

CAROLINE DINENAGE MP

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR GOSPORT

NEWSLETTER

December 2023

ISSUE: 149



Christmas has been and gone, and after a hectic year I hope you all managed to find time to relax and celebrate with loved ones. We have been at home in Gosport as usual over the Christmas break and enjoyed catching up with family and friends.

I know that for many of my constituents Christmas Day is not a holiday, and I'm grateful to all those who work to keep everything running smoothly. In particular, I want to thank our healthcare and emergency services, many of whom sacrifice their Christmases to care for us and keep us safe.

This month, I visited Gosport Fire Station to thank our firefighters and hear about their work to not only put out fires but prevent them too.

It has been wonderful to wander around Gosport, Lee on the Solent, Stubbington and Hill Head enjoying the house decorations, which seemed better than ever this year. One of the top attractions for me was the [St Mary's Christmas Tree Festival in Alverstoke](#). 75 trees, beautifully decorated by local schools, charities, and businesses, a picture postcard of festive spirit.



December is always a crazy in Parliament, as we get legislation concluded and projects wrapped up ahead of the break.

I had the opportunity to [question the Prime Minister in the Liaison Committee](#). The hospitality and tourism industry, which is important to our regional economy, struggled so much during Covid. I raised the importance of the sector being able to capitalise on the freedoms promised in Brexit to fuel its recovery.

The Culture, Media and Sport Committee, which I chair, has been active this month. One of its functions is to [interview the Government's preferred candidate for Chair of the BBC, Samir Shah](#). I was particularly curious to hear about how he would deal with the pressure of the role, considering the media spotlight on the BBC's biggest stars and the licence fee, about which constituents often contact me.



Our Committee's also [interviewed music legend and king of cool, Nile Rodgers](#), for our report into creator remuneration and streaming. Our work to support grassroots music venues and creators won the Artists and Managers' Industry Champion Award this month.

Finally, we published our [report into gambling](#). I highlighted the

importance of protecting children and those who vulnerable to harm, from the barrage of adverts, particularly at football matches. You are can watch my interview with Sky News [here](#).

I've also been busily dashing around the Gosport Constituency in my normal way!

The month began with a visit to IRC Haslar, where I was pleased to see the [Home Office redevelopment of this historic prison](#). It is now due to open later next year as a secure unit for Foreign National Offenders, until they can be sent back to their home nations. I've been lobbying for a long time for the site to be used or sold, so after 7 years of inaction it's positive to see it being brought back into use, in a way that will create around 200 local jobs.



At Brune Park Community School, I met with leaders to talk about positive changes that have taken place since summer's disappointing Ofsted ratings, see new classrooms and 4G pitches. There is so much hard work being done by our education staff and in February, I will be chairing a Secondary School Summit to bring together all the relevant stakeholders to maximise support for our local senior schools, so that our children enjoy the best possible education.

I visited [Two Saints](#) on the Fareham Road, to hear about the support provided to those who are sleeping rough across Hampshire. Funded by Hampshire County Council, their work, offering accommodation, health and well-being support and day centres helps get people off of the streets and back on their feet.

Since January, I have been repeatedly pushing the Government to improve the standard of accommodation at HMS Sultan and HMS Collingwood, [raising it in the House of Commons Chamber](#) and pursuing it through meetings and correspondence. Looking back on the year I'm pleased with the progress, one accommodation block in Collingwood now closed, and a new one under construction. I welcomed [Defence Minister, James Cartlidge MP](#), to visit the sites with me this month to see the work. There is still much to do, but we are getting there!



More campaign success this month, in a [change to Valuation Office Agency rules around Houses of Multiple Occupancy \(HMOs\)](#). From December 1st, individual bedrooms in shared living spaces will no longer be treated as separate dwellings. Locally this ambiguity was jeopardising the redevelopment of some shops in Gosport High Street and landing tenants with huge, unexpected council tax bills. It's a fairly technical issue, but you can find out more about my

campaign and how I used an amendment to the Levelling Up Bill to achieve the changes [here](#). I'm grateful to local property developer Propods and my neighbour, Penny Mordaunt MP, for their invaluable support on this campaign.

I've been out on the doorsteps most Fridays with my Caroline Consults survey, asking residents for their views on policing and crime in our area. You can take part in the survey [here](#).

I also met with [Citizens Advice](#) to learn more about the fantastic work they do supporting those who are struggling with the cost of living. I pay tribute to their team's selfless work, and the testimonials of those who have been helped are heartening. If you need help, then do get in touch with them [here](#), or if you can spare the time to help others in their time of need, then I know they would love to hear from you.



I enjoyed finding out more about the work of [Repair Café](#) and meeting repair-volunteers, who fix all sorts of broken household items brought in by local people. By doing this, over a tonne of waste has been prevented from landfill, equivalent to 10 tonnes of CO2 emissions.

Sadly, my poor old office shredder was irreparable, simply because of a small broken component, so during my visit, I signed the Repair and Reuse Declaration, which asks policymakers to require manufacturers to ensure household items repairable by also making the spare parts. Co-incidentally, this week the Government has [launched a consultation](#) to find out your views on how to make recycling easier.



I also had a chance to see the new premises of [C2U](#) on Gosport High Street and thank the team for their work supporting vulnerable people in our area and bringing our community together with their wonderful Christmas festivities.

Speaking of valued local groups, a reminder that the Gosport Marine Festival will be on 18th May next year. This is a great day out and an opportunity for local children to try a number of fun water sports. I enjoyed meeting up with the team to hear about how the plans are shaping up.

There was good news for local healthcare, [with £2,230,685 granted to Hampshire](#) by the Government, to speed up hospital discharge, boost social care provision and prevent avoidable hospital admission throughout the winter. I know what a worrying issue this is for many of my constituents and am grateful to those who've contacted me with your views.

I was glad to see that inflation fell again this month, down to 3.9%. This is important for households, because food and energy prices are no longer rising so quickly, and it's a positive sign the economy is back on track following the global shocks of the pandemic and Putin's war in Ukraine.

While our economic growth has sometimes felt pretty unimpressive this year, the good news from [Centre for Economics and Business Research recent analysis](#) is that U.K. economy is still growing faster than our neighbours and on course to outstrip the French economy and narrow the gap with Germany in the years ahead.

In early December [nearly twelve million payments were made to pensioners across the UK](#) - meaning that more than 99% of eligible pensioners will have now received up to £600 per household to help with their energy bill this Christmas for the second year running.

Other good news, just before Christmas, was the announcement of [record funding for schools](#). As England continues to rise up global rankings in maths, reading and science, the £1.8 billion boost for school funding will see it reach almost £60 billion in 2024-25 - its highest ever level in real terms.

There was also a major [funding boost of £843 million for the Police](#), taking the total police funding settlement to £18.4 billion for 2024-25 and ensuring they have the resources they need to keep us safe.

Finally - there were some changes to my Parliamentary team this month, with the departure of Herbie and Hebe, who have been the dynamic duo heading up my Westminster office for the last couple of years. Joining us, to take over the reins in Parliament, are Linden and Anastasiia, it was lovely to get most of the team (past and present) together for an event at Lee on the Solent Golf Club.



As ever, my team and I are here for any questions, thoughts or concerns you may have. Please do get in touch via caroline.dinenage.mp@parliament.uk.

Ahead of tonight's New Year's Eve celebrations, I want to wish you and your loved ones all a very happy, healthy 2024. I'm praying that the new year will deliver a more peaceful and settled world, with a solution to the dreadful violence in both Ukraine and the Middle East.

My best wishes to you all.

Best wishes
Caroline Dinenage

Caroline Dinenage MP
167 Stoke Road
Gosport
PO12 1SE

caroline.dinenage.mp@parliament.uk

Promoted by Caroline Dinenage of 167 Stoke Road, Gosport, PO12 1SE.



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

[Unsubscribe here](#)



© 2023 Caroline Dinenage MP