[Your name]

[Your business name]

[Your full address]

[Your postcode]

[Date]

Dear [MP’s Name],

My name is [your name] and I am writing to you today as a business owner and member of our local community, someone who passionately believes in a safe, sustainable and diverse high street that positively contributes to a vibrant community and a growing local economy.

*[Insert something personal to you and your business here]*
As a small business in your constituency, and a member/advocate of the British Independent Retailers Association, I urge you to support and promote the following asks of your colleagues in Government:

Business Rates & Taxation

* Reform the business rates system to reduce the burden of the retail sector
* Make permanent the retail rates discount of 75%
* Reduce the multiplier down to 3p in the pound
* Introduce a small business owner tax allowance so the first £25k of profit is tax free. This easy to manage system would work similarly to that of employees’ tax allowance.

Crime:

* Implement the new law to make abuse of staff a standalone offence in England and Wales, as it already is in Scotland.
* Continue to demand better policing and a greater police presence in our community.

Access:

* Stop making parking a barrier to accessing our community and force local authorities to provide free time-limited parking to allow everyone to visit and shop.

Property & Place:

* Make it mandatory for local authorities to engage with and involve small businesses with any proposed plans to change and improve “our” place.
* Proactively seek alternative use for empty retail space that has been sat empty for a lengthy period of time, which could be pop-ups for new starters, or community space for the younger members of the community.

Energy:

* Empower businesses to be able to renegotiate contracts that were signed under the extreme circumstances of 2022’s energy price increases.
* Increase employers’ national insurance allowance to offset some of the impact of National Minimum Wage increases.
* Enforce greater transparency of the commissions made though energy brokerage and billing.

Banking:

* Increase the roll out of banking hubs so businesses and the wider community have better access to the services they need (there are only 31 currently in the UK which is not enough to offset the 10,000 bank branches that have been lost).
* Force banks to pay competitive or equivalent interest rates to small business accounts, as they do for consumers, and help SME’s that are currently missing out on £7bn in interest rates each year.

People:

* Reform the apprenticeship scheme and make it more practical for small businesses to employ apprentices.
* Ensure that funding and grants are easy to find and have a user-friendly application process, like the Wales Future Proofing fund that is currently available.

Landlord & Tenant Act:

* Give tenants greater security of tenure, allowing them time to thrive and thus avoid increasing levels of vacant high street properties.
* Stop commercial landlords from enforcing upward-only rent reviews, allowing for flexibility through tougher economic times.
* Promote clarity and transparency of service agreements and hold landlords accountable for the delivery of agreed services.

Regulatory Burden:

* Help to ensure regulations are proportionate and avoid them placing unnecessary cost on small business.
* Provide better funding to the relevant agencies to address the online sale of banned and age restricted items – currently its mainly the small high street business, the low-hanging fruit, that is forced to comply.

Sustainability:

* Provide greater clarity of funds available for small businesses to access.
* Provide better education on what it really means to be sustainable.
* Encourage greater investment in onshore manufacturing.

If you would like to visit my business during your election campaign, the address for which you can find at the top of this letter, it would be great to tell you more about my business, how we work in our community and you would be welcome to take a photo or two.

If you wish to receive any further information on the matters I have included in this letter, or if you would like to arrange a meeting to discuss any of these topics with me, please do let me know.

If you could acknowledge receipt of this letter and clarify any actions you plan to take, that would be greatly appreciated.

In the meantime, I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours faithfully,

[Your name]