

HOLLY MUMBY-CROFT MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Amanda Solloway MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
1 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0ET

27 October 2020

Dear Minister,

Thank you for your response to my constituent dated 30th June regarding Wedding Venues. Can I also thank the Department for their continued efforts to ease the Covid-19 burden on businesses. I am writing to add my voice to those of my colleagues regarding the actions needed to be taken to support our wedding industry.

Since June, the situation for wedding operators has changed with the reduction of maximum capacity allowed moving from 30 to 15 for the past two weeks. Halving the congregation, whilst designed to limit transmission in large groups, has caused understandable concern for these small business owners regarding the impact of this change on their ability to operate sustainably.

Wedding venues in my area are concerned that venue sizes are not being taken into account with these decisions, with some settings capable of holding vastly more than 30 people whilst maintaining social distancing, and others being set outdoors, which I understand will further lower the rates of transmission.

Constituents have also pointed to the pre-scheduled nature of weddings, as seating plans, attendance numbers and contact details are all in place long in advance of the 'big day'. It has also been pointed out to me that wedding operators are not the only companies affected by this change, but all of the other small businesses in their supply chain will feel the consequences of these new restrictions.

No doubt this has also had an effect on the mental health of those directly involved - I have heard heartbreaking stories of constituents having to let down close family members who have previously made it onto the already reduced list of guests. It is also the case that a "one size fits all" restriction in the number of attendees will penalise communities and families who tend to hold large weddings or those who undertake elaborate traditional ceremonies.

In future, my constituents have highlighted the need for a clear timescale when future changes to Weddings are needed. Whilst it is understandable that government need to make quick decisions in response to changes in the infection rate, it is hard for wedding operators to react to these changes without taking a huge hit to their income and potentially their reputation. I appreciate that when the Prime Minister announced the reduction in capacity on 22nd September, operators were given six days to adapt. Advanced awareness is key to allow businesses to plan ahead.

I look forward to a response from you or a member of your team.

Yours sincerely,

Holly Mumby-Croft

Holly Mumby-Croft
Member of Parliament for Scunthorpe