advice and guidance especially to the vulnerable. Those of us who voted for less restriction last time are pleased that numbers of serious cases and hospital admissions did not shoot up dramatically as some predicted.