

CAROLINE DINENAGE MP

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR GOSPORT

NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2021

ISSUE: 123



It has been lovely to see life gradually showing semblances of normal life over the summer months as we were all able to do more of the things we have missed over the last couple of years. Locally, [Summer in Lee](#), Leesland ParkFest and in Portsmouth, [Victorious](#), all saw the welcome return of live music and events and it has been heartwarming to see people out and about enjoying themselves.

[Gosport Marine Festival](#) also saw its triumphant return this month. It was fabulous to see 100s of youngsters enjoying the huge variety of water sports as well as a special appearance by a giant whale which was the focal point of a performance by [Circo Rum Ba Ba Theatre Company](#).



Most recently the [Lee Victory Festival](#) took place as a belated commemoration of VE & VJ Day. The three-day extravaganza of live music, events and displays was an opportunity to remember those who gave so much to secure the freedoms we all enjoy. For me, the highlight of the weekend was Saturday's parade through the Lee streets, featuring serving personnel from HMS Sultan and Collingwood, as well as some extra special guests.

Not only 'Churchill' and 'Monty' but real-life WW2 veterans, including Gosport hero, Geoff Rushton, aged 96. A big thanks to the fantastic team, led by Jonathan Moore who masterminded this unforgettable event.

The same, action-packed weekend also saw the welcome return of the annual [Alverstoke Michaelmas Fayre](#) organised by [St Mary's Church](#) and the [Gosport Rotary Club](#). It was a great opportunity for me to catch up with some of our popular local groups and stock up on a few goodies! Earlier in September, I went along to [St Mary's Parish Hall](#) fundraising launch, to learn more about their exciting plans to create a new community hub.

This month I also spent a fantastic evening in the company of the lovely team at [Christ Church](#) in Stoke Road. I was honoured to be asked to formally reopen the family church after a significant revamp under the expert guidance of Ray & Chris! The new-look space is welcoming and inclusive with a range of events for all the family and even a coffee bar!



September has also seen the return of schools and colleges and it was a pleasure to visit [CEMAST](#) again to check out the new aircraft in their workshop. The plane will both train and inspire the next generation of aeronautical and aerospace engineers!

This month marked the one year anniversary of T-levels across the UK, including at [Fareham College](#), and the Government introduced [£50 million in new funding](#) for the programme.



Parliament has also returned this month, and the House of Commons is no longer working under a hybrid model, which means an end to Zoom! All proceedings will now be physical in the way they were pre-pandemic.

Whilst things are slowly returning to normal, we must realise the massive effect Covid-19 has had on our children and I was reassured to see the [£1 billion package to provide additional tutoring to help children catch up](#) on what they have missed. We have also seen the continuation of the [school rebuild programme](#) helping schools such as [Bay House](#) to ensure they have the right infrastructure to offer the best quality education.

Back in the constituency, it was great to attend Octoberfest which kicked off at [Powder Monkey Tap House](#) in Priddy's Hard!



Another of our brilliant locals, the [White Horse Inn](#), was a finalist in the [Great British Pub Awards](#) – sadly they did not come out overall winner but I'm so proud of Zac and the team for reaching the finals of this prestigious national competition.

We also celebrated #GoSportyGosport this month. In honour of [National Fitness Day](#), I wanted to highlight all the amazing sports in Gosport from gentle exercise like walking groups to high-octane sports like ice hockey.



As we prepare for the winter months ahead, the Government introduced [its autumn and winter plan](#) for Covid-19 to help make sure we stay safe while continuing to reopen as we follow the [Covid roadmap](#). This includes offering [vaccines to those aged 12-15](#), [boosters for selected people](#) and a continuation of international corporation.

This month also saw the long-awaited [NHS and Social Care reforms, providing £36bn](#) to help our health and care services deal with current demands and face the future. The Health and Social Care Plan includes changes to National Insurance to address the challenges of an ageing population and help protect people from catastrophic care costs in the future. As a former Minister for Care, I worked for two years on this issue and we explored every possible solution. There are no easy choices, which is why successive governments have failed to address this thorny issue. The current system is unsustainable, it is complex and unfair, meaning some of our most vulnerable and poorly residents lose everything they have worked all their lives for. This new system, while not perfect, is a step in the right direction to tackle this.

1 in 2 of us are affected by cancer at some point in our lives, so it was a pleasure to take part in [Hardway Sailing Club's Macmillan Coffee Morning](#). I can't think of a better excuse to indulge in some delicious cake all for a good cause!

I know many constituents have been following the story of young [Sophie](#)

from Stubbington and her courageous battle with a very aggressive form of childhood cancer. Readers will have been distressed to hear that Sophie passed away this month.



She was a remarkable little girl who touched so many hearts across our area and beyond. My thoughts and prayers are with her family and friends. I met with Sophie's mum Charlotte this month. The family's horrendous experiences over the last 12 months have unveiled some troubling concerns about how rare forms of childhood cancer are detected and treated and I'm determined to see what more can be done on all these fronts.



Another remarkable Gosport constituent, Alice Henry, set up an organisation called [R;pple](#) in memory of her brother, Josh, who took his own life after seeking advice on how to commit suicide online. This month the organisation launched an online tool that discretely intercepts harmful searches and provides signposting to 24/7, free mental health support.

We all know that mental health is so important, and I was pleased to see the Government launch Operation COURAGE providing an additional [£2.7m in funding for mental health support for veterans](#).

This month the Government has brought forward strategies to tackle a number of current issues, including:

- Reforms in [HGV driving tests](#) to combat the global shortage of drivers and avoid future concerns around food and fuel shortages.
- [Pet Abduction reforms](#) to help protect our furriest members of the family.
- [Operation Warm Welcome](#) assisting those fleeing from Afghanistan.

There were some big changes in Parliament with the reshuffle. After over six years as a Minister, in six different Government departments, under seven different Secretaries of State and three different Prime Ministers, I am finally returning to the back benches. It will be a welcome opportunity to speak freely in Parliament once again, which Ministerial roles limit and continue to be a strong voice for Gosport from the back benches as well as in the corridors & meeting rooms of Westminster!

There's also been some changes in my own team as we've said a fond farewell to Joe and welcomed both Hebe and Max to my Westminster office.

Looking ahead - I'm hosting two open surgeries at Lee Hub and Elson Community Hub and Library. You can find out the details [here](#).



As ever, my team and I are here to help so if you have any questions or queries, please do email caroline.dinenage.mp@parliament.uk.

Best wishes
Caroline Dinenage

Caroline Dinenage MP
167 Stoke Road
Gosport
PO12 1SE
caroline.dinenage.mp@parliament.uk



This email was sent to {{ contact.EMAIL }}
You received this email because you are registered with Caroline Dinenage MP

[Unsubscribe here](#)



© 2021 Caroline Dinenage MP