

Sweatshops may be behind city's outbreak, says MP

Gye, Hugo . i ; London [London]01 July 2020: 8.

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FULL TEXT

The Covid-19 outbreak in Leicester may have been caused by "sweatshops" in the city, according to a local Conservative MP.

Andrew Bridgen, the MP for North West Leicestershire, suggested that police had turned a blind eye to businesses such as small garment factories flouting lockdown rules.

He also pointed to a relatively young population and large number of multi-generational households as possible contributors to a "perfect storm" boosting the spread of coronavirus in the area.

Mr Bridgen told BBC Radio 5 Live there is "a very large garment industry which should have locked down, which my sources are telling me have worked for internet retailers who have been very busy during lockdown and they've carried on working as well.

"The human resources and health and safety is not necessarily what you would want them to be. I would regard them as sweatshops."

He claimed they were not observing social distancing rules but had not faced legal consequences. "You've got a city which has generally got younger people living in it... we know that younger people have been less likely to comply with the lockdown rules, in some cases maybe even 50 per cent of them have been flouting the rules."

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