

# CAROLINE DINENAGE MP

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



## NEWSLETTER

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As February draws to a close I am always mindful of the blessing that, while this is usually the dullerest month of the year, it is also the shortest!

And luckily, there have been other blessings this month in abundance.



It started with the fantastic news that the Children and Young People Cancer Taskforce would resume its important work.

The Taskforce was launched last year after I ran a long campaign with the founder of Sophie's Legacy, Stubbington's Charlotte Fairall. The new Labour Government initially paused it.

However after Charlotte and I met with Health Secretary, Wes Streeting, in the autumn, he agreed we could continue the work, with me as Chair and Charlotte representing the parents and patients voice. I spoke to ITV News Meridian [here](#) about why the Taskforce's is so crucial to meaningfully improve the way we detect, treat and care for children and young people with cancer.

In addition to the Taskforce, the Department of Health and Social Care, has introduced the National Cancer Plan with the aim to transform all aspects of cancer care. If you are a childhood cancer survivor, parent, charity worker, healthcare professional or policy expert, I encourage you to take part in the Government's call for evidence [here](#).

There was excellent National Lottery News for some of our brilliant local community organisations, C2U on Gosport High Street and the Hardway Elson & Districts Community Association (HEDCA). I visited both to learn more.

C2U on Gosport High Street immediately stepped in to help when the Firstlight Trust Cafe closed just before Christmas - offering a meeting place and support network for our veteran community and monthly veteran's breakfast. They also host a range of other community initiatives

including the Helping Hands Food Pantry and Mindful Moments programme - you can get involved [here](#)



And if you are on the look-out for fun and sociable activities from Bingo to Zumba, Taekwondo to Line Dancing - HEDCA has it all - see their Facebook page [here](#).

Big congratulations to the team at Harbour Cancer Support Centre who, came to a Funding Workshop that I held and have now secured a substantial grant from the National Lottery. It means they can continue their vital work for the next 4 years. Find out more about their work [here](#).

One of Gosport's local champions, Les Heyhoe is up for a prestigious Community Hero Award in the Pub Hero Awards 2025. He has made it to the final three from hundreds of nominations from across the country, an impressive acknowledgment of his dedication to people in our area. Wishing Les the best of luck in the grand final [on 4th March](#) in Parliament!

Congratulations are also due to King's Academy Bay House for their recent 'Good' Ofsted rating in every single category. I was delighted to join them to celebrate and discuss their plans for improvements to the school site and facilities. In *The News* column this month, I talked about this remarkable progress, particularly in the wake of a disappointing 'Requires Improvement' rating only a couple of years ago. You can have a look at what I said [here](#).

I also visited King's Academy's other new Secondary school partner, Brune Park, to hear more about the hard work by teachers and pupils to drive up standards. They are already making great progress, pupils told me about the improvements to teaching quality and student experience, already resulting in falling absenteeism.



Many local children have fond memories of their residential visits to Stubbington Study Centre. This month the campaign to save this much loved and valued local facility continued, with many people joining a demonstration march and signing the petition. I wrote again to the Council ([here](#)) and Minister for Early Education, Stephen



Morgan MP, (the Member of Parliament for Portsmouth South) who responded "that, despite extensive site search across the county, HCC found a lack of alternative suitable site options (for the new Swanwick Lodge facility) compared to the Stubbington Lane site." You can see it [here](#).

We learned of the Government's plans for devolution in Hampshire which will lead to an elected Mayor for the County and new Council boundaries. The full details have yet to be announced but you can read more [here](#).

A consultation by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government is asking for your thoughts on these changes to local government in our area. You can make your submission [here](#) the deadline is 13th April 2025.

You might also like to join a petition in support of our local pubs. The Government's rise to Employer National Insurance Contributions, coupled with the decision to cut business rate relief for pubs and restaurants, are putting huge pressures on many of our locals. Have your say [here](#).

That's why I'm launching my "Pub of the Year" competition to celebrate the unique venues across Gosport, Lee on the Solent, Stubbington and Hill Head and what they mean to our community. From Monday 10th March until Friday 21st March local people will be able to nominate their favourite pub [here](#). The top 5 pubs with the most nominations will go head-to-head in an online vote from Monday 25<sup>th</sup> until Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> March. The winner will be announced on Monday 31<sup>st</sup> March.



As I mentioned in my January newsletter, I am concerned about the lack of regulation of fertility clinics, and I am pushing the Government to bring forward legislation to address this. You can read the Minister's response to my recent letter [here](#).

In Westminster this month, I voiced my concerns over rumours that the Government and Ofcom are planning to water down the Online Safety Act, a groundbreaking piece of legislation that ensures younger users will be protected from harmful content. You can watch my speech [here](#).

On the Third Anniversary of Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine, I spoke in a Parliamentary debate, paying tribute to the bravery and resilience of the Ukrainian people and calling for our Government to reiterate their support, particularly in the light of recent troubling interventions by the US President. You can listen to my contribution [here](#).

The late-night Gosport-Portsmouth ferry ceased operation unexpectedly this month. I understand the impact of this on many Gosport residents. Even before this announcement, I was looking for a water-transport solution that would make better use of our peninsula location, but this recent news has galvanised my efforts. I chaired a hastily arranged scoping meeting with some key local stakeholders to discuss the potential for introducing water taxis across Portsmouth Harbour. It's still in the early stages but my team and I are now pulling together a wider summit for later in the Spring to try and move this forward.

Businesses from across the South Central region attended a reception in Parliament this week and I filled them in on this ambition to drive support for the idea.



The highlight of the month was a visit to Nepal. A couple of years ago, my husband (who is in Brigade of Gurkhas in the Army) and I held a fundraising event for the Gurkha Welfare Trust, to support those who have served in our British Army. This trip gave us the opportunity to see how Welfare Trust work, from a new school roof to water taps. The best part was seeing the direct result of our own fundraising, including the little house that had been built for 81-year-old retired Gurkha Rifleman Pun and his wife, with a plaque dedicated to one of our local businesses who donated the money to build it. You can watch a short video that I made on the trip [here](#).



So that's it for February! 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](mailto:caroline.dinenage.mp@parliament.uk)

Best wishes  
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