

CAROLINE DINENAGE MP

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



NEWSLETTER

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Regular readers will know that I am always keen to showcase our area to those I think could bring investment and opportunity and the early May sunshine offered the perfect backdrop to that.

I hosted Lord Mendoza, Chair of Historic England, and his team for a visit to some of our heritage sites. We discussed how regeneration which saves historic buildings for future generations can also attract investment and boost economic growth. Our tour included Fort Gilkicker – recently named as one of 17 sites that Historic England have identified for significant development potential - the Rum Store in Victoria Quay, Carpenter's Yard (the brand new artists' quarter at Priddy's Hard) and Fort Rowner at HMS Sultan. Lord Mendoza loved the area and said he felt he had been on holiday!



Just a week later Warner Bros accepted my invitation to our town. I took them to some exceptional sites, including Fort Blockhouse and Little Woodham Living History Village, where the volunteers joined us in their 17th Century personas, to demonstrate some of the unique magic that the Gosport area has to offer.

There were other high-profile meetings this month. Further to the night ferry ceasing its operation with very little warning, I'm keen to help find a sustainable waterborne solution to improve connectivity across the Harbour and drive economic prosperity and tourism.

With this in mind I organised a Water Taxi Summit, inviting local service providers, elected representatives and businesses to a very positive first meeting at Boathouse 4 in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard. There

was widespread consensus for the introduction of a pilot service to measure the appetite for water transport among residents and visitors. I am now following-up with all stakeholders to move this forward. As always, I will keep you in the loop.



I also met with stakeholders from Royal Clarence Yard to catch up on the distribution of the £18 million Levelling Up funding secured for the area by the previous Conservative administration of Gosport Council to restore the Rum Store and create a footpath around the waterfront. I am grateful to UK Docks, Oil and Pipelines Agency, Gosport Borough Council, and Victoria Quay for such a productive discussion.



The Gosport Marine and Sea Shanty Festivals combined to make a hugely fun and successful day. It was a pleasure to see so many kids thoroughly enjoying the watersports on offer. Huge thanks to the army of volunteers and over 100 individual performers who made the day so special.

We are lucky that Gosport is home to two of the best Cheerleading groups in the UK - both of whom won Gold in their categories at the World Summit in Florida earlier this month. I was excited to be invited to see Jessie Leigh Dance & Cheer Academy (JLDC) in action at their Summer Showcase this month. I took the opportunity to celebrate both them and our other team, Storm Athletics, in Parliament. Cheerleading is one of the fastest growing sports in the UK, popular with boys and girls, adults and kids - but particularly good at keeping teenage girls involved at an age where so many disengage from school sport. You can listen to what I said here.

On Bowls Big Weekend I [discovered](#) that I had natural talent/or beginners luck at Rowner Bowling Club. Bowls is accessible, fun and sociable, Rowner's members are aged between 11 and 90, so a great activity for the whole family. You can find out more [here](#).



While I am always keen to champion the businesses and industries that support jobs and employment in this constituency, the recent Employers' National Insurance rise and Business Rate increases are already taking their toll. In a debate on business and employment in the House of Commons recently, I shared evidence from local hair and beauty salon on the issue of apprenticeships, which the sector warns at the current rate could be extinct by 2027. You can watch my contribution [here](#).

I [attended](#) AERALIS's showcase at StandardAero Fleetlands (Gosport's largest employer), to see their pioneering British-designed modular aircraft that could replace the Red Arrows' ageing Hawk jets, potentially bringing over 600 new jobs to Gosport. I am pushing Defence Ministers to support AERALIS's British built bid, rather than the Russian designed and Italian built option the MOD seem to prefer.

Mastering all the tricks of the digital world is increasingly vital to the success of a business. I hosted a Google Digital Garage at Daedalus to provide free business advice to those looking to get the most out of the internet and AI. The event was a great success with the room full of entrepreneurial spirit. If you missed it you can find the online courses at https://skillshop.exceedlms.com/student/catalog/list?category_ids=7879-google-digital-garage.



This month was also crunch time for our creative industries in their battle to stop AI models stealing their work. You may have seen Elton John brand the Government 'losers' over their lack of support for the creative industries, and I did my bit in Parliament by speaking out against the Government's decision not to back proposals to mandate Big Tech to be transparent about where they are getting their data from. The Data (Use and Access) Bill contains amendments to enforce transparency and I supported them [here](#), and [here](#). Sadly on both occasions the Government rejected the measures.

As Chair of the Culture, Media, and Sport Committee, this month I [pressed](#) Minister Chris Bryant to confirm that the Department was not for the chop amid rumours in the press.

We heard from the Music Venue Trust about how 2025 was going to be the most difficult year yet for independent grassroots music venues, and met with the electronic music sector/nighttime economy to hear their concerns too.



I spoke at the launch of the Independent Venue Community Charity, which is a social prescribing programme of education, development and community activity in local performance spaces.

As part of the 80th anniversary commemoration of VE Day I joined some of the local activities and also went to see the 30,000 ceramic poppies returned to the Tower of London. They will be there until November 11th and it's well worth a visit.

Back at home...

In Lee on the Solent, alongside Cllr Stevyn Ricketts and the Patient Participation Group, I met with James Roach who is the NHS Hampshire & Isle of Wight Director of Primary Care to highlight the need for additional pharmacy provision. I also raised your concerns about waiting times, difficulties in reaching GP surgeries to even book an appointment, and lack of clear escalation routes for complaints.

I was delighted to unveil Langdale Nursery's groovy new minibus, 'Ruby Tuesday'. The minibus is wheelchair friendly and will increase opportunities for residents to get out and about.





I went to see the remarkable [Longest Yarn exhibition at Gosport Museum and Art Gallery](#) this weekend, featuring 24 beautifully crocheted panels depicting Britain at War from 1939-1945 for the 80th Anniversary of VE Day. Your last chance to visit is Tuesday before these stunning panels join a national tour and return to Gosport next summer.

I met with Abri Housing to discuss Somerset Court and relocated residents' wellbeing. I was assured the site's reconstruction is progressing.

I also met with the Chief Executive of VIVO at some of our local Service Family Accommodation.



The last Government made £400 million available to improve defence housing but only around 5 % of the homes in Gosport and Hill Head have been improved. There are still 69 empty units, deemed uninhabitable, and many others where Service Families are living in damp and mouldy accommodation. I will be meeting with the Government's Defence Housing Review Chair next month to draw attention to this and push for the funds Vivo needs to finish the work. You can still take part in my Defence Housing Survey [here](#).

I met with Bridge to Unity, an organisation that supports refugees, particularly Ukrainians, in the UK. More information about them is available [here](#).

I visited the brand new Fareham Child Development Centre, a one stop shop for children's community health and paediatric services for local families.

As the Summer months approach, I know the bathing waters off of the Gosport constituency will become more and more enticing. I'm glad to say that the Environment Agency currently rate all ours at least Good, with Hill Head and Lee on the Solent rated Excellent. You can monitor the data for yourself [here](#).

This month in the House of Commons Chamber I spoke about the Government's new deal with India, which seems to give young Indian professionals preferential access to our jobs market; I challenged NHS England's decision to scrap its NHS volunteer service due to uncertainty from the Government; and I praised One Small Thing's success in providing a residential alternative to custody for female offenders that keep families together and break cycles of offending.

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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