

Hello! Thank you so much for helping to Save Our Shop!

We've put this page together to make it as easy as possible to get involved. Below is the link to send your letter to:

Cabinet member Paul.frew@newcastle.gov.uk

Then send us a copy at 109generalstore@gmail.com so we've got the proof too!

And we have a letter template for you too! If you have time to write a small, personal introduction, and/or give the whole thing a slight re-jig we'd really appreciate it! This will help to make it clear to the council that real, actual people care about this rather than it just being us spamming them from random email addresses. Anything in [bold square brackets] is a place to add in your own information, or leave as is and remove the formatting if you aren't writing your own introduction.

Thanks again,

Team 109 xoxo

[I am writing in regards to the news that 109 General Store on Heaton Park Road is at risk of closure, due to the almost doubling of rent by Newcastle City Council. This is devastating news for me, and for the local area, and I am writing in support of reversing rent increases to help this business to continue to thrive.]

I have been a resident of **[Heaton since 2015]**, seeing numerous positive changes to the area since moving here. 109 General Store and Heaton Perk seem to have been instrumental in turning Heaton Park Road into a viable commercial street. In recent years we've seen numerous new restaurants, cafes and a book shop open on the street, but raising rents to the point that some of these pioneer businesses can't make a profit is gentrification. These new businesses haven't been here long, and the fact that a business has recently closed on the street would suggest that the new rent is above the actual market value.

I've used 109 General Store for refills and groceries since **[it first opened, relying on it for sustainable living and eco-friendly shopping. It was a lifeline during lockdown,]** and continues to provide an essential service to myself and residents of Heaton and beyond, especially since Something Good and Nil Living have both closed in recent times. I think it is imperative in modern times to choose to shop in an eco-conscious way, which 109 provides in droves, being the last refill-focused shop in Newcastle.

Looking at Newcastle Council's website, there is a drive for business to 'start, develop and thrive in our city' with talk of business support, investment, and championing local communities. If raising the rent in 109 General Store means that they are forced to close, it appears to be in direct opposition to these talismans of business inspiration. How can

Newcastle City Council support local enterprise if it is pricing successful and essential independent businesses out of the market? I welcome your thoughts on this.

The website also has a strong environmental message, with a net zero pledge and an invitation for residents to live more sustainably in Heaton (found here:

<https://new.newcastle.gov.uk/climate-change-net-zero/get-involved/residents>). Shopping at 109 General Store allows me to reduce waste through refills, reduce plastic, and reduce food waste by buying only what I need. How would you suggest I continue to do this if 109 is forced to close because of the rent increases? Again, I welcome your thoughts on this. As I said, it would be devastating to lose this local, independent business. I would ask that Newcastle City Council revisits the decision to increase rent and thus helps 109 General Store to remain open. I genuinely look forward to your thoughts on this; the justification on rising rents, and how businesses such as this can stay open.