

Dear Stephen,

I am writing in regards to the Great Houghton ASOS warehouse and the current Covid-19 pandemic. I know you will agree with me that the welfare of the thousands of workers who work at this site must be protected.

Thank you for speaking to me yesterday morning on the phone. I welcome the news that the Council's Environmental Health Team will be undertaking weekly unannounced visits to the ASOS Warehouse. I understand from communications with yourself and the CEO of ASOS, Nick Beighton, that the company have installed further measures to protect their workers. These are very welcome. Following our phone call, where you indicated I should outline any of my concerns going forward, I would be grateful if the Environmental Health inspectors could pay close attention to the below:

- Personal Protective Equipment, including masks, is readily available to all workers in the fulfilment centre.
- Social distancing protocols are enforced across the site, including communal areas, such as the canteen, toilets and smoking areas, and in the narrow alleyways where pickers, returns and putaway staff work.
- Hand sanitizer with alcohol and soap is available to all workers and in high quantities in toilet facilities.
- Management has followed through on their commitment to stagger shifts and reduce numbers of workers exiting the building at the same time.
- Communal spaces and shared equipment, including RDT/AMT scanners, tape guns and knives, are thoroughly cleaned, using disinfectant and antibacterial wipes, during and at the end of shifts.
- How management is guarding against workers who are symptomatic coming into work, potentially spreading Covid-19, when they are being offered extra pay.

My office has had hundreds of phone calls and emails from distressed workers. It is from their correspondence and the responses to the GMB survey, that I have collated the above of key issues. Those that replied to the survey provided their names and contact details, using different IP addresses. We are confident the information provided was from genuine workers. As I am sure you will agree the conditions above must be improved to ensure the health of ASOS workers and their loved ones is protected.

Please be assured that I will support every measure Barnsley Council takes to make this warehouse a safe place to work. I have written to the Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy asking for the Government to revise its current guidance on who are 'key workers' and what qualifies as 'essential work'. I will keep you informed of the outcome of this correspondence. I would be grateful if you would likewise notify me of the results of the Environmental Health inspections of the ASOS site.

Our country is facing one of the biggest public health crisis in living memory. We must do everything we can to protect our community, from office staff to warehouse workers. I look forward to working with you and the Council closely on this issue, to safeguard the health of ASOS workers in our community.

Kind regards,

Stephanie Peacock
Member of Parliament for Barnsley East