



Caroline Dinenage

MY ROUND UP OF THE YEAR
IN GOSPORT & WESTMINSTER

2012

featuring...

193 votes in Parliament

46 oral and written questions

31 Parliamentary debates

112 constituency events

and 1 charity skydive!

Happy New Year! Time to build on the golden legacy of 2012.

The weather may not have been up to scratch but 2012 had some wonderful & memorable moments. Not least the success of Team GB & our golden summer of sport which showcased this country at its very best, the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations & the poignant 30th commemorations of the Falklands Conflict.

Without doubt there were also some lows, however I'm proud that this Government has risen to the challenges and tackled difficulties head on. More on that later, but first a quick gallop through some of my highlights of 2012.

One of my New Year's resolutions was to show my appreciation for our voluntary workers by **visiting local charities and community groups**. This saw me manning the tills at charity shops, having a cup of tea with members of the Parkinson's Group in Stubbington and enjoying the Scouts' St George's Day celebrations. It was also a good opportunity to thank those who we call upon in times of emergency and this year I visited the local Police & Ambulance services as well as the Marine Patrol Unit, the NCI Coastwatch and the Maritime Coastguard Agency.

One of my favourite yearly events is my reception in Westminster for some of the volunteers who contribute so much to our local community. This year guests, who included 89 year-old John Halford who's helped out at Peel Common Nursing Home for years, were entertained by talented musicians from St Vincent College.

Indeed some of my happiest moments are when I get to **welcome groups of constituents to Parliament**. This year I invited 40 lovely Gosport ladies to celebrate International Women's Week and hosted the fantastic Fareham & Gosport Self Advocates group of adults with learning difficulties, as well as a number of local schools and even a group of vicars!

But 2012 was also about getting out and about – taking my MP's surgery to Gosport High Street and running a series of **advice sessions in libraries, schools & community centres** right across the constituency.



JANUARY— In urgent talks with Pompey Supporters Trust



FEBRUARY— National Apprenticeship Week at Costa



MARCH— Welcoming Gosport ladies during International Women's Week



APRIL— With Simon Weston at reception commemorating Falklands War



MAY— Raising the issue of adult illiteracy at PMQs



JUNE— At the launch of the 'Bridging the Gap' fund

It was definitely a year to **focus on business & enterprise**; in January I took part in a Parliamentary debate on Mary Portas' recommendations for **High Street regeneration** and was delighted to help Gosport secure £110k for town centre improvements. An impressive 'Town Team' has now been assembled to decide how best to spend it.

I was also really pleased that 'The News' took up my suggestion of a "Bridging the Gap" Regional Growth Fund scheme to **help new and growing businesses**. This was such a success that there were enough bids in the first tranche alone to have allocated the £2.1million grant twice over.

Since becoming an MP, I have made the **regeneration of the Daedalus airfield site** a big priority and have been working hard to see it become an Aviation, Aeronautical & Marine Business Park. I am pleased that the past twelve months have produced a number of significant milestones; culminating in the DCLG Secretary, Eric Pickles, visiting the site (now called the Solent Enterprise Zone!) to announce that over £25million will be invested in infrastructure and a new skills academy. This is fantastic news for the local area, which will benefit from the creation of almost 1,200 new jobs and top skills training in the future.

This investment also has knock-on benefits for the area, with Hampshire County Council now agreeing to fund **£8million of improvements to Newgate Lane**. Frustrated by the congestion local residents have to endure on our roads every day, I hope this package will improve travel via the route and offer a boost for commuters, businesses and our local economy. I have also been in regular contact with Transport ministers to further the case for greater large-scale **improvements to our transport infrastructure** in the future.

As well as building on my **commitment to create local jobs**, I have campaigned to retain local shipbuilding jobs at Portsmouth Dockyard. Through the course of the year I raised my concerns with numerous Defence Ministers as well as the Prime Minister and I will continue to fight to protect local jobs.

Team GB athletes weren't the only heroes being awarded medals this year, as the campaign to **honour our brave Arctic Convoy veterans** came to a triumphant end. I was delighted that the Prime Minister recognised the need to award the Arctic Star, though sad that it has taken so long to achieve that many of those brave sailors are no longer alive to receive it. I will continue to urge the Government to deliver on this medal as a matter of urgency.



JULY—Welcoming the Olympic Torch to Gosport



AUGUST—Visiting the Daring Club for adults with learning difficulties



SEPTEMBER—Eric Pickles announces £25m Daedalus investment package



OCTOBER—With local business leaders



NOVEMBER—With Katrice Lee's family at 10 Downing Street



DECEMBER—Helping pack food hampers at Waterside Church

A tragic local case is that of Katrice Lee, who went missing over 30 years ago. I helped persuade the Royal Military Police to re-investigate the case and spoke on a debate in the House of Commons. I also raised concerns at the flaws in the initial investigation with the Prime Minister during PMQs. I joined the Lee family march to Downing Street with a petition and secured a meeting with them and the Defence Minister at RMP HQ in a bid to get this brave family the answers they both need and deserve.

From hundreds of local events, to key debates in Parliament, I've spoken on a **wide range of issues that matter to my constituents**; from fuel prices to the future of the Falkland Islands. Some of the highlights included the world record attempt for the largest human Olympic rings at Bay House School, a charity sky-dive for the local MS Society and helping out with a shift behind the bar in a local pub! The most lasting memory is the day the Olympic Torch came through Gosport—truly the most perfect illustration of the great sense of community spirit and pride which makes our area such a great place.

In many ways 2012 has been a truly remarkable year. While we've faced tough economic times and international instability, we have made great strides in our community and throughout Britain. There's lots more still to do, but below is my pick of the Government's top achievements in the past year.

Wishing you and your families a happy, healthy & successful 2013.

Caroline

CAROLINE'S TOP TEN GOVERNMENT ACHIEVEMENTS

- 1. Cutting the deficit by £13 billion** – down by 25% since we came to office, with credible future economic plans.
- 2. Making welfare fairer** – capping benefits so that no one will receive more in welfare than the average family earns by going out to work, while targeting support on those with real need.
- 3. Real terms increase in the NHS budget** – spending more on the NHS than ever before, targeted at front line services - increasing the number of doctors in England by 5,180 and clinical staff by 2,642, and reducing managers and costly bureaucracy.
- 4. Frozen fuel duty** – scrapping two planned fuel price increases, meaning the average family spends £159 less that they would have under Labour's plans.
- 5. Reduced immigration by a quarter** – cracking down on sham marriages & bogus colleges, and tightening student visas.
- 6. Over 1 million new private sector jobs** – Unemployment down nearly 500,000 and a record number of apprentices.
- 7. Improving schools** – 1,000 new Academies mean that 2,619 schools now have the benefits of Academy status and targeting Pupil Premium money at disadvantaged students who need it most.
- 8. Cutting income tax bills of more than 24 million workers** – raising the threshold at which people start paying tax from £6,475 to £8,105, with a further increase to £9,440 – the biggest ever – coming in 2013/14. Meaning 2 million of the lowest paid have been taken out of tax altogether.
- 9. Biggest-ever cash rise in the state pension ever** – with the triple lock guarantee ensuring that the basic state pension will be raised by the highest of inflation, wages or 2.5 per cent.
- 10. Freezing Council tax** – enabling local councils to keep council tax unchanged for the 3rd year running.

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