



Weekly Brief

from the London Press and Public Affairs Office

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Recognition for National Chairman and the FSB

FSB National Chairman John Wright was awarded a CBE in the New Year Honours List for 'Services to the Federation of Small Businesses'. This recognises the importance of small businesses and the work of the FSB across the country. [Read](#) the full list.

Let it snow!

The FSB has had an avalanche of coverage in national and regional, broadcast and print media about people unable to make it into work because of poor road conditions and school closures. However, some FSB members also reported a surge in trade as people abandoned their cars and walked to their local high street to support local shops. The FSB's comments were picked up throughout the week in the [Daily Mail](#), The Times, Daily Mirror, the [Daily Telegraph](#), [The Independent](#) and [The Guardian](#) as well as on BBC News, GMTV, Sky News and Channel 4 News. [Watch](#) the coverage.

Backing Young Britain

Small businesses are being invited to take part in a No.10 Webcast on Thursday January 14 on the subject of putting in place internships and apprenticeships as part of a national campaign to get young people to work. The event is supported by the FSB. [Find out more](#) information and [sign up](#) to watch the webcast.

Reduce regulation

The FSB policy unit is calling small businesses to tell us their biggest regulatory bug-bears so we can tell Government what regulation needs to be changed or removed completely. [Find out more](#) and give us your views.

Supermarket Czar

The FSB welcomed the Conservatives' proposals to introduce a 'supermarket czar.' Read our comments in the [Evening Standard](#).

Banks

The FSB voiced concern in the [Daily Telegraph](#) this week that high interest rates on loans from the Enterprise Finance Guarantee should be lowered, while in [The Independent](#) the FSB warned that where the banks are lending to start-up businesses, they shouldn't hike up interest rates for existing customers.

Return of VAT

The FSB criticised the timing of the return of the VAT rate from 15 per cent to 17.5 per cent on January 1 and warned that it could cost small firms around £350 million in added costs. Read the coverage in the [Daily Express](#) and [The Times](#).

Non-planning Consents

The Government is reviewing the process of gaining non-planning consents to see how to make the process less burdensome for businesses. A non-planning consent is any consent that a developer has to obtain alongside or after and separate to the planning permission in order to bring a development into its first operational use. [Contact us](#) with your experiences.

Health and safety consultants

The Institute of Occupational Safety and Health is inviting small businesses to complete a survey on the accreditation of health and safety consultants. Complete the [survey](#).

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