

CAROLINE DINENAGE

NEWSLETTER

May 2024

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This month's newsletter is hitting your inboxes a little earlier than usual because, as I am sure you will have spotted, the General Election date has now been set for 4th July. This means that from 30th May Parliament is dissolved and I cease to be an MP and become a Candidate for the remaining election period. More on that later, I still have a lot to tell you about the goings-on in Westminster and the Constituency during May.



It has been quite a busy month, with some notable progress and useful information to feed back on. I had an important [meeting with Minister for Water and Rural Growth, Robbie Moore MP](#), to discuss the impact of last month's floods on Alverstoke village and Victoria Quay. I will continue to push for further support for those impacted as well as meeting with both Gosport Borough Council and the Environment Agency to check their progress on prevention works to avoid future incidents.

I also met, alongside other local MPs, with the Health Secretary – Victoria Atkins, to press for more support with local GP provision and progress our work towards a new Dentistry School at Portsmouth University, which would attract more dentists to this area.

Inflation fell to 2.3%, signalling that the Prime Minister's plan to cut inflation is working. I know how hard the past few years have been as we build back better from Covid, and it is really positive news that economic recovery is well on track. If you would like to read more about the impact that lower inflation might have on you, the Government produced a useful explainer [here](#).

The fall in inflation also means that the energy price cap set out by Ofgem will see a reduction of 7%, from £1690 in the last quarter to £1568 in July. I am sure this will be a huge relief to hard-stretched households.

In big news, [attended the publication of the long-awaited Infected Blood Inquiry Report](#), which presented a summary of wrongdoing over many decades, and a list of recommended action aimed at supporting the victims of this terrible scandal. It is an issue I have taken an interest in since I was first elected because I have constituents who are impacted – in fact I first spoke about this in Parliament in October 2010, so this announcement is long overdue. The Prime Minister formally apologized on behalf of the successive Governments since the 1970s and accepted the Inquiry's recommendation to provide financial compensation to those impacted. Further information about the compensation scheme, worth an estimated £10 billion is [here](#).



I was interested to read [the Government's published Immigration statistics](#) for the year ending March 2024. Some significant numbers include a 31% decrease in the number of people arriving by small boats. Moreover, the decision-making process on asylum claims became more efficient with more than four times as many initial decisions on asylum applications made than at that time last year.

In Parliament, I continued chairing sessions of the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee and we also published our [report into grassroots music venues](#), which calls for a ticket levy on big arenas and stadiums, a target VAT cut, and a fan-led review. Our excellent local music venues, such as [Quay West Studios](#) at St Johns on Forton Road, [play an important role in our community and feed the UK music industry](#), which is worth £7 billion to our economy, it is right that we do everything we can to support them.

[I also met with](#) the [Hampshire and Isle of Wight Air Ambulance](#), this incredible service, entirely funded by donations, can be anywhere in Hampshire within 15 minutes.

[In Gosport, we had a very special visitor](#), HRH Princess Anne, The Princess Royal, who came to celebrate [Hornet Services Sailing Club's](#) 60th birthday. HRH also inspected the Historic Coastal Forces Vessels such as HMS Dasher and Medusa, who were looking ship shape for the occasion.

She concluded her visit by officially opening the Army Sailing Association Centre, which has been relocated to the beautifully restored site in the old Gunboat Yard, with help from Historic England funding. It was exciting to see her back in Gosport again –so generous with her time, meeting staff and visitors at the sites.



In other local funding news, I was glad to welcome [the Chief Exec of Arts Council England to Priddy's Hard to celebrate a £600,000 investment](#). The funds will refurbish dilapidated heritage buildings at Carpenter's Yard into affordable studios for creatives and makers.



There are already several fantastic businesses there, including [Port and Lemon](#) and [Justin Newman Antique's Repair Shop](#), so we are well on the way to building an exciting cultural hub in these buildings, which are adjacent to [Explosion! Museum](#).

And if that wasn't enough, [DCMS, Arts Council England, Hampshire County Council, and Gosport Borough Council have also given £850,000](#) between them to help restore the No 2 Battery, the listed fort on Stokes Bay, for the [Diving Museum](#). I really enjoyed visiting the only dedicated diving museum in the country, and it was great to see how they are using this funding to save this historic building for future generations.



I also [met with Repair Café Portsmouth](#), who have a full-time home in Cascades Shopping Centre to house their lending library of tools, kitchen appliances, camping gear and games. Of course, our fantastic Gosport Repair Café also is open on the second Saturday of each month, should you need to fix your own household items and save them from landfill.

The Gosport's Business Awards took place this month, sponsored by The News, St Vincent College and StandardAero. A fabulous celebration of the spirit of innovation and enterprise across Gosport and Lee on the Solent and a great way to champion some of our most imaginative and entrepreneurial local traders. A huge congratulations to all the nominees and winners – including the overall winner Blitz Photography. You can read the full list on my Facebook page [here](#).



Gosport's Sea Cadets, Police Cadets, and Scouts were on parade to kick off the brilliant [Gosport Marine Festival and Art Show](#), which gave young people a chance to try out a whole range of exciting water sports and other activities. An army of over 100 volunteers, led by the fantastic Nick, put together a cracking day for everyone.



I also visited [NATS \(the National Air Traffic Service\)](#) at Swanwick this month. They are the largest employer in Hampshire. I was awestruck by the complex work that they do 24/7 to ensure that the world's busiest airspace remains open - overseeing over 3,000 flights each day across six London runways! Next time I take a flight I will definitely spare a thought for those working hard to keep our skies safe, many of whom come from our constituency.



I was proud this month to witness the annual [Ceremonial Divisions at HMS Collingwood](#). The Royal Navy showcases the people and professionalism that makes it the best in the world, although on this occasion I was accompanied by an Army officer (my husband)! These kind of displays really show the remarkable skill and dedication of our armed forces – and indeed the veterans to whom we owe so much.

In particular this month, I have been thinking ahead to the 80th anniversary of D-Day in June, I recently met with Gosport's D-Day Fellowship about their plans for the 80th anniversary commemorations, including [installing a permanent memorial at Stokes Bay](#).

With the General Election now around the corner, I would like to use this opportunity to say a big thank you to all of you for your kind words and feedback throughout the years. It has been a pleasure and honour to represent Gosport, Lee on the Solent, Stubbington and Hill Head in Parliament, and I do hope that I will have a chance to continue to do so in the years to come. I'm very proud of what my team and I have been able to achieve for this area, as well as the many hundreds of individuals we have been able to support in times of trouble or distress.

From tomorrow, Parliament will dissolve, I will be out and about every day on doorsteps across our constituency – something regular readers will know I have already been doing most weeks with my Caroline Consults programme over the last couple of years. I've met many of you already – but I am looking forward to getting the chance to chatting to many more over the weeks ahead.

My office will still be operating throughout the General Election period, so for queries and casework you can still contact me at caroline.dinenage.mp@parliament.uk.

For questions on wider issues such as policy and legislation, the General Election, and to share your views, please get in touch here caroline4gosport@gmail.com.

So, that's it for May! As ever, my team and I are here for any questions, thoughts or concerns you may have.

Best wishes
Caroline Dinenage

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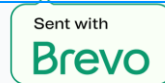
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