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Portmeirion Group
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19 October 2026

F.A.O: Attention Andy Burnham, Prime Minister

House of Commons,

London

SW1A 0AA

Dear Prime Minister,

Ahead of your first Budget in office later this month, I wanted to re-extend my invitation to visit our factory in Stoke-on-Trent.

Since my first letter to you in June, we have welcomed cross-party support from several of your colleagues in Parliament, particularly our local MPs, who continue to provide vocal advocacy for the UK ceramics sector.

Now, as you and your Chancellor prepare your policy announcements for 28 October, there are two key questions we would like to see addressed and discuss with you:

1. **Where is the £120m promised to the UK ceramics sector in May and when will the funding be given to the businesses that need it?**

And with energy prices even higher today than when the pledge was made:

2. **Will the Government now finally provide meaningful support to the UK ceramics sector on soaring energy costs in the upcoming Budget?**

As the CEO of Portmeirion Group, one of the UK's leading global homewares businesses, with over 700 valued employees, we would welcome the opportunity to discuss the action needed to protect the UK ceramics industry, as well as show you the skills, heritage and people behind iconic British brands including Portmeirion, Spode and Royal Worcester.

In a recent speech you described yourself as a "staunch defender of the Potteries" and recognised the ceramics sector's crucial importance. Whilst those words are welcome, it is vital they are translated into timely, long-term support or we risk losing further iconic British brands and hundreds more highly skilled industrial jobs. Since April 2024, historic ceramics businesses which have closed or entered administration include Royal Stafford, Moorcroft and Denby.

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The industry has also already endured punishing increases in energy costs, burdensome red tape to access funding support and hugely increased associated employment costs across labour and wages.

In May, the Government announced £120 million to support capital investment in energy efficiency and decarbonisation, alongside operational support for businesses facing increased costs. Aside from the roundtable meeting in September with the its Department for Business, Science, Innovation and Technology, nothing has been heard since, and the sector remains in need of quick, long-term support to protect heritage and its skilled labour.

Despite repeated calls for it to be included, ceramics remains excluded from the British Industry Supercharger scheme. Comparative manufacturing industries, such as steel and concrete, which use less energy, do receive this support. in

With energy prices now even higher than when the support was announced back June, the forthcoming Budget is an opportunity for your Government to demonstrate that its reindustrialisation agenda extends beyond warm words. Without urgent action, Britain risks losing more heritage brands from this key manufacturing sector, generations of specialist skills, and the industrial jobs that sustain communities such as Stoke-on-Trent.

At Portmeirion we are taking proactive steps to safeguard our future and support British manufacturing. Through our “Made in Stoke” strategy, launched in 2025, we are reshoring production from China and significantly increasing UK output of branded tableware. In the last financial year, we produced an additional 280,000 branded pieces in Stoke: an increase of 7%. We are also preparing to relaunch England’s oldest porcelain brand, Royal Worcester, in 2027. In June, institutional and retail investors backed our growth plans by buying new shares in our company. We’d now like to see the Government move swiftly to allocate the £120m committed to the UK ceramics sector to help firms survive and thrive.

I would be delighted to host you for a factory tour, to see first-hand the fantastic craftsmanship our industry inspires, meet some of our skilled employees, see for yourself the skills and products we are trying to protect, and hear directly what the Government can do in the Budget to support British ceramics.

My team will follow up to see if we can arrange a date ahead of the Budget later this month.

Yours sincerely,

M. Scheepers

Group CEO,
Portmeirion Group