[Your address]

[Name of your MP]

House of Commons

Westminster

SW1A 0AA

[Today’s date]

Dear [your MP],

**Help communities with a High Street Buyout Fund**

I hope this finds you well. I am a constituent writing to you from [your address] and I run a community business called [name of your community business].

As you will know, the local high street is a top concern for people like me living in [your area]. It’s the same for many other places across the country. Vacancy rates have gone through the roof (almost 16% of high street properties are vacant!) and it’s not a surprise given the growth of online shopping and out of town retail parks. On top of this the Covid-19 pandemic has only made matters worse.

I’ve been looking at possible ways to help our struggling high streets and came across a new idea from an independent charitable trust called Power to Change who support community businesses in England. They are proposing a High Street Buyout Fund that will help communities purchase assets on the high street as part of their #TakeBackTheHighStreet campaign. This is a fund that:

* Can move at the pace of private capital and is informed by local intelligence;
* Improves the physical, social and economic impact of high streets in a relatively swift but sustainable way;

It would leverage in £250m of commercial and social investment against £100m government grant. It would work by holding an asset to allow communities to raise the capital necessary to take over the asset for themselves.

The benefits of community-led high streets are clear:

* Community-owned spaces contribute £220m to the UK economy and 56p of every £1 they spend stays in the local economy, compared to just 40p for large private sector firms;
* Where there is community ownership on the high street vacancy rates are lower and there’s greater community engagement;
* They serve as ‘destination spaces’ which drive footfall to other businesses on the high street;

I’m sure you’ll agree that an innovative national fund like this could be a real gamechanger in [your area] and help revitalise the high street.

It would be fantastic if you could support the campaign by meeting with myself and a representative of Power to Change to discuss how we could work together to push for a High Street Buyout Fund in Parliament.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

[your name]