

Sheffield City Region Mayoral Combined Authority
11 Broad Street West
Sheffield, S1 2BQ

21 July 2020

Councillor Mrs Mavis Berry

Dear Cllr Berry,

Thank you very much for taking the time to get in touch. I wanted to write to set out my position on the issues that you raised.

Firstly, on the television licence I completely agree with you that over-75s should receive a free licence. Those, like yourself, who have worked hard and paid into the system all their lives deserve some support in their retirement. It is shameful that the Government have passed the buck on TV licences to the BBC and I firmly believe that they should do the right thing and ensure that all over-75s have their free TV licence restored.

During this pandemic, as you rightly point out, the television has been a source of comfort and company for older people who are at risk of social isolation and loneliness and the value of the free TV licence for over-75s has been clearly demonstrated. I am a very long-standing campaigner on the issue of free TV licences; I've raised the issue in Parliament, on social media and in the local press on a number of occasions and will continue to campaign for the licence to be restored.

Furthermore, I very much share your concern about a lack of services available for older people, especially in rural communities like Thurgoland. I know your village well, and I know that loneliness is a very real risk for older residents, especially those who live alone and do not have family and friends close by. I would be more than happy to see if there's anything I can do as Mayor to support voluntary and community groups in Thurgoland and more generally across South Yorkshire. If you've got any suggestions as to how I can support, please do let my Mayoral Office know, the telephone number is 0114 220 3400.

Once again, thank you very much for taking the time to get in touch. If there is anything I can do to support you as Mayor, please do not hesitate to get back in touch.

With my very best wishes,



Dan Jarvis MBE MP

Mayor, Sheffield City Region Mayoral Combined Authority