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MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR GOSPORT

NEWSLETTER

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September certainly did not turn out the way any of us had planned or hoped for, being dominated as it was by the very sad death and funeral of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, after a lifetime of unparalleled service.

Her Majesty has quite simply been part of the fabric of our country, the constant in so many of our lives and our nation's pride around the world.

Like a grandmother to millions across the UK and Commonwealth, our Queen never let us down. She served with unflinching dignity, duty and dedication, a shining light through some of our darkest times.

Many of my constituents feel the same way and it was an honour to make my [Tribute](#) to Her late Majesty the Queen in the House of Commons on behalf of the people of Gosport, Lee on the Solent, Stubbington and Hill Head.

Like so many people from across the UK and beyond, I visited the gates of Buckingham Palace with some of my family to pay my respects. I filed passed Her Majesty's coffin in Westminster Hall. And I tearfully watched the funeral on TV.

It was quite overwhelming to see the national and international outpouring of admiration and gratitude to this remarkable lady. Her Majesty clearly held a very special place in the hearts of people across the globe.

I was also honoured to attend the Addresses of Condolence from both Houses of Parliament to His Majesty King Charles III. It was an opportunity for Parliamentary colleagues to reflect on Queen Elizabeth's immaculate service to our country and express our loyalty to the new sovereign.



Her Majesty's death seemed all the more unexpected because we had all seen the photos of her welcoming Liz Truss into her new role as our Prime Minister earlier that week, looking quite well and happy, albeit a little frail.

Despite this being incredibly difficult circumstances under which to take office, in her first few days the new Prime Minister did introduce very welcome additional support towards energy bills, which will go some way towards supporting households and businesses across the winter by giving them more certainty about costs they face and protecting jobs and livelihoods.

The Energy Price Guarantee will cap the unit price of gas and electricity, saving households around £1000 per year. This is on top of the £400 Energy Bill Support Scheme, announced earlier this year, which discounts energy bills for 6 months.

Businesses and community groups will also benefit from a Energy Bill Relief Scheme which caps the unit cost of their energy use.

Other groups will see additional cost-of-living support, such as:

- £150 Disability payment for anyone receiving disability benefits
- a £300 Pensioner cost of living payment for anyone who receives a Winter Fuel Payment
- £650 payment if you claim Universal Credit or other benefits.

You can find out what you are entitled to [here](#). I have also compiled a list of support on my [website](#).

Crucially all this comes alongside a commitment to boost the UK's homegrown energy supply, so that we have our own domestic energy security and are future proofed against the root cause of the current issues, the global spike in energy prices

The Government also delivered a so-called 'mini budget' this month. With an emphasis on growth and prosperity, the new Chancellor also announced the cancellation of both the planned National Insurance rise and the new Health and Social Care Levy.

Other policies the Chancellor announced [included](#):

- Cutting the basic rate of income tax to 19p
- Cutting Stamp Duty to £250k and for first time buyers £425k. Taking 200,000 more people out of paying stamp duty altogether.
- Cancelling Corporation Tax Rises.
- Introducing more than 40 new Investment Zones, providing tax incentives and liberalising planning to provide localised support

Among the more surprising announcements were the decisions to scrap the 45p tax rate and remove the ban on banker's bonuses. The Chancellor's rationale is that the latter currently only serves to reduce the country's 'tax take', with wealthy bankers avoiding them, by basing themselves overseas and paying their taxes there. I'm a strong believer in lower taxes but not convinced that this is the right time to reduce taxes for a handful of the wealthiest people in our nation. Inflation and interest rates are going up around the world, the 6 million people with mortgages in this country are worried about the future. I did share these thoughts with the Government and was relieved to hear that the Chancellor had listened and changed position on the 45p tax rate.

Regular readers will know of Sophie's Legacy, and the campaign to improve awareness of the signs and symptoms of childhood cancer. September marks one year since young Sophie Fairall's tragic death from Rhabdomyosarcoma, which has left a lasting impact on her Stubbington community and beyond. At Liz Truss's first Prime Minister's Question Time, I [asked her](#) to state her government's commitment to a Childhood Cancer Mission as part of the Ten Year Cancer Strategy!



September also happens to be Childhood Cancer Awareness month and I wrote to the new Prime Minister and Health Secretary, asking them to ensure that the UK is at the forefront of international research into childhood cancer treatment.

As both a former Minister for Care and Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group for Carers, I am very aware of the vital work that unpaid carers do and the extraordinary lengths they go to ensuring their loved ones are looked after. This month, I pitched to the Backbench Business Committee for a Parliamentary debate on [Recovery and Respite](#) for Unpaid Carers. This will give an opportunity to colleagues from across the House to recognise and identify what needs to be done to provide support to unpaid carers.



This month I became a patron of the Conservative Mental Health Group who aim to develop new and innovative perspectives on how to deal with the causes and impact of mental ill health.

I also joined the Alastair Stewart and Friends on the TV sofa for a chat on GBNews!



I also became an official supporter of the Conservative Animal Welfare Foundation. I have been involved in animal welfare issues and campaigns for many years and was one of the first members of the Conservatives Against Fox Hunting group. I look forward to working with CAWF to ensure that animal welfare continues to be a priority under the new government.

This month the Conservative Friends of the Ocean launched and I was delighted to be asked to be a patron. It was great to attend the event in Old Portsmouth and discuss how we can work together most effectively to better protect both our ocean and our coastal communities.



Back in Gosport, I attended the opening of St Matt's On the Corner, the new Community Café at St Matthew's Church, Bridgemary, which serves delicious drinks, cakes and light meals. They also offer low priced cooked meals to families each Wednesday after school, as well as a Community Pantry.



Readers will know I have been working with some local civil engineering experts to discuss potential improvements which could ease the flow of traffic on the A32. We have come up with a number of suggestions and I am now pushing for meetings with Hampshire Council Highways and the Solent LEP to try and move this on to the next stage where an optimisation study may be viable.

The Home Office announced that they are planning to reopen the [Haslar Immigration Removal Centre](#) which closed in 2016. They are currently undertaking feasibility studies looking at redeveloping the site as a new 600-bed secure facility, for the short term detention of time-served foreign national offenders and immigration offenders, while arrangements are made to remove them from the UK. The changes would happen by late 2023 at the earliest. I met the Home Office Minister, Tom Pursglove MP, to discuss the plans and ensure the right safeguards are in place for both local residents and detainees. On balance I'm glad a decision has finally been made regarding the site, which has been a detention/prison facility since 1962 but empty since 2016, contributing nothing to our local economy. I have long called for the site to either be bought back into use or sold.

Another key Gosport site is Fort Gilkicker. The Fort has recently been purchased by F & F Developments (Southern) Ltd. A meeting between Gosport Borough Council, the new owners and my office took place. The site has become a dangerous honey-pot for trespassers over recent months. Myself and a number of local residents were very concerned that it was only a matter of time before someone is seriously injured or worse, however it was reassuring to hear that the new owners have already secured the site and are keen to get the redevelopment of Fort Gilkicker underway - so keep your eyes peeled!

As part of Macmillan Coffee Mornings I popped into Co-op Funeral Services on Stoke Road. I had a lovely time chatting to staff and showing my support for this fantastic charity - not to mention eating a slice of yummy coffee cake! Macmillan do fantastic work providing cancer support networks and advice. You can find out more about them [here](#).



I am looking for Gosport, Lee on the Solent, Stubbington and Hill Head residents to vote for their Pub Hero so that I can put them forward as our community nomination in a competition run by PubAid. This is an opportunity to recognise local pubs that have gone the extra mile to support our local area through fundraising, charity work or any other involvement in the community. You can [nominate](#) your Pub Hero until October 21.

Finally, my team waved a fond farewell to Megan and warmly welcomed both Herbie and Sarah to my team this month. Herbie is from Lee on the Solent and went to Bay House School, he has actually been a part time team-member while completing his studies and now joins us full time. Meanwhile Sarah, born and raised in Gosport and living in Lee, became a brand new member of the Gosport team.

My team and I are still standing by ready to assist you with any issues or concerns.

Please contact my team and I at caroline.dinenage.mp@parliament.uk.



Best wishes
Caroline Dinenage

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