



Caroline Dinenage

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



With Vince Cable MP at the Topping Out ceremony for the CEMAST skills centre

Whilst we are lucky that the Gosport peninsula has survived the recent storms better than many, I was extremely proud to hear that Royal Navy sailors from HMS Sultan and HMS Collingwood spent time contributing to the vital flood relief effort in Berkshire this month.

Young apprentices from the Defence Munitions Training Scheme have also been spreading their wings by taking part in the Brathay Apprentice Challenge. I have my fingers crossed for their success in the competition!

Our area has a glowing reputation for providing fantastic training programmes, and its repertoire will be further enhanced once Fareham College's CEMAST Skills Centre at Daedalus opens. I was delighted to welcome Secretary of State for Business, Innovation & Skills, Vince Cable MP, to the site for the official 'topping out' ceremony ahead of the centre's September 2014 opening.



With local literacy volunteers after the BIS Select Committee evidence session

My campaign to tackle adult literacy and numeracy problems ramped up a gear this month as the first inquiry session by the Business, Innovation & Skills Select Committee got underway in Westminster. A number of familiar faces gave evidence to the Committee, including the Principal of St Vincent College, Di Lloyd, and Linda Curtis from Gosport's 'We Can Read'. Two more inquiry sessions are coming up and you can watch my YouTube call for evidence [here](#).

At the start of the month, the first meeting for my new All Party Parliamentary Group for Maths and Numeracy took place. I am pleased that the Government is already starting to take action to boost maths skills in the UK by pledging £20 million of funding to coax top maths graduates into teaching.

Back on the south coast, I had a chance to put my teacher's hat on when I spoke to Year 6 pupils at Lee-on-the-Solent Junior School about democracy and exercised the debating skills of lots of budding politicians!



With students & staff at Bridgemary School

I also paid a visit to Bridgemary School to celebrate the start of work on their new £500,000 3G football pitch. The new facility will not only benefit students, but also community clubs and local teams from across the area. After the success of London 2012, it is crucial that we maintain Britain's enthusiasm for sport which is why I welcome the Government's new £150 million per year scheme to enable primary school pupils to do sport with a specialist.

The issue of energy costs was a hot topic in Westminster this month. I took part in a debate on the matter and called on energy companies to abolish charges added to bills which are not paid by direct debit and offer more flexible methods of payment to consumers. During a debate on fuel poverty, I commended the Government's Warm Home Discount Scheme which is providing invaluable help for pensioners here in the Gosport constituency and across the UK.

I paid a visit to the National Air Traffic Control Centre in Swanwick for a tour of the impressive facility and heard about the crucial work that staff from across the local region do to keep everything running smoothly up in the air.

This month, we heard that business optimism is at its highest for 22 years and the number of empty shops on the high street has reached its lowest point in four years. Across the Gosport peninsula, such optimism is evident. After last month's Gosport Business & Employment Fair, over half of the participating businesses reported that they had found appropriate candidates for their vacancies, showing just how important such events can be for both businesses and job hunters.



Reopening Nelson's Bar

We are lucky to have thriving high streets boasting unique shops in both Stubbington and Lee-on-the-Solent, and the Gosport Town Team is continuing to make improvements to Gosport High Street. I took the opportunity to name-check this hardworking group during a debate in Westminster, praising the Empty Unit Support Scheme which has already helped two new fledgling businesses set up shop on the High Street in recent weeks. I was delighted to reopen Nelson's Bar which has undergone a glamorous refurbishment, creating 12 new jobs.

Following First's announcement that many local bus services would be re-routed, I joined local Councillors Scard, Burgess and Jessop in a campaign to ensure that communities across our region are adequately served by public buses. I held a beneficial meeting with the Regional Director at First and local councillors - whilst there are some big hurdles to overcome we will not give up without a fight! We are investigating other ways of improving bus provision and will be talking with Hampshire County Council in the coming weeks.

During a meeting with the Hampshire Police and Crime Commissioner, Simon Hayes, I was pleased to hear that out of 42 police forces nationally, Hampshire has the 6th lowest total expenditure per head of the population.

February 2014 was an exciting month for my family and I as I married my partner Mark Lancaster. Of course, this does not change my role as MP for Gosport, Stubbington, Lee-on-the-Solent & Hill Head. I will continue to live and work on the south coast where my children go to school.



Using software at NATS



My wedding day

Best wishes

Caroline

(P.S. If you can spare some time to help deliver my leaflets around your local area, I'd love to hear from you!)

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!

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