



DUNCAN BAKER MP

Member of Parliament for North Norfolk

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Tuesday 11th August 2020

Dear Lifesavers across North Norfolk

The relaxation of coronavirus restrictions and the resulting boom in 'staycations' has provided a welcome boost to our economy. However, I recognise it has also led to an unprecedented rise in the number of incidents your crews and teams are responding to along the North Norfolk coast this summer.

After talking to other emergency services, I know carrying out rescues in masks and other PPE, adjusting and adhering to new Covid-Secure processes, and the suspension in some cases of your regular training routines (with the attendant risk of 'skill fade') has placed considerable extra pressures upon you all. With this in mind, it is all the more remarkable that you continue to give your time, dedication, and skills – in many cases as volunteers – to answer the call to help those in distress. And I know that all this continues to be achieved in spite of a considerable decrease in fundraising income for the RNLI and independent lifeboat stations as a result of the lockdown.

The NHS, rightly, has been at the centre of press coverage in recent months as its workers – who truly deserve our thanks – battle with coronavirus. But we have heard less about the heroes who risk their lives to help others at sea, on, and around our coastline. As the MP for our most beautiful North Norfolk constituency with nearly fifty miles of the most stunning coastline, I want to thank you all and ensure you are fully appreciated.

I know from local reports that hardly a day goes by without you all being called upon for urgent support, so I write to express my heartfelt thanks to all our Coastguard Rescue Teams, lifeboat crews, and lifeguards for your vital work in keeping our residents and visitors safe, and in saving lives no matter when or how the call to action comes.

From my constituency visits this summer, I know the high esteem in which you are all held by our local communities and if I can support you in any way, you have my assurance that I stand ready to do so.

Yours sincerely

Duncan Baker
MP for North Norfolk

To: Mr A Garbutt, Senior Coastal Operations Officer, HM Coastguard
Mr S Edwards, Area Lifesaving Manager, RNLI
Mr C Hardy, Lifeboat Operations Manager, RNLI Wells Lifeboat Station
Mr B Farrow, Lifeboat Operations Manager, RNLI Sheringham Lifeboat Station
Mr J Redmond, Lifeboat Operations Manager, RNLI Cromer Lifeboat Station
Mr N Alexander, Chairman, Mundesley Volunteer Inshore Lifeboat Service
Mr C Siely, Lifeboat Operations Manager, RNLI Happisburgh Lifeboat Station
Mr M Skerrett, Chairman, Sea Palling Independent Lifeboat