



Caroline Dinenage

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



Meeting with Cats Protection



Learning about the Energy Switch Guarantee



At the opening of the new Supermarket Soul Food

It's hard to believe that we are already coming towards the end of another year! This will be my seventh Christmas as an MP and the busiest December I can remember, with some fantastic announcements from Parliament. These included the [Animal Welfare Draft Bill](#) - which will increase maximum sentences for animal cruelty, the ban on [Microbeads](#) from January, exploring a deposit return scheme on non-recyclable plastic bottles, £370million investment in the [Post Office](#), making high speed [broadband](#) for all a legal requirement by 2020 and a ban on leaseholds on new-build houses!

This month the Government reached agreement on three important issues in the first phase of the Brexit negotiations: citizens' rights, Northern Ireland and the financial settlement. The details are set out in a [joint report](#). On the basis of this report, the Commission has recommended that we move to the second phase of the negotiations.

There was also positive news with a £450 million increase in police funding across England and Wales, Hampshire Police Force budget is set to rise by around £9.6million in 2018/19.

In Parliament I met with Cats Protection to celebrate the charity's work supporting cat welfare. Gosport's very own Cats Protection branch is celebrating its 35th anniversary this year!

I also met Energy UK to talk about switching, over 6200 households in the Gosport Constituency switched energy supplier this year, saving hundreds of pounds. But that means thousands of others are missing out on these potential savings. Switching is a lot more simple and speedy than you might think. Find out more about [Energy Switch Guarantee](#) here.

I took the opportunity of a fascinating basement tour of the Houses of Parliament. Next year MPs will vote on different proposals for the full scale restoration of this historic building. It was useful to see the scale of the challenges to be overcome in such a mammoth project.

Back at home, I had fun celebrating [Small Business Saturday](#) on 2 December by visiting a number of the great local independent shops across the Constituency. I picked up lots of Christmas shopping along the way and cut the ribbon to open Soul Food, a fantastic new Afro-Caribbean food store in Gosport Precinct. Small businesses are the life-blood of our country's economy and this was a great opportunity to promote the value of supporting local traders both at Christmas and throughout the year.

Fareham Borough Council this month approved a planning application allowing Lidl to expand, demolishing a number of industrial units at Apex Centre in the process. In addition to securing some support from Lidl and the site landlord, to help the affected businesses with their relocation plans, I have arranged to meet with them again alongside the Solent Local Enterprise Partnership and Growth Hub to see what further help could be offered.

I met with NHS England to discuss dentistry and raise the lack of NHS dentist appointments available in the constituency, meaning some people travel to Portsmouth for treatment.

It was great to catch up with Lloyd from [Farm4Life](#) at Haslar. This wonderful charity sends furniture, equipment and tools to hospitals & schools across Ghana and Sierra Leone. They have already sent an amazing 15 containers. They are currently sending wheelchairs and disability equipment to hospitals and sports equipment to schools, and would be grateful for any donations.



With Lloyd at Farm4Life

I popped into Brune Park School to watch the fantastic Suki Gymnastics 2017 Gala. The skill and talent from the young gymnasts was truly astounding, I won't be surprised to see some of them representing GB in the future, all made possible by some incredible volunteers!

I also met with Professor Dominic Tweddle, Director-General of the National Museum of the Royal Navy to discuss their future plans for Explosion Museum at Hardway. And I was delighted to attend TS Hornet Sea Cadet's carol service and awards evening.

Continuing the nautical theme, it was such an honour to be invited to see Her Majesty The Queen commissioning the UK's new aircraft carrier, HMS Queen Elizabeth, into the Royal Navy this month. I am so proud of our area's incredible track record of support for the Navy, long may it continue!

I visited the [Wave 105 Mission Christmas](#) warehouse to see the thousands of Christmas presents donated for disadvantaged children by the incredibly generous people from our region. I was keen to thank the volunteers, many of whom had been given time off by their employers, help.

Shoppers in the Alver Valley supported Tesco's food collection this month, in partnership with the Trussell Trust and FareShare. I also took my own 'Reverse Advent Calendar' donation to our local Gosport & Fareham Basics food-bank. You can find out more about their great work [here](#).



With volunteers from Wave 105 Mission Christmas

Two Saints Chief Executive, Steve Benson, came to see me to discuss their support for homeless people in our area. There are currently 12 individuals rough-sleeping in Gosport, Two Saints 101 offers support, including hostel accommodation.

I attended the annual St Mary's Christmas Tree Festival. The weekend featured over 50 trees, beautifully decorated by local organisations, schools and businesses, as well as musical entertainment by groups from across the area.

I announced Katelyn Armitage, from Woodcot Primary School, as the winner of my annual Christmas Card Design competition at Gosport Discovery Centre. I received over 200 wonderful entries and they were all on display for all to admire!



The winner of my Christmas Card Design Competition

Looking forward, as ever the GAFIRS New Year's Day charity swim in Stokes Bay is one of the UK's best examples of craziness on a huge scale in a fantastic cause! I'm not sure I'll be brave enough to take to the water myself, but hope to be cheering from the (relative) warmth of the beach! You can find out more about this [here](#).

Gosport Borough Council will be holding a public meeting regarding the redevelopment of Fort Gilkicker at Thorngate Halls on 8th Jan at 18.30. More details [here](#).

2018 will be the [Year of Engineering](#). The Government will work with hundreds of industry partners to raise the profile of engineering among young people aged 7-16, their parents and teachers. More than 350 partners have signed up to support this project including Siemens, the Science Museum Group and BAE Systems.

As we reach the end of an eventful year, I would like to thank all of you who keep up-to-date with my goings-on in the Gosport Constituency by reading my newsletter every month. It has, as ever, been my enormous honour to represent you in Parliament.

A very Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year to you all!

Best wishes

Caroline

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 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!

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