

Caroline Dinenage

**MP for Gosport,
Lee-on-the-Solent,
Stubbington and
Hill Head**



December marked the start of a very busy festive season; there were lots of events across the constituency to get us in the Christmas spirit! Christmas lights were formally 'switched on' in Gosport town centre, Lee on the Solent & Stubbington Village - usually involving some very jolly carol singing and something yummy to eat/drink. The Alverstoke Christmas Tree Festival is always a favourite with my own children.

I invited children from schools across the constituency to submit a design for my 2014 Christmas card. Maia from Crofton Hammond Infant School was crowned overall winner and I visited local schools to meet her and the runners up. I also paid a visit to the Royal Mail sorting office in Gosport to pass on my thanks to the men and women who ensure that our festive cards and packages reach us safely.

Having abseiled off the Spinnaker Tower in aid of the Fareham & Gosport branch of the MS Society, I was thrilled to attend its Christmas Fayre and present representatives with a cheque for the £800 I raised. They are currently trying to talk me in to another challenge involving the longest zip wire in Europe, in Snowdonia. Do get in touch if you want to be part of this madness, it is an excellent cause!

This month we celebrated the second Small Business Saturday which encourages people to 'shop small' & support our fantastic independent retailers. I managed to visit lots of small businesses across the constituency and do most of my Christmas shopping. This initiative is a reminder of the Government's commitment to support small businesses. In the Chancellor's Autumn Statement, he announced that Small Business Rate Relief would be extended and the discount for high street shops and cafes will increase to £1,500.

The Gosport Marine Scene group which I started back in 2012 continues to thrive; this month it hosted an event at the Submarine Museum to promote Gosport's future as a maritime hub. It was great to see representatives from Ben Ainslie Racing and Premier Marinas among those at the event – all of whom expressed great enthusiasm about our area's huge potential. I also attended a meeting with residents of Royal Clarence Marina to talk about the future plans for of this development.

Infrastructure improvements are crucial to this growth so I met the roads Minister, Robert Goodwill MP to ask him to support the Solent Local Enterprise Partnership's £30M funding bid to complete a new access road to our peninsula. The decision will be announced in the New Year – fingers and toes firmly crossed! I also met with the Minister responsible for local bus services, Baroness Kramer, along with Hill Head residents, to discuss the adverse changes to bus provision across our area.



With the winner and runners up in my Christmas Card competition



At the Gosport Sorting Office



With Colin Baxter from Driftwood Studios on Small Business Saturday

Alverstoke residents will be aware of the longstanding campaign to open up the Stokesmead site for public use. Finally, this month the Chief Executive of Gosport Borough Council, the Chair of Anglesey Conservation Group and I were able to sit down with the Managing Director and Executive Chairman of Abbey Homes which owns the land. It was an open and positive meeting which has laid the foundations for further discussions in the hope of finding an acceptable way forward.

This time last year some homes in Stubbington faced the threat of flooding. I brought together local residents and the key agencies involved for a meeting at Fareham Borough Council to discuss how these vulnerabilities can be mitigated against in the future.



With the President of Alverstoke Bowling Club, Dave Boynton

Energy Bills can be a big worry at this time of year so I spoke to representatives from the Home Heat Helpline about how to keep the bills down this winter; you can call 0800 33 66 99 free from 9am to 5:30pm Monday to Friday to receive support.

The end of the year is always a good time to celebrate the year's achievements; I joined Alverstoke Bowling Club for their annual presentation and attended the Goshawks Gymnastics Awards. My sons and I also thoroughly enjoyed watching the Gosport Ice Skating Show; we were extremely impressed with the talented skaters of all ages.

I visited the Forces Families Club at HMS Collingwood and met some of the delightful children and parents who make use of the crèche facilities – clubs



At the Forces Families Club

such as these, run by an amazing team of dedicated volunteers, have a huge sense of camaraderie and offer important support to the families of service personnel. You can find out more about it here: Forcesfamiliesclub.co.uk.


This month, the Department of Health announced more details about the Independent Panel which has been launched to investigate the unexpected deaths at Gosport War Memorial Hospital during the 1990s. For all those involved, from bereaved families to hospital staff, this has been an extremely long and difficult journey so this is a welcome step towards closure. If you have any information, I would urge you to contact the Panel through its official website: <http://gosportpanel.independent.gov.uk/>.

I'd like to wish you all the very best for the New Year!

Caroline

PS: there are just a few tickets still available for my General Election fundraiser 'An evening with Jim Davidson' at the Thorngate Halls on 6th Feb. Please call Lesley on 023 9258 8400 for details!

*An Evening with
Jim Davidson*



*Hosted by
Fred Dinenage*

Friday 6 February 2015
7.30pm 'til late
at the Thorngate Halls, Gosport
Tickets: £50 (incl. dinner and wine)
From: Gosport Conservative Association
Tel: 02392 588400 or
email: office@goscons.plus.com

GET IN TOUCH

Please feel free to contact me on any issue, or to find out when my next surgery is. I'm always happy to arrange tours of the Palace of Westminster and Big Ben for my constituents. Please contact my office at least three months in advance to make sure you get a place - the tours are very popular!

Constituency Office: 023 9252 2121

Westminster Office: 020 7219 7078

Email: caroline.dinenage.mp@parliament.uk

Website: www.caroline4gosport.co.uk

Address: House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA