



Happy new year!

Just one month into the new decade and already so much has happened. Her Majesty the Queen has granted Royal Assent to the Brexit Bill. The Act, now enshrined in law, means the UK will be leaving the EU at 11pm tonight, 31 January!



Although Brexit has dominated headlines, there have been a lot of other positive announcements from Parliament this month;

- A [ban on gambling businesses allowing customers to use credit cards](#) will come into force in April
- £80 million funding [investment to music hubs](#) across the country, so that children have more opportunities to learn creative and musical skills
- Delivering on our manifesto promise, the [NHS Long Term Plan Funding Bill](#) has entered Parliament, placing a legal duty on the government to provide a minimum spend of £33.9bn a year by 2024
- We've introduced the [Environment Bill](#) to Parliament allowing us to tackle climate change head-on, protecting and restoring our natural environment for future generations.

In local NHS news, I met with the CEO of Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust who have recently been rated '[Good](#)' by the CQC, showing the progress made at the Trust and reflecting the quality of care provided by staff. I also caught up with the Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association to hear more about their wonderful work across our region.

Also announced this month, the roll-out of the [Veterans Railcard](#) which will be available from Armistice Day this year, giving our veterans 1/3 off their rail fares. Our area has among the highest number of veterans in the UK, a testament to our proud and rich military links past and present.



This month, Holocaust Memorial Day, marked the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz Birkenau, I signed the annual Holocaust book of Remembrance to pay my tribute to the millions of lives brutally stolen. It's worth remembering that the Holocaust did not start with violence, but venomous words and hate-filled hearts. We must continue to stand against the hatred and intolerance that still blights our world today. It is vital to educate young people on the lessons from the past and their contemporary relevance, so that we can say, with all sincerity; "never again!"

Keeping in touch with local educators, I met with the heads of Bay House, Bridgemary and Brune Park senior schools to discuss some local issues. I also met with both Fareham College and Portsmouth University to discuss post-16 education in our area. I visited Little Barn Owls and Gateway Preschools to discuss Early Years Funding as well as popping to Crofton Hammond Junior School to teach a class to their Year 6 students about Parliament and democracy.

I caught up with the RSPCA to learn more about its [Generation Kind](#) initiative which is the charity's biggest ever education and prevention programme, teaching compassion to new generations. I also joined other MPs at a [Ban Trophy Hunting Event](#) in Westminster.

I met a childhood hero when Orinoco wobbled into Parliament to promote Keep Britain Tidy's [Great British Spring Clean](#). Events will be running across the country from 20 March-13 April 2020 and I'm encouraging local

people and organisations to get involved.



Libraries play a key role in our communities - improving education and skills, hosting community groups as well as reducing loneliness and social isolation. As many residents are aware, Hampshire County Council is currently holding a [consultation on Libraries](#). I am very concerned about one of the options in the consultation which proposed closing 10 libraries across Hampshire, including Elson and Lee on the Solent, which would impact the Gosport Constituency. You can find my response to the consultation [here](#). I would also encourage all residents with an interest in our local libraries to take part in the consultation.



More positive news from Hampshire County Council as the construction work on the new £34.5m Gosport Access Road (Stubington Bypass) finally started this month. I have tirelessly campaigned for this critical part of the solution to our local road nightmares for years, it's so good to see spades finally going into the ground! You can view the plans on the construction and how traffic will be managed [here](#).

Fareham and Gosport will receive an additional £141,450 from the Government to [tackle rough sleeping](#). I recently popped in to thank volunteers and meet the guests at the Gosport Open Doors project. Organised by Caritas and entirely staffed by wonderful local people, the scheme offers a warm bed, hot dinner and breakfast as well as friendship and support for rough sleepers in a number of our church buildings . We have a responsibility to care for the most vulnerable in society and just one individual on the street is too many, so I shall continue to work with the Government and local organisations to get people the support they need.

It has also been announced that Hampshire Constabulary could receive an [extra £26.1million](#) to tackle crime and keep our streets safe – an increase of 7.7% from last year. This will deliver a further 156 officers to add to the 210 that

were funded and recruited from the council tax increase last year. This is in addition to the £1,996,200 that the Hampshire [Troubled Families Programme](#) will receive in 2020/21, which will benefit 1274 vulnerable families across the area.

Coming up in February is [National Apprenticeship Week](#), watch out for my **Social Media Takeover by local apprentices!**



*Best wishes,
Caroline x*



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