

Caroline Dinenage

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Your local MP reporting back from Westminster



MP for Gosport, Lee-on-the-Solent, Stubbington and Hill Head

It was a poignant month both at home in Gosport & up in Westminster as we said goodbye to Baroness Thatcher.

Margaret Thatcher enjoyed a special relationship with Gosport that continued long after she had left office, in no small part due to our proud links to the Royal Navy, particularly during the Falklands Conflict. Just last summer, although too frail herself, she was adamant that a member of her staff should represent her at Gosport's Falklands 30th Anniversary commemorations. I had the privilege of meeting Baroness Thatcher on a number of occasions, so it was a great honour to represent Gosport at her funeral. Despite the sombre occasion, it was comforting to see so many familiar faces from our area, all paying their respects to a once in a generation politician.

Mrs T would have been delighted to hear about the new generation of impressive young ladies keen to follow in her footsteps. This month I met with Chloe Shield (14) from Bridgemary School. Chloe has been elected as deputy member of the Youth Parliament for Gosport, Fareham & Havant. I wish her all the best as she flies the flag for our region & look forward to working with her.

With community projects in mind, this month the Government launched the Coastal Communities Fund. CCF is a £28m pot that's open to charities, community groups & private sector companies, in seaside locations around the UK, calling for proposals that will create local jobs & growth. Find out more [here](#).

As this was Community Pubs Month, I showed my support for our local pub industry by putting in a shift at The Three Tuns in Elson. I enjoyed chatting to constituents in a relaxed & informal environment and it was really useful to gain first-hand experience of the challenges that our pubs are facing. This month the Government launched a consultation into the relationship between large pub companies and their tenants and I'd encourage pubs & patrons alike to get involved [here](#).

Last year the whole country was gripped with Olympic fever & this month Gosport saw a replay of this feel-good factor when Olympic legend, Colin Jackson CBE officially opened the new Gosport Leisure Centre. The centre boasts fantastic facilities & membership numbers are already up nearly tenfold on the old Holbrook Centre at its peak. With an £850,000 refurbishment of the ice rink now underway, Gosport Council have truly delivered an Olympic legacy to be proud of.



With the late Baroness Thatcher



At The Three Tuns



At the opening of Gosport Leisure Centre

For the latest news visit www.caroline4gosport.co.uk

Still in sporting mode, I was delighted to step onto the hallowed turf at Anglesey Gardens as I visited Gosport Lawn Bowling Club to 'deliver the first wood' of the 2013 season. I was bowled over by the warm reception I received & thoroughly enjoyed meeting the Club's members.



At Gosport Lawn Bowling Club

Staying in Hampshire, I visited key local employer Northrop Grumman to hear about their exciting plans for the future. I also continued to take my advice surgeries out & about this month, visiting Bridgemary Library to offer help, listen to problems or just have a chat with anyone who popped in.

I visited Gosport's new Tesco superstore ahead of its grand opening, to see the progress being made as the multi-million pound regeneration of the Rowner Estate continues. I'm delighted that the store will create 167 new jobs for local people, some of whom had previously been long-term unemployed. I also dropped in to Aerial Direct, a fantastic Gosport business success story, employing 170 staff & still recruiting - the sky's the limit for this ambitious team!



At Tesco, Rowner

I was really impressed with the green fingers on display at St John's Primary School, as I popped in to see the children plant tree saplings & learn about the environment to celebrate Earth Day.



At St John's C of E Primary School to celebrate Earth Day

Back up in Westminster, I met with Hampshire's new Police Chief Andy Marsh who revealed that the county has seen a 15% reduction in crime in the last year. Crime detection rates are also up & investigation times halved. This downward trend is being seen across England & Wales, with crime down 10% since the 2010 election. The Government played its part by slashing the red tape that kept officers behind desks rather than on the streets, and our Police have worked hard and shown an impressive ability to rise to the challenge of doing more with less.

I continued my efforts to raise awareness of low levels of literacy & numeracy. In Questions to the Education Secretary I urged the Government to ensure children attain basic levels of literacy & numeracy and will continue to ensure this stays high on the Government's agenda.

I ended the month by outlining my vision for the local growth agenda in a speech at the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) annual conference. LEPs, like our own Solent LEP, are business led organisations that have been given the great responsibility of driving our economic recovery forward. It's therefore vital that they have the resources and necessary expertise to become the engines for growth that we know they can be and I will continue working to ensure barriers to growth are broken down.

Best wishes

Caroline

GET IN TOUCH

Please feel free to contact me on any issue, or to find out when my next surgery is. I'm always happy to arrange tours of the Palace of Westminster and Big Ben for my constituents. Please contact my office at least three months in advance to make sure you get a place - the tours are very popular!

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