

11 September 2025

The Rt Hon Peter Kyle MP
Department for Business and Trade
Old Admiralty Building
Admiralty Place
London
SW1A 2DY

Dear Secretary of State,

ACS Local Shop Report 2025

Congratulations on your appointment as Business Secretary. I am writing to share ACS' (the Association of Convenience Stores) Local Shop Report 2025. The report provides key insights into the convenience sector, including store and job figures, sales statistics, direct tax contributions, investments made by convenience retailers, and the profiles of owners, employees and customers utilising convenience stores.

The report demonstrates the pivotal contribution of the UK's 50,486 convenience stores to both the national economy and local communities. However, it also underscores the challenges faced by store operators, some of which are directly linked to recent government policy decisions. The sector has seen a reduction in both employment and working hours, and investment levels have fallen. We urge you to consider the ways in which policy impacts the viability of convenience retailers and their ability to continue offering essential services - such as Post Offices, bill payment facilities, and access to everyday goods - in communities across the country.

The report highlights there are 443,000 people employed in the sector. Over the past year, convenience retailers have invested £916million, most commonly directed towards refrigeration, internal building maintenance and improving IT systems. The report also highlights the growing range of services and technology that stores offer, from banking and bill payment services, to click + collect and home delivery services, and shows the vital role they play in communities and how relevant we are to our consumers. Our members sell a broad range of products, adapting to each community's needs, however for the first time since we started producing this report, we have seen a decline in sales, reflecting pressure on household incomes.

As a member of the Retail Sector Council and through our ongoing collaboration with your officials, we are committed to pragmatic engagement to help deliver on the principles outlined in the Employment Rights Bill, safeguarding the secure, local, and flexible employment opportunities that convenience stores offer. We have welcomed the recent amendments to the Bill in the House of Lords delivering a right to request regular working hours and providing clear definitions regarding shift notice. We hope that you will seriously consider broad industry support for these adjustments to the Bill.

We appreciate the Government's new Small Business Plan and its acknowledgement of the challenges faced by local shops, particularly concerning crime, regulatory burdens, and operational costs. We are also encouraged by the emphasis on addressing illicit trade on high streets and continue to engage with your officials to highlight the financial impact on our members and the detrimental effect on public trust when enforcement actions are not taken against non-compliant businesses.

In addition to the report, you can learn about the 72 local shops and 621 people employed by them in Hove and Portslade by looking at the attached constituency card, which also contains details of the level of investment local retailers have invested in their business. We encourage you to share your constituency data on social media to celebrate the important contribution that convenience stores make to local communities.

We would value the opportunity to meet with you to discuss the Local Shop Report and the positive role that convenience retailers bring their local economy and community. We will follow up with your office or you can contact jordan.newfield@acs.org.uk to arrange a meeting.

Yours sincerely



James Lowman
Chief Executive