

# Caroline Dinenage

October 2011  
Issue 11

Your local MP reporting back from Westminster



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

Gosport faced an unlikely invasion this month as I disembarked with the Royal Marines. The landing at Browndown was part of a visit to HMS Bulwark with the Armed Forces Parliamentary Scheme, in which we saw first-hand the role fulfilled by this Amphibious Assault Ship and her crew.

These experiences give me a great insight into the challenges our servicemen face, so I can continue to champion their cause in Parliament. This month I have written to the new Defence Minister to urge him to introduce fair harmony times for the Navy and questioned him in the House of Commons about ongoing delays in the airbridge from Afghanistan.

There has been some good news for our Forces too, with the opening of a new MCTS training facility in HMS Collingwood. At the launch I was mindful of the fact that investment is not just great for the military, but can help our economy too. That is why I called on the Ministry of Defence to ensure that our procurement practices provide a supportive environment for the UK defence industry to help fantastic, constituency based businesses like Vector Aerospace.

I am passionate about promoting all business growth in Gosport. Following the announcement of an Enterprise Zone for the Daedalus site, I am pleased to have been elected as the Vice-Chairman of the new Parliamentary Group on Local Business, Enterprise Zones and LEPs. Our first meeting was attended by the Secretary of State for Local Government and was a first step to ensuring the local growth agenda pays off for Gosport.



*Disembarking from HMS Bulwark with fellow MP Penny Mordaunt*



*With Twigg at the Westminster Dog Competition*



*Visiting Alverstoke Junior School to meet the School Council*

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As my own business experience came from running a franchise business, I was keen to enlighten MPs about the importance of Franchising to the UK economy – with a £12.4 billion turnover and providing over half a million jobs. I hosted a reception for MPs to meet some of the UK's most successful Franchisors. Many were unaware that major brands like Body Shop and Domino's are great franchise success stories right on their doorstep!

One of the more unusual events of the month was the Westminster Dog Show. My lovely dog Twiggy took her defeat very gracefully, we were proud to take part to promote the very important issue of dog welfare and the work of the Kennel Club and Dogs Trust who organised the event.

This month I continued my tour of local schools, visiting to three great schools, Leesland Infants, Alverstoke Juniors and Grange Juniors. As ever I was hugely impressed by the great teachers and the very engaging pupils, who always give me a grilling in our question time.

High standards were also apparent at the Rowner Renewal launch, where we celebrated with the first residents to move into the impressive new homes. In the next phase, a supermarket and shops will be built to bring jobs to help this great community continue to thrive.

I am always happy to return from Westminster to my constituency, but the journey always reminds me of the enduring problems we face with the A32. That's why I teamed up with Hampshire County Council for Liftshare Week, promoting car sharing in Gosport. They run an excellent website - <http://hants.liftshare.com/> - where you can find people on your route – saving you money and taking cars off the road.

Finally – we had a fairly high profile vote in the Commons this month on whether we should have a Referendum on our membership of the EU. Virtually without exception the sizeable postbag I receive on this issue is strongly in favour of giving the people a say in our relationship with Europe. This is why, with a heavy heart, I voted against the Government and in favour of the Referendum.

Best wishes,

*Caroline*



## GET IN TOUCH

Please feel free to contact me on any issue, or to find out when my next surgery is. It is also possible to come up to Parliament to have an official tour. I'm always happy to arrange tours of the Palace of Westminster and Big Ben for my constituents. Just please contact my office to book at least two months in advance to make sure you get a place - the tours are very popular!

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