



HOUSE OF COMMONS

2nd March 2020

Dear local residents,

Thank you to those who have contacted me about the NSPCC's Wild West Web campaign.

I recognise that, whilst being online can be a hugely positive experience for children, we must do all we can to protect them from the negative impacts so that we make the UK the safest place in the world to be online.

The Government has said that it fully recognises the importance of tackling online harms, including harmful content to children on the Internet. That is why the Online Harms White Paper, jointly published by the Home Office and DCMS in April 2019, sets out plans for world-leading legislation in this area. The White Paper can be found here:

www.gov.uk/government/consultations/online-harms-white-paper

As championed by the NSPCC, the Bill will establish a new duty of care on companies towards their users, which will be overseen by an independent regulator. This will make companies take more responsibility for the safety of their users and tackle harm caused by content or activity on their services. The regulator will have a suite of powers to take effective enforcement action against companies that have breached their statutory duty of care. The regulator will take a risk-based approach, prioritising action to tackle activity or content where there is the greatest evidence or threat of harm, or where children or other vulnerable users are at risk.

I also welcome that, as set out in the Online Harms White Paper, the Government will be developing an online media literacy strategy. This strategy will lead to a coordinated and strategic approach to online media literacy education and awareness for children, young people and adults. Online media and digital literacy can equip users with the skills they need to spot dangers online, critically appraise information and take steps to keep themselves and others safe online.

Finally, you may be interested to know that I recently attended a workshop at a local school to learn about Google's new digital citizenship education programme, Be Internet Citizens. The programme covers a range of topics including how to spot fake news, recognise divisive 'us vs them' narratives, respond effectively to online hate speech and positively contribute to the online community. I was impressed by the positive response it received from both students and teachers and so I have written to all local schools to make them aware of the programme. More information about the programme can be found here:

<https://internetcitizens.withyoutube.com>



I hope that this information is reassuring. If you have any further concerns about this, or any other issues, please do get back in touch.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jane".

Jane Hunt MP