

Dear Constituent

I am seeking changes to the way the government responds to the pandemic. I wish them to do all a government can to save lives, and to help the vulnerable find the protection they need and want from the disease. I also wish to see the government avoid measures which do substantial damage to jobs and livelihoods.

I am urging the government to work closely with medics and pharmaceutical researchers to identify more treatments to cut the death rates. There are various steroids, anti virals, clot busters and antibody treatments that have now been found to help or may emerge from trials as useful additions to treatment. Health professionals have also now discovered using non invasive ways of administering extra oxygen are often best. There are also issues about whether Vitamin D and zinc supplements can help. I have urged more emphasis on seeking new ways of treating and preventing.

I have been very critical of the data and forecasts used by government advisers to urge Ministers into adopting lock downs. The basis of defining a death has been changed several times during the pandemic and there are issues about whether CV 19 deaths have been overstated whilst understating other lung infections and serious co morbidities in the mainly elderly people dying. The latest forecasts for cases and deaths take the form of very wide ranges where the upper figure is three times the lower figure, making them meaningless as planning forecasts. There is an absence of reliable published data on hospital bed occupancy which seems to be the main worry of NHS management and the scientific advisers. We must not close the economy down to save the NHS if it can now cope thanks to building the Nightingales, greatly expanding intensive care facilities and recruiting many more staff.

I am pressing for substantial changes to lock down plans. I see no need to close outdoor sports facilities. I think a range of specialist retailers should stay open with suitable measures to cut risks of infection spreading. Pubs and restaurants should be allowed to sell drink as well as food for take away. Government should work with business and offer help to improve air extraction so more can function safely indoors.

I do support the schools staying open as this is important to the development and future prospects of children and Teenagers. This disease is usually very mild in young people. I have urged the resumption of non CV 19 work by the NHS, as many more people die of causes other than CV19 every day.

If you are suffering particular problems with your job or business from the proposed lock down please let me know as I am pressing for change from Ministers. Without serious change to this policy I am unable to support it in a vote.

Yours sincerely

John Redwood