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# CAROLINE DINENAGE MP

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR GOSPORT

## NEWSLETTER

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Firstly, I would like to say a heart-felt thank you to all those who have been following the guidance, protecting our most vulnerable residents and our NHS. This month has not been easy, and none of us wanted to see tighter restrictions, no matter how necessary. I have been immensely proud of how our community continues to be a source of strength as residents have come together and supported one another.

We have had glimmers of good news this month as scientific advances in vaccinations present the possibility of a gradual return to normal life in the Spring - the [Oxford/AstraZeneca](#), [Pfizer/BioNTech](#) and [Moderna vaccine](#) all show early signs of being highly effective with two doses, the government has procured [357 million doses of these vaccines from 7 different sources](#). They still have to pass the UK's stringent medicines safety checks, which are among the toughest in the world. Access to mass testing through lateral flow COVID-19 tests has also been expanded this month.

On top of this, care homes in Hampshire are taking part in the [pilot testing of visitors](#). The hope is that, if successful, designated visitors can not only visit more often, but have physical contact with their loved ones. Although care home staff in residences are already routinely tested, weekly testing is now being [rolled out to homecare workers as well](#).

However, we still have some way to go before we return to the life we all took for granted this time last year, so it is important we remain vigilant and keep doing our bit to stop the virus spreading. The Prime Minister has [confirmed from December 2nd](#) we will return to the tiered Local COVID-19 Alert Level System - with Hampshire in Tier 2.

## Tier Restrictions For Hampshire

### Support For Individuals

If you are a business owner please do remember that a range of support is available. The [furlough scheme](#) has now been extended to March 2021 and for businesses that have been impacted by the recent restrictions, there are grants available, distributed through [Gosport](#) and [Fareham](#) Borough Councils, find out more by clicking on the button below.

In addition, the [Solent LEP](#) are there to provide free business advice and also have their own funding schemes. This month, I caught up with the LEP about their range of support for businesses and individuals.

### Support For Businesses

#### Solent LEP Coronavirus Hub

We can also now start to plan our Christmas festivities as from the 23rd to the 27th of December you are allowed to form a Christmas 'bubble' with up to three households. Travel restrictions will be relaxed over this period but please remember to follow the local guidance!

### Christmas 'Bubbles'

This Christmas, along with fellow local MPs, I am joining the Portsmouth News and Age UK Portsmouth's [Christmas Calls campaign](#) - calling a local lonely resident who is spending Christmas Day alone to have a natter and spread some festive cheer. Unfortunately the deadline to sign up has now passed, but don't forget you can join their [year-round befriending service](#) to support those who want a friendly weekly chat.

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While Remembrance Sunday also looked a little different this year, I took part in a virtual commemoration, [placing my wreath](#) at the Gosport War Memorial on video earlier in the month for an online service that was

posted by Gosport Borough Council on the day. It was not the Remembrance Service any of us wanted, but the digital version was very poignant and respectful and it was important to pay my respects, on behalf of the residents of Gosport, Hill Head, Stubbington and Lee-on-the-Solent, to all those from our area who sacrificed so much to secure our freedom.



I know that this month has been particularly difficult for retail businesses who have faced tighter restrictions. To do my bit in support I decided to make it #SmallBusinessNovember and set up a Facebook group [Supporting Traders in Gosport, Lee-on-the-Solent & Hill Head](#) by promoting their goods and services online. I was pleased to see over 400 local businesses & residents join. I have also been sharing the goods and services they have to offer across my social media platforms.

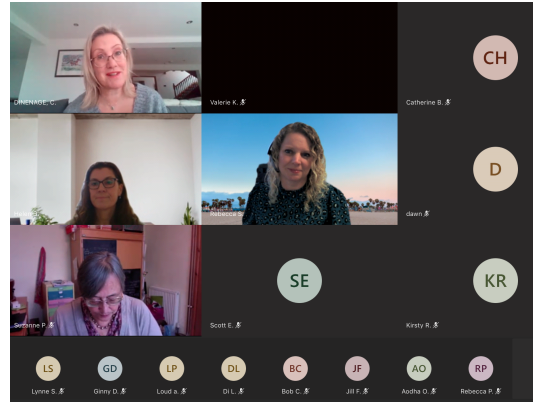
It has been so positively received that I plan to extend it into December so it's not too late to join!

Don't forget that December 5th is Small Business Saturday when everyone is encouraged to support independent local traders when doing their Christmas shopping. This year it's more important than ever to show our support as many of these retailers will only just have reopened. I encourage everyone to stay loyal and shop small this December to show the wonderful businesses on the Gosport peninsula how much we appreciate them..

This month I also hosted two online events for those looking to maximise their online business sales with [eBay](#) - one for those new to the online site and another for established sellers - with over 600 residents signing up.

Don't worry if you missed the events, you can watch the webinar for beginners [here](#), and those who are already selling online [here](#).

We know that some of the community groups and voluntary organisations who make such a remarkable difference to our lives here in the Gosport peninsula have struggled with fundraising during the Covid pandemic. That's why this month I organised a webinar with the [National Lottery Community Fund](#) and more than 40 charities from across the constituency to discuss what funding is available and how they can access it.



Our local organisations and charities are always an invaluable source of support and help, but none more so than over this period. This month I welcomed the announcement that six of our local charities - [Oarsome Chance](#), [Harbour Cancer Support Centre](#), [Rowner Community Trust](#), Infinity Digital International, [CedarOak Support Trust](#) and [Fareham District Branch Parkinsons UK](#) - have been awarded £128,865 from the [Coronavirus Community Support Fund](#). Distributed by the National Lottery Community Fund, it is part of the Government's £750 million support package for charities announced earlier this year.

My small team and I have been playing our part this month for #Movember, the organisation which raises funding and awareness for men's health issues, including prostate cancer and mental health. We have challenged ourselves to walk 60km each this month in memory of the 60 men we tragically lose to suicide every hour across the world.



Although the month is at an end, you can support the cause throughout the year and find out more [here](#).

Huge congratulations to Rebecca Kopeck from Portsmouth University Hospitals NHS Trust who has been shortlisted for the [NHS Parliamentary Awards](#) after I submitted the nomination from her team! Find out more about Rebecca's work, and her nomination, [here](#).

As we head towards the Christmas holidays, it has undoubtedly been a tough start to the year for our schools, staff and pupils. I invited all local primary headteachers to a roundtable to discuss their challenges and successes. Heads from 14 schools attended and we had a really useful discussion with a number of points which I have fed back to the Department of Education. I will also be holding a similar rountable with secondary school heads next month.

In addition, I contacted all of our local schools in the constituency for [Anti-Bullying Week](#) - working with the [Diana Award](#) charity to signpost them to the resources available online to tackle bullying behaviour.

To recognise the amazing efforts of our young residents this month, I launched my Young Leading Light Award - to say thanks to those nominated for their kindness, selflessness and hard work supporting others whether lifting spirits or shopping bags.

We are so lucky to have such remarkable youngsters helping our community and you can learn more about the inspiring efforts of Maisy, Abigail, Brooke, Lexie and Rogan [here](#).



I also took part in National Mentoring Week by having a call with Jesika who is a student looking to get into politics. We had a great conversation about pathways and she has spoken to my team about arranging some work experience with us.

It has been an exciting month of announcements. As a town with deep rooted military history, our local area has played a pivotal role in our nation's defence. The Prime Minister announced a [£16.5 billion boost to defence spending](#) - the largest increase since the Cold War - helping improve our traditional and cyber defences as well as creating 10,000 new jobs annually. Here on the Gosport peninsula, I have successfully fought off the planned disposal of HMS Sultan and will continue to do so. The Gosport Taskforce - which I set up back in 2016 to discuss the disposal of local Government owned sites - met virtually for an update. The latest news is that Fort Blockhouse won't be disposed of until 2023 at the earliest.



I also caught up with James Humphry from the Environment Agency to discuss the investment in our local area to improve our flood defences. The Prime Minister announced his [10 Point Plan](#) to tackle climate change and this November [Hampshire County are set to receive over £3 million](#) in additional funding to create and improve cycling and walking infrastructure.

Importantly, the Chancellor announced his Spending Review. It focused not only on our health and jobs following the pandemic, but also on tackling other key issues that matter to local residents.

- £18 billion for NHS Test & Trace, PPE and vaccinations for next year
- £3 billion for our NHS, 40 new hospitals and upgrades for 70 more and 1 million doctors, nurses and healthcare workers to receive a pay rise
- Pay rise for public sector workers on the lowest incomes and increase in National Living Wage
- £1 billion for the criminal justice system and £400 million for new police officers
- Increasing school budgets by £2.2 billion, rebuilding 500 schools
- £100 billion infrastructure investment for everything from new roads and cycle lanes to homebuilding and community projects

This is only a snippet of what is to come and I am pleased that our vital public services - schools, hospitals and local infrastructure - continue to remain a priority.

### Spending Review Announcements In Full



As ever, please do get in touch if you have an queries at [caroline.dinenage.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:caroline.dinenage.mp@parliament.uk).

**Best Wishes**  
**Caroline x**



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