

CAROLINE DINENAGE MP

**MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR GOSPORT
LEE ON THE SOLENT • STUBBINGTON • HILL HEAD**



NEWSLETTER

JULY 24 | ISSUE 156

Welcome back to my monthly newsletter - following my 'General Election Thank You special' earlier this month, my normal scheduled service has now resumed!

And no sooner was the ink dry on all those ballot papers, I was straight back to work in Westminster, where I had the privilege of being sworn in once again as Member of Parliament for Gosport, Lee-on-the-Solent, Stubbington, and Hill Head. You can view the clip [here](#).

Those first few days back felt like nothing had changed and everything had changed, all at the same time. My same team were back, at our same desks, in our same offices, working to support residents in our Constituency. Yet, around us, so many colleagues were moving out to make way for their successors. There are lots of new faces to get used to and I have been adjusting to life on the opposition benches. And, just to make me feel really old, I was invited to lead a 'teach in' for all the hundreds of new MPs on how to ask Questions in Parliament.



Most significantly, we had the King's Speech and State Opening, where we got a chance to hear what plans the new Labour Government has for the country. I am glad Labour will continue to take forward previous Conservative-proposed Bills such as [Football Regulation](#) and the [Tobacco and Vapes Bill](#). The Leader of the Opposition, Rishi Sunak, rightly pointed out the importance of cross-party working to deliver good legislation, and effective opposition, to scrutinise the Government and ensure that the interests of British people are met.

I have always been a strong advocate of working collaboratively, cross-party, to deliver the best possible outcomes and objectives. However, I will call out errors of judgement where I think they occur. To this end, I am concerned about the new Government's decision to downgrade the Veterans Minister post to a junior Defence Minister, so that they no longer attend Cabinet, or operate across Government. Veterans' issues are bigger than the MOD, concerning themes like health, housing and employment - as such, they deserve a Government-wide approach. I asked the Cabinet Office Minister about this in Parliament, which you can watch [here](#).

In other Government news this month the Chancellor, Rachel Reeves, announced that Winter Fuel Payments for Pensioners would be means-tested from this year, with only those on Pension Credits eligible. I have voiced concerns, because there are many pensioners in our area who are outside the eligibility for Pension Credits but still struggling with their energy bills. Additionally, there are currently 800,000 people eligible for Pension Credit who don't get it. As it's a crucial gateway benefit, it's important to ensure people aren't missing out. To check if you are eligible please click [here](#).

Secondly, it will charge private schools 20% VAT from January 1 2025, including on fees that are pre-paid.

In the Chamber, I [pushed the Business and Trade Minister](#) to ensure that sub-postmasters affected by the Post Office Horizon scandal have the right information and support to access the redress scheme

I have also written to the new Secretary of State for Health, to ask about the future for the Children's Cancer Taskforce, which I helped establish under the last Government. It would be a disaster if all that work now goes to waste. My partner in this, the fantastic Charlotte Fairall from Sophie's Legacy, has had notable success this month with the launch of a pilot scheme to ensure that no parent at 15 NHS hospitals across the country goes hungry whilst they are supporting their child in hospital.



Sticking with healthcare, I wrote to the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Integrated Care Board to support an application for a new pharmacy in Lee on the Solent. The small existing Boots branch is understandably struggling to meet demand, and it is not right that local health bosses rejected the application for this pharmacy. I have asked them to reconsider their decision, and you can read my letter [here](#).

It was good to see President Zelenskyy join a meeting of the new UK Cabinet as they restated their commitment to supporting Ukraine. As someone who hosts a Ukrainian family I care deeply about securing long-term peace. I [asked the Foreign Secretary](#) to support them in their efforts to bring this terrible war to an end.

I also had the pleasure of meeting some of Gosport's real-life superheroes in Parliament. Unexpectedly encountering a man with a handgun and two explosive devices could phase even the most experienced officers, yet Gosport's PC Emma Davies, PC Tim Clarkson, Sgt David Gibbs, PC Nathan Fulton and PC Scott Thompson all demonstrated impressive courage, as they tackled the offender, miraculously preventing him harming either himself or others. I invited them to Parliament to offer my thanks and congratulate them on winning a National Police Bravery Award.

Locally, our Police and Crime Commissioner, Donna Jones, has opened a public consultation to develop her next Police and Crime Plan. It's really important that she hears residents' views, so do please take part in her survey, which you can find [here](#).

I was pleased to welcome 6th Gosport Scout Group to Parliament - they had some great questions about being an MP and how Parliament works.



We have so many fantastic businesses locally, so a reminder that my "Supporting Traders in Gosport, Lee-on-the-Solent, Stubbington & Hill Head" Facebook group is still up and running for local independent shops, businesses and venues to advertise their services, and encourage people to shop local. You can join [here](#).

For businesses who have been operational for over a year, and employ between 5 and 249 people, University of Portsmouth are offering a completely free 12-week programme of face-to-face training sessions from September 3rd onwards. They will cover subject from growth strategies to innovation techniques, and you'll get to hear from business leaders too. More information is available in the video [here](#).

Gosport is bursting with fascinating history, some of which is not as well-known as it could be, so Historic England has offered funding to youth groups who want to explore our local stories, and who have innovative ideas for place markers to commemorate them. You can apply [here](#).

It was welcome news this month that the Diving Museum has received [£800,000](#) from the National Lottery Heritage Fund! I recently visited to hear about their refurbishment plans.



To mark the 200th anniversary of the RNLI, and celebrate the bravery of those who risk their lives at sea to keep us safe, local man Elvin will be sailing the retired lifeboat AMiTy to 31 lifeboat stations across the South East. The aim is to raise £31,000, some of which will go to the non-affiliated Gosport and Fareham Inshore Rescue Service! More info can be found [here](#).

It's been quite a summer of sport, with England putting in a great performance to get to the Euros finals again, and the Olympics have now kicked off in Paris. Gosport Leisure Centre are getting in on the sporting action too by offering walking cricket sessions to over 55s every week, which is a really fun way to get active. Find out more [here](#).

Those with secondary school-age kids can also sign them up to Gosport Borough Council's 2024 Summer Passport, our award-winning local scheme that gives them the chance to try a range of fun activities, from BMX to sailing, and karaoke to cooking. The link is [here](#).

Finally, as the Olympics gets going, I want to wish everyone in Team GB the best of luck in their events. I have had the privilege of meeting some of our athletes, including BMXers Beth Shriver and Kye Whyte when they visited Gosport BMX track last summer - I know how hard they have worked to get to these Games. It is wonderful that we have won so many medals already, and hope there are many more to come. We are all right behind them!



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

Best wishes
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