

Dear Prime Minister,

We are a coalition of organisations representing businesses, retailers, hospitality and leisure providers, unions, and transport providers. Our members have a vital role to play in safeguarding the country's economic future and, as they have shown over the last year, are committed to doing this while carefully balancing the need to protect our employees and customers from Covid-19.

As England prepares to take its third step out of lockdown later this month, to fully revive the shops, offices, restaurants, and venues that form the beating heart of town and city centres across the country, it is vital to restore people's confidence to use public transport.

There are three things the government could do to help achieve this:

- The government should lead the way in sending a visible message that it is safe to use buses, trains and trams when appropriate measures, like wearing a face covering, are followed. Ministers and others should be seen to use public transport themselves.
- The government review into social distancing needs to take a balanced and pragmatic approach to public transport: the assessment of risks must take full account of the measures introduced by transport providers to ensure customers and staff are safe. Consideration should also be given to the health and economic risks of a failure to get people back on-board buses, trains and trams, including poorer air quality and a constrained economic recovery as people remain reluctant to move around.
- It should be quick, simple and easy for people to pay their fare and know they are getting the best deal, especially with the rise of flexible working patterns. More tap-in tap-out, price capping on trains and trams, and multi-operator ticketing across buses, all of which government action can unlock.

We must aim to prevent Covid-19's lasting legacy being a harmful combination of towns and cities that are more reliant on public transport being left behind while car-heavy areas experience more pollution and congestion, and where businesses are permanently shuttered as customers who rely on public transport stay away. We seek to work with the government to ensure a green transport recovery that helps revive city centres and urban economies and look forward to receiving your reply.

Yours sincerely,

Emma McClarkin, CEO, British Beer and Pub Association
Shevaun Haviland, Director General, British Chamber of Commerce
Andrew Goodacre, CEO, British Independent Retailers Association
Helen Dickinson, CEO, British Retail Consortium
Paul Tuohy, Chief Executive, Campaign for Better Transport
Matthew Fell, Chief UK Policy Director, CBI
Graham Vidler, Chief Executive, Confederation of Passenger Transport

Craig Beaumont, Chief of External Affairs, Federation of Small Businesses
John Dickie, Interim Chief Executive, London First
Jace Tyrrell, Chief Executive, New West End Company
Michael Kill, Chief Executive Officer, Night Time Industries Association
Andy Bagnall, Director General, Rail Delivery Group
Paul Nowak, Deputy General Secretary, TUC
Julian Bird, Chief Executive, UK Theatre and Society of London Theatre
James Hammett, Managing Director, UK Tram
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