

Caroline Dinenage

YOUR LOCAL MP'S ROUND UP OF THE PAST TWELVE MONTHS IN GOSPORT AND WESTMINSTER

2011

featuring...

197 votes in Parliament

2 Westminster Hall debates hosted

80 oral and written questions

19 Parliamentary speeches

121 constituency events

41 local schools visited

1 Westminster Dog Show



Happy 2012! It promises to be a exciting year for Britain.

They say that a week's a long time in politics, so you certainly fit a remarkable amount into a year. 2011 was a time of great highs, with the whole nation coming together to celebrate the Royal Wedding. There were tough times too, but I'm more proud than ever to support this Government as it has risen to these challenges – you can read more about this below.

But first, here's a whistle-stop tour of my own highlights, achievements, and bizarre moments of 2011!

For once, I managed to achieve one of my resolutions, as I visited all 41 constituency schools by the end of the year. With incredible teachers and pupils across our area this was a resolution that was more enjoyable to keep than most! It reflects my commitment to **securing the best start for Gosport's young people** – in helping our schools, defending Sure Start in Parliament and supporting the new Maritime Skills Centre.

Taking Business Minister Mark Prisk on a helicopter ride over Gosport was certainly a memorable part of my campaign to **support economic growth in the South-East**. Whether it was the helicopter ride, my Westminster Hall debate, or my unrelenting campaigning (some might say nagging!) in the House, I was delighted to secure an Enterprise Zone at the Daedalus site and be part of successful Regional Growth Fund bids for the area. They'll kick-start much needed local growth.

In addition to Daedalus, over the past 12 months I've been committed to **securing the best possible outcome for our local resources**. The 300+ apprentices training at HMS Sultan validate my campaign to save this great military base & while the Lee-on-the-Solent Coastguard will close, some coastguard facilities will remain at Daedalus & I've campaigned to secure jobs at the new MOC in Titchfield.



JANUARY—Questioning the PM on the Arctic Convoy Veterans



FEBRUARY—On the Armed Forces Parliamentary Scheme



MARCH—Visiting one of our local schools



APRIL—Supporting the Children's Heart Surgery Unit



MAY—At Gosport's very own 17th Century Village



JUNE—Taking Business Minister Mark Prisk on a helicopter tour over Daedalus

At my age, you don't expect to be out on the streets of Gosport late on a Saturday night! But that's exactly what I did to join the Street Pastors helping the vulnerable. They're just one of many **inspiring voluntary groups I've supported** over the past year. From the Crofton Lions to the Sea Cadets, they're doing great community work, so I said a big 'thank you' to them and others who do so much for local area with a party in Westminster for local volunteers and community groups.

Hopefully my 'invasion' of Browntown from HMS Bulwark has been forgiven. It was part of my commitment to **standing up for our Armed Forces**. I've gained unique insights into the challenges our Forces face over the past year, particularly on visits to the Falklands & Afghanistan. These experiences help me to stand up for our Forces –over the Covenant, war widows' pensions, R&R time and a host of other welfare issues.

At the start of the year we celebrated the reopening of Blake Maternity Unit, a fantastic midwife led facility. I'm committed to **protecting all local health resources**, have supported the Children's Heart Unit at Southampton Hospital, met the local GPs' Commissioning Group & visited the War Memorial Hospital.

My ongoing campaign to gain a **medal for the Arctic Convoy Veterans** took a stride forward in 2011, as I questioned the Prime Minister in Parliament, held a meeting with him at Downing Street, and hosted a debate on this in Westminster Hall. With immense support for my campaign coming from across the world, I'll continue to push in 2012 to ensure these brave veterans get the recognition they deserve.

I've also **sought transport solutions for our area**. From meeting with the First Hampshire & Dorset buses to talk about the BRT, to calling for improvements to Portsmouth-London line, to promoting car sharing, I've sought to tackle congestion, for however good local drive-time radio is, the A32 is unbearable!

From **hundreds of local events, to key debates in Parliament**, an MP's life is never quiet – in Parliament I've spoken up on vital issues for my constituents, from fuel prices to elected Police Commissioners. I've had the great privilege of attending events as diverse as the WWII event at Explosion Museum and the opening the Ale House at Gosport's 17th Century Village, to the more bizarre Westminster Dog Competition in aid of the Dog's Trust and Kennel Club, where in many ways I was glad my dog & I were not awarded the title Dog of the Year!



JULY—Launching the Gosport Maritime Skills Centre



AUGUST—At the Lee-on-the-Solent Carnival



SEPTEMBER—Discussing dementia in Parliament, one of many useful meetings held here



OCTOBER—Another great community event - the Rowner Renewal Launch



NOVEMBER—At Camp Bastion in Afghanistan



DECEMBER—Supporting local growth at Gosport's Business Celebration

2011 has been an extraordinary year—in our community, nationally and across the globe. While we've faced tough economic times and international instability, great strides have been taken in Gosport and throughout Britain to rebuild our country in greater and more secure prosperity. See below for my pick of this Government's top achievements over the past year.

And finally,

Sadly, MPs aren't yet issued with a crystal ball, but I still know that a brilliant year lies ahead for Gosport and for Britain. My long-running campaign to ensure the Olympic Torch goes through Gosport has paid off, so our area will be a part of the greatest sporting event in the world, while Diamond Jubilee celebrations are also set to sweep the nation.

So all that remains is to wish you all a very happy New Year!

Best wishes, *Caroline.*

CAROLINE'S TOP TEN GOVERNMENT ACHIEVEMENTS

- 1. Standing up for Britain in Europe** – we're committed to protecting our national interests in Europe. At the EU summit in early December, David Cameron stood up for our nation when he vetoed treaty changes that would have been detrimental for Britain.
- 2. Steering Britain through the debt storm** – our reduction plan has ensured that this country is a safe haven in the international debt storm. UK interest rates have fallen to record lows, which is great news for businesses, homeowners and families.
- 3. Lifting 1.1 million people out of income tax altogether** – combined increases in the personal allowance have benefitted 25 million individuals by up to £326 a year, and will result in an extra 1.1 million people paying no income tax at all.
- 4. Cutting fuel duty** – this Government has cancelled proposed fuel duty rises and the fuel duty escalator – saving hard-pressed families and businesses 10p per litre on Labour's proposed rises.
- 5. Supporting small business and local growth** – we're kick-starting economic growth across the UK with 24 Enterprise Zones, such as the one at the Daedalus site. We've also poured £20 billion into small businesses and secured commitments from all major banks to increase lending, to support sustained and balanced economic growth.
- 6. Transforming our NHS** – we've secured more doctors, fewer managers and less bureaucracy, with 3,500 more doctors and 5,500 less managers working for the NHS and cuts to bureaucracy of £4.5 billion planned over the course of this Parliament.
- 7. Giving children the best possible start in life** – we're transforming children's lives, with 24 new Free Schools and over 1,000 Academies established in the past year. Tough new powers on school discipline will enable teachers to drive up standards, while our largest ever increase in Child Tax credit ensures all children get the support they need.
- 8. Delivering real support for pensioners** – in recognition of all that the elderly have done for our country, we've committed to the greatest ever increase in the State pension, increased Winter Fuel Allowance and maintained benefits such as free prescriptions.
- 9. Freezing Council tax** – to ease the burden on hard-pressed taxpayers, we're enabling local councils to freeze council tax – for the 2nd year running.
- 10. Tackling the benefits culture** – we've already taken great strides to alleviate the unfair burden on hard-working taxpayers, by capping Housing Benefit at £100,000, and have further plans for 2012 to ensure that it always pays to work.

For the latest news visit www.caroline4gosport.co.uk