



Tim Loughton's Parliamentary E-Newsletter

Your local MP updates you on his Parliamentary and Constituency Activities

April 2007

Welcome to the latest edition of my e-newsletter...

I have included a few articles about recent controversial votes in Parliament where I have received a fair amount of correspondence from constituents. I have also included details of some local campaigns, where I would be grateful for action by local residents.

My Annual Report has now been printed and will be distributed to every house in the East Worthing & Shoreham constituency during April. It has been slightly delayed this year to include up to date details of the Keep Worthing And Southlands Hospital campaign and includes additional poster and petition forms. You will soon be able to download the report from my website on www.timloughton.com which has also undergone a revamp to include more interactive features.

If you have not received one by the end of April let me know and we can send you a hard copy.

As always, if you have any suggestions for things you would like to see included in future newsletters, please let me know.

Yours Sincerely,

House of Lords Reform

As you will have heard, at the beginning of March, Parliament had a chance to vote on the Government's proposals for reform of the House of Lords. There were nine options to choose from and in the end MPs voted in favour of a predominantly elected, or totally elected Second Chamber. Tim voted for 80% of the House of Lords to be elected and 20% to be appointed. The week after MPs, the Peers themselves had their turn to vote. They rejected plans for a fully elected House of Lords and voted in favour of retaining a fully appointed House. Although the votes will not bring any laws into effect the Government will take them into account if they decide to put forward a Bill to reform the Lords.

For a full account of the debate on this bill, please refer to: <http://pubs1.tso.parliament.uk/pa/cm200607/cmhansrd/cm070306/debtext/70306-0004.htm>

Ropetackle Rocks

The Ropetackle Arts & Education Centre in Shoreham opened its doors for the first time on March 1st for supporters and potential customers to come and see round the state of the art new facility. Around 150 people enjoyed an evening of entertainment and talks from members of the Ropetackle Centre Trust charity which will be running the Centre and is chaired by Tim.

Fitting out of the centre is due to start soon but the Trust still needs to raise further funds including £10,000 to match the £10,000 given by the UK Film Council to purchase new digital projection equipment. The venue will host several events for the Adur Arts Festival in June including a viewing and discussion of Al Gore's Oscar award winning film 'An Inconvenient truth' on June 2nd.

If you would like to get involved with the Friends of Ropetackle or are interested in using the Centre contact us on info@ropetackle.co.uk



Tim joins the Ropetackle board members and Chairman and leader of Adur District council in toasting their success.

Broadwater gets a new Community House

Tim was at the official opening of the new East Worthing Community House at 25 Dominion Road on March 9th. This is a joint project between Worthing Homes, Spurgeon's Childcare and Mick's Garage run by Mick and Chriss Smith, and will provide a range of community services including after-school clubs, computer facilities and groups for mums and kids. A full time community development worker Leigh-Anna Barber will be based there. Tim is also planning to hold drop-in surgeries there too.

This is a great boost for the area and is a direct result of the hard work put in by Mick and Chriss over the past few years following a spate of anti-social behaviour in the area. Rather than sit back and com-

plain they got together with other members of the community and sought help from Worthing Homes, Worthing Council and local police. Tim got involved and organised a public meeting at St Stephen's Church and has been working with them ever since – a great example of a grass roots community projects making a real difference.

Mick and Chriss also run the local football team and take local youngsters on holiday breaks. If you would like to help out with this, volunteers are always welcome. In addition, Mick is still running Mick's Garage where he restores old bicycles to give to young people on the estate, and any donations of unwanted cycles are also welcome.



Mick and Chriss Smith perform the official opening of 25 Dominion Road

Tim explains his views on the renewal of Trident...

On 14th March the House of Commons was given its chance to vote on the question of Britain's nuclear deterrent, Trident. I know that this is an issue with which many of you are concerned and have made your views known to me directly. I believe that it is a strategic imperative that we maintain, update and replace our nuclear deterrent and I exercised my vote in the debate accordingly.

Nuclear weapons cannot be dis-invented and they will remain part of the international security picture in the future. The acquisition of nuclear weapons by North Korea and their possible acquisition by Iran are real threats to our security. We do not have the right to gamble and to play fast and loose with the security of future generations. We live in an increasingly unpredictable world and just as 20 years ago international terrorism supposedly in the name of Muslim fundamentalism was not a serious threat, we do not know where the challenges will come from 20 years hence. I very much welcomed the fact that there was a consensus on this issue and that with the support of the Conservative Party, the Government was able to take a decision that I believe is in the national interest.

The results of the vote are as follows: Those in favour of Trident renewal - 413 members, those against Trident renewal - 167 members.

Tim votes against suspect Communications Allowance

On March 28th the government timetabled a vote on a controversial proposal to allow MPs offices an extra £10,000 per year as a 'communications allowance.'

Tim and his Conservative colleagues voted against this proposal as he feels perfectly able to communicate with you, his constituents, regularly without such an unnecessary expenditure.

He worries that this allowance would be used specifically by Labour MPs in marginal seats to produce and distribute even more unnecessary campaign material to their constituents, at further damage to the environment.

URGENT!! Vote for a new Shoreham Footbridge

Coronation Green was a mass of bicycles and schoolchildren on March 27th as Shoreham received a visit from representatives from Sustrans, responsible for extending cycle lanes and promoting sustainable transport around the country. They have been short-listed by the National Lottery for a £50m award and Shoreham has been nominated as potential beneficiary of extended cycle lanes to include a new footbridge with cycle lane to link the town with Shoreham Beach and the coastal cycle lane.



Tim joined John Grimshaw, head of Sustrans, on a cycle tour around the town, to help boost our case. Residents can show their support for the scheme by registering their comments on the Sustrans website on www.sustransconnect2.org.uk and we need at least 500 people to do this before the decisions are taken at the end of April. **So get on line and cast your vote now.**

Tim supports a new cycle bridge for Shoreham, with its many other local supporters.

Right to Read Campaign comes to Westminster

On Wednesday 28th March, over 300 supporters of the RNIB and partially sighted people gathered in Westminster Hall to air their concerns about the fact that over three million people are being denied the access to books essential to their education and wellbeing.

Among their concerns, the fact that only 12% of maths and 8% of GCSE textbooks are available in formats accessible for those with sight problems.

Tim, as Shadow Minister for Children, was asked to speak at this meeting, along with other MPs, teachers and popular children's author Jacqueline Wilson.

The speakers articulated the need for the government to ensure access for essential educational material in appropriate formats, as no other group needs to rely on charities to provide educational material.

Jacqueline Wilson, in giving her support for this 'Right to Read Campaign' said that she made certain that, in her contract, her books would be produced in Large Print, Braille and Audio form, so as to ensure that they were accessible to all. She urged other authors to do the same; as it is essential to children's development to have adequate access to reading material.

For more information on this important cause, please refer to: http://www.rnib.org.uk/xpedio/groups/public/documents/PublicWebsite/public_r2rhome.hcsp#P51_3494

Safer Routes to School

Tim has been working with Broadwater Primary School and local councillors to improve the road crossing for children and parents in busy Rectory Gardens, where 60% of pupils walk to school. He arranged for County Council Highways Cabinet member Tex Pemberton to visit the school with highways officers and they are looking at making the area a new School Safety Zone. In the meantime it has just been confirmed that a new school crossing patrol (what we used to know as a lollipop lady) is to be appointed to improve safety.



Rush hour at Broadwater C of E School

KWASH prepares to step up a gear

The KWASH campaign will soon move up a gear if as seems likely the West Sussex PCT publish their hospital consultation document at long last in mid-May, after months of waiting. We are pressing for the consultation proposals to include an option to keep the major acute hospitals of St Richard's and Worthing at least rather than opt for a one site option which is the PCT's preferred option. We also want to retain Southlands as a proper working hospital.

Last month all the West Sussex Conservative MPs met the Chairman and Chief executive of the PCT to urge this option on them. Last week Tim and Peter Bottomley brought two consultants up from Worthing Hospital for a meeting with the Government's 'Tsar' for accident and emergency services Sir George Alberti. At that meeting Sir George agreed that major general hospitals could be viable serving a population of 300-350,000 as Worthing currently does. Having one hospital in West Sussex to serve the whole population of 762,000 would be a real overstretch. That is what KWASH has been saying all along, only for Sir George to backtrack big time after 'discussions' with the PCT!

All we are saying is that any decisions to downgrade our hospitals should be based on clinical grounds in the interests of our constituents not financial expediency because of budget deficits. So when the consultation document comes out it looks as though we will need everyone to write letters, attend public meetings and come out to support our events in a show of strength. The picnic in the park event we had hoped to stage at Easter has now been moved to Whit weekend Saturday May 26th. There will be a series of events on Worthing prom and hopefully simultaneously in Shoreham too. We will be announcing further details soon but put the date in your diary and if you have any time to help we desperately need more volunteers.



Budget Links

To access full details of the March 2007 budget, announced on March 21st please refer to :

<http://budget2007.treasury.gov.uk/>

To access material on the Conservatives' response to the budget, please refer to:

http://www.conservatives.com/tile.do?def=news.story.page&obj_id=135730

A short version of this is available at:

<http://www.conservatives.com/pdf/taxconnottaxcut.pdf>

To book an appointment at one of Tim's regular constituency surgeries ring the Worthing office on 01903 235168.

The following dates have been organised and Tim will also be holding more of his drop-in street surgeries in shopping centres.

March 31st—Southwick.

April 20th—Shoreham.

May 4th—Lancing.

This newsletter is published by Tim Loughton MP, House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA. To contact Tim you can email him at loughtont@parliament.uk or fax him on 020 7219 0461. If you have a problem you think Tim could help you with and you would like to meet him to discuss it please ring 01903 235 168 to book an appointment at one of his fortnightly surgeries. Please visit www.timloughton.com for more information about Tim.