

# CAROLINE DINENAGE MP

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR GOSPORT

## NEWSLETTER

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July has felt like a bit of a whirlwind, filled with meetings, debates, visits and plenty of votes! But as another Parliamentary term draws to a close in Westminster, the work continues back at home in the Gosport Constituency.

The month started with a bang, literally, at HMS Collingwood's fantastic Open Day, featuring the exhilarating Field Gun competition with teams from across the country. I joined over 2000 visitors who attended this hugely successful event, a great showcase of the Collingwood community spirit.

Over at the BMX racetrack in Alver Valley, there was more high-speed sporting excellence on offer at the National BMX Championships. We are so lucky to have among the best sites in the UK right here in Gosport, and the Gosport BMX Club really pulled out all the stops to make this a fantastic day, with racers including Olympic medalists; Bethany Shriever and Kye Whyte.



I joined Peter Henley on BBC Politics South to talk about topics as diverse as Gosport parking meters and medical research. If you missed it, you can catch the episode on iPlayer [here](#).

More funding has been announced for Gosport from central government this month. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities has confirmed that Gosport Borough Council and Fareham Borough Council will both receive £1m each, and Hampshire County Council will get £5,797,000 through the Shared Prosperity Fund. Hampshire County Council will also get an additional £210,000 through the Community Renewal Fund, to develop capacity and engagement in reducing carbon emissions at a grassroots level.

I share many parents concerns about recent OFSTED ratings of our secondary schools in Gosport. It is vital that every child is given the best possible education and every teacher properly supported. Having met with the Education Minister to share my worries last month, I'm relieved that he is now taking a close interest in our local schools. This month I visited Bridgemaury School to hear about their strategy to improve their outcomes and met with GFMAT regarding Brune Park and Bay House. It is reassuring to hear about the action taking place to improve all our local schools. I will do everything I can to help them. This remains a huge priority for me.

A particular highlight of this month was the [NHS](#)



[Parliamentary Awards](#), where three of my local nominations from Portsmouth NHS Trust made it to the National Shortlist. Jane Cansfield for the Lifetime Achievement Award, and Mahfuja Aktar for the Nursing and Midwifery Award. Imagine the delight when my other nomination, the Pets As Therapy team, were declared National winners of the Volunteer Award! A special well-done to Snowy, Whiskey, Maggie, Mollie and Louis, who were the real stars of the show. Their wonderful owners; Steven, Lesley, Tess and Madeleine, and the rest of the volunteers who make up the Pets As Therapy Team, go into hospitals in Gosport and

Portsmouth to brighten the day of patients and NHS staff. They are all heroes in my eyes – and now they have an award that proves it!

Back in Gosport I returned to Bedenham Grasslands, part of the Defence Munitions, Gosport estate. This site, which houses explosive ordnance in its underground bunkers, is also a haven for rare flora and fauna. Defence Munitions investment has meant that the site's natural diversity has been protected for future generations. This is especially important considering 68% of the world's biodiversity has been lost since the 1970s.



I met with the new Chief Inspector for Gosport & Fareham, Chris Spellerberg. We discussed the recent traveller encampments which had turned up in Stubbington Green and Brookers Field, and agreed that Police now have new powers in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act to deal with illegal encampments quickly. We also spoke about Chris' priorities - cracking down on crime and anti-social behaviour throughout Gosport and Fareham.

Positive news that inflation fell this month to 7.9%, from 8.7% last month. Reducing inflation remains one of Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak's 5 priorities.

We also welcomed significant investment into the UK this month, including the £4 billion investment by Jaguar Land Rover.

In Parliament, I attended the launch of Age UK's report on the '[State of Health and Care for Older People in 2023](#)'. An opportunity for Parliamentarians to hear from excellent speakers- like Norman, who relived his experiences caring for his wife, and the value of person-centred, high-quality care at home.

After a record breaking 18 votes in a single evening, the Illegal Migration Act finally passed Parliamentary scrutiny and was granted Royal Assent. This is a key part of the government's plan to stop the small boats, it means anyone who enters the country through illegal means can be deported to their country of origin or a safe third country. This is a popular topic in my mailbag and something that

concerns me enormously, I pushed for better safe and legal routes for genuine asylum seekers as the Bill was refined, but agree with the PM that UK Government and people should decide who is entitled to live here, not criminal & exploitative boat gangs.

I met with Health Minister, Will Quince, alongside my Stubbington constituent, Charlotte Fairall, to push for progress on the Childhood Cancer Mission that we have been pursuing in memory of Charlotte's daughter, Sophie, who died from Rhabdomyosarcoma aged just 10. We are determined to radically change the way we detect, treat and care for children with Cancer.



Thank you to Councillor Zoe Huggins for championing the issue of Education for children with a cancer diagnosis locally at a recent Hampshire County Council meeting. This is an important step in improving the way we care for children with cancer, I have [raised it in the House of Commons](#), and [met with the Minister](#) about it.

Another local Councillor Lesley Meenaghan has achieved success in her important campaign to get all taxis in Gosport & Fareham Borough's to carry CCTV - a positive measure to improve safety and reduce crime for both cabbies and customers.



I welcomed members of the brilliant [Gosport Men's Shed](#) and the [Women's Institute](#) to Parliament for a tour. Parliament is a public building that anyone can come and visit. I love to see constituents when they're up in Westminster- if you would like to arrange a tour, please do get in touch!



An area of particular concern some of my constituents is the BBC's plans to cut some local radio services. For many elderly or vulnerable people who are not able to access digital services, local radio can be a lifeline to key information. It is important that these services are protected. I raised this with the Minister in [Culture, Media & Sport Questions](#).

Regular readers will know of my work over many years alongside campaigner Paula McGowan to introduce mandatory autism and learning disability training for health care professionals, following the avoidable death of their son Oliver. I'm delighted that the [Oliver McGowan Training](#) is now up and running, thanks to their hard work and it was so lovely to catch up with





Paula and Tom when they visited Parliament this month.

UK Music attracted 14 million tourists and £6.6 billion in spending last year alone- supporting lots of jobs and income. I spoke at the launch of UK Music's report '[Here, There and Everywhere](#)' which highlights the staggering value of the music sector to the UK's economy.



Back home, I visited the former Criterion (Crown Bingo) site to hear more about the Council's plans to convert it into a theatre/performance space and to see the condition of the site for myself.

My team and I have continued to hit the streets each week, seeking views of local people on health and care provision with my 'Caroline Consults' survey. You can contribute your thoughts and feelings [online](#).

We are very lucky to have so many fantastic voluntary groups and community organisations which make such a difference to the quality of life in our area. Yet some struggle to secure the funds they need. I held a funding event alongside the National Lottery Community Fund and Hampshire & Isle of Wight Community Foundation who spoke about the funding streams available. Local charities Oarsome Chance & Motiv8, who have been successful in securing grants, shared their insights in how to make a winning bid.

The Department of Culture, Media & Sport recently announced a new £76 million fund for community groups and charities which will provide an additional avenue of funding. The Community Organisations Cost of Living Fund can be applied for via the National Lottery Community Fund [website](#).



One of these community groups, C2U Gosport, are running a free breakfast each Monday, Wednesday & Friday between 1000 & 1200, during the school holidays. I joined Pudsey Bear to check out the fun on offer.

High Vibes Female Business Networking group are a brand-new forum for local business women and entrepreneurs to come together in a welcoming and supportive way. I was pleased to join their second meeting and share a few of my experiences

as a former business owner. They meet on every final Wednesday of the month -you can find out more [here](#).

I caught up with the team at StandardAero this month, the company who operate out of the historic Fleetlands site and are still the biggest employer in Gosport.

Having spoken to a number of local companies who are concerned about energy costs, I am running an energy use survey on my website to help gauge the needs of our businesses, so I can advocate for the best support possible. If you run a business, big or small, you can complete the survey [here](#).

As the month came to an end I attended the opening of the [Imagination Refinery](#) on Gosport High Street. An innovative new facility that provides a workspace, meeting place and a creative space for makers in the area with lots of classes and workshops. Funded by the Gosport High Street Heritage Action Zone and the Makers Guild it's an innovative and exciting reimagining of empty retail space.



In Westminster we saw the biggest trade deal we have signed since leaving the EU come into effect- the [Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership](#) (or CPTPP). This agreement is supporting over 60,000 jobs and 1,500+ businesses across our region.

In other national news, school strikes have been called off in light of the government's latest pay deal. The government has accepted the Independent School Teacher's Review Board recommendation of 6.5% to bring an end to the strikes that have been causing disruption to households in the constituency and nationwide. The pay rise extends to other public sector services like the NHS, recognising the incredible work that they do.

This month, [Great British Nuclear](#) has been expanded to make the UK a world leader in nuclear technology. Nuclear will play an incredibly important role in providing the base load required in a clean, green, self sufficient and safe way.

Parliament may be in recess, but rest assured my team and I are still working hard for the residents of Gosport, Stubbington, Lee-on-the-Solent and Hill Head. Please do get in touch with any questions or concerns.

Best wishes  
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