



Tim Loughton's Parliamentary Newsletter

Your local MP updates you on his Parliamentary and Constituency Activities

Welcome to the latest edition of my newsletter...

February 2007

Dear Constituents,

Welcome to my first newsletter of 2007. As usual do tell me if there is any particular information you would like to see included in the future.

My website is currently being upgraded and I hope that in the next few weeks I will be able to launch my new look constituency website with a lot more features enabling you to keep in touch with what goes on in the constituency and at Westminster. I am particularly keen to get feedback from residents on hot political issues, for example, I've recently received a lot of correspondence about stem cell research and same sex adoption - do let me have your views. This should coincide with my Annual Report which will be distributed to homes across the constituency and available online.

Best wishes,

Ropetackle Centre Trust moves in

After many months of negotiating the Ropetackle Centre Trust has at last signed the lease with Adur Council to take over management of the exciting new arts & education community facility which has been built at Ropetackle in Shoreham. The Trust which is a charitable company chaired by Tim consists of twelve board members all with strong local connections and a wealth of experience in arts, education and business. The immediate priority is to start the specialist fit out using the grants which have so far been secured from South East Arts and other charitable bodies though there is still a lot of money to be raised before all the equipment necessary can be purchased. It is hoped that a centre manager can be appointed soon and a series of receptions will be held to open up the centre to potential customers and sponsors, Friends of the Ropetackle Centre and local residents. The centre will also feature in the Adur Arts Festival later in the summer and one of the early activities is likely to be a local film club.



Above: Tim and other Ropetackle board members celebrating the handover with Adur Council Leader Neil Parkin and Deputy Leader Julie Searle who represents the council on the trust board.

Council rejects Orange Mast

Tim has been supporting the Shoreham Beach action group BAMB (Beach Against Mobile Masts) to ensure that a planning application by Orange to install a 12 metre mobile phone mast in Shoreham has been rejected by Adur District Council.

Orange had applied for the mast to be placed alongside the A259, opposite Shoreham recreation ground. Local residents objected to the plans on the grounds that they would spoil the undeveloped and picturesque skyline in the area and the Council's planning officers recommended that the application be turned down because the lack of parking facilities for maintenance vehicles on the A259 would mean that the already busy road would face even greater disruption.

On 8th January Adur Council rejected Orange's plans and Tim has now written to the Chief Executive of Orange and offered to facilitate a meeting between Orange representatives and local residents and councillors to discuss whether a suitable alternative site can be found.

After the decision Tim commented, 'I have been active on campaigns on a number of other inappropriately sited masts across the constituency and it appears that Orange failed to take proper account of why this site would have been unsuitable. This has been a victory for local common sense and BAMB should be congratulated on their campaign against this mast which saw hundreds of people writing to Adur council to object to these plans.'

KWASH (Keep Worthing and Southlands Hospital) UPDATE

KWASH NEWS: SEEDA Chairman speaks out on hospital downgrading

KWASH organised a press conference on Monday January 15th at the offices of B&W Loudspeakers in East Worthing for a keynote presentation by the Chairman of the South East England Development Agency and Sussex resident Jim Brathwaite CBE.

Jim is a highly respected figure both in business and in Government circles and his presence and speech gave an enormous boost to the campaigns across Sussex which are fighting the downgrading or closure of our hospitals. Speaking from a business perspective Jim said that the proposals were bad news for business investment in the area where the South East already makes a net contribution of £11bn in taxes to the Exchequer. He questioned the sense behind such 'knee jerk reactions to creating change' and detailed why the health of the local population is an important element of improving the quality of life in the South-East and therefore the attraction for good business investment and jobs.

Jim also expressed concerns about where we would train our future doctors if we are closing down A&E departments all over the place. Instead we should be looking at new ways of delivering health which did not compromise quality and did not take it away from local people. SEEDA is trying to achieve smart growth and getting people on sickness benefit back into the workplace

and a fully functioning local health service is an important part of that.

The event was put together by Worthing's business umbrella group Worthing First, chaired by Roy Stannard who also gave a

presentation emphasising that the business community was solidly behind the KWASH campaign and that the proposals as they stood could mean a matter of life and death for local employees in an accident situation. In addition, Worthing & Southlands hospitals with 3200 employees are the biggest employers in the area.

Attendees at the press conference were given a warm welcome to Worthing by Mayor and KWASH Chairman Tom Wye who then introduced the town's MPs. Tim welcomed the initiative from Jim Brathwaite which represented an important third prong to the KWASH campaign having added the business community to support from the local population and politicians and secondly the medical staff at the hospitals and said that strength of the KWASH campaigns and sister campaigns across Sussex was having an effect on the SHA and PCT and the tide was turning in favour of the case being put forward by the protesters.



Tim presents Nurse Sunshine T-shirts to Jim Brathwaite and Roy Stannard



Sunshine Around the World!

Are you planning to visit relatives and friends either in another part of the UK or abroad? Wherever you go, Egypt or Edinburgh, Belgium or Barnstable, Sweden or Scunthorpe, Durban or Doncaster, Philadelphia or Pratts Bottom:

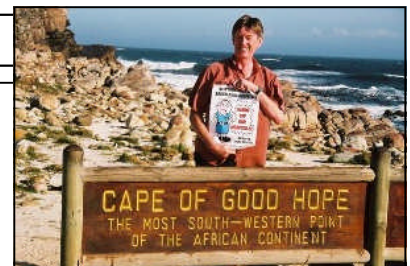
- Take your digital camera and a nurse sunshine poster.
- Choose a representative backdrop of your location e.g. a

notable street name or famous landmark, - Take a photo of the poster against the backdrop. You can include yourself too if you wish. - As soon as you are able, e-mail it to nurse_sunshine@msn.com

Already we have submissions from South Africa, Australia and The USA. We have it on good authority that Nurse Sunshine will be visiting Boston (USA), the Carribean, Cyprus and Mandalay (Burma) in soon. Local submissions will also be equally acceptable: Steyning, Shoreham, Durrington, Horsham, Dial Post, Bramber, Arundel, Bognor, Tangmere, Slindon, Chichester, Pulborough, Henfield all need a visit and a photo. The list is endless! If you are not travelling, no problem; pick up a poster and send it by post to a distant far-flung relative or friend and ask them to take a suitable picture based on the rules above and return the image by email. It's that simple!!

Once you have taken your picture send it to the following E-mail address: nurse_sunshine@msn.com Posters can be obtained from the Worthing and Southlands Hospital League of Friends, the Department of Anaesthetics or Haverfield House in Worthing's Union Place.

For more information about Nurse Sunshine Around the World please contact Dr David Uncles on 01903 285 151 or email nurse_sunshine@msn.com



Boundstone has some brass

Tim was delighted to attend the annual concert by Boundstone College Bands held at the Pavilion Theatre in Worthing last Friday. The junior and college bands wowed a packed hall as always with a fantastic wealth of talent of all ages on stage. Tim commented that the Boundstone band really is a fantastic treasure amongst West Sussex schools and goes from strength to strength.

On a less noisy note earlier in the day Tim joined pupils at North Lancing junior school for their sponsored hush in aid of Macmillan nurses, one of at least 6 schools in the constituency taking part to raise funds for this important charity.

Tim supports the Sustainable Communities Bill to save Post Offices

In the middle of January Conservative MP Nick Hurd presented a Private Member's Bill to Parliament which will empower local communities to influence government policy on local issues. The Sustainable Communities Bill is designed to tackle the decline of the local high street and the closure of local post offices.

Tim spoke out in favour of the Bill in the House of Commons chamber and voted in favour of the Bill which had its Second Reading two weeks ago. He believes that for too long our communities have been under threat from the ongoing decline of local shops, jobs and services. This has resulted in 'Ghost town Britain' and a fading sense of community; in 2005, 700 newsagents closed, as did 2000 independent convenience stores in 2006. A national action plan is needed and Tim hopes that the Sustainable Communities Bill will provide just that through giving influence to the experts on lo-

cal issues; local people.

Tim has said that 'this Bill would be particularly beneficial in East Worthing and Shoreham where despite the fact that 98.6% of elderly people say that the Post Office is their 'lifeline', 9 Post Offices have closed since 1997. Indeed in a survey conducted by ICM, 41% of the population is said to be worried by the loss of shops and post offices. Due to the decline in local facilities the average person travels 893 miles a year to shop for food, which is why farmers markets are increasingly attractive; providing the opportunity to buy British produce, keep it local and be environmental.'

For further details please visit http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/pabills/200506/sustainable_communities.htm

Latest news on Lancing Beach Green concrete blocks

After extensive surveying of the area and a tender process for local companies to produce proposals for detailing with the problem, Lancing Parish Council have now published three main options. These involve a combination of digging up some of the blocks and infilling, top soiling and reseeding. Local residents are invited to give their views and the plans will be discussed at council meetings.

For further information please visit the Lancing Parish Council website: www.lancingparishcouncil.gov.uk/news/index.htm

Tim encourages car sharing schemes

Tim is trying to encourage constituents to get involved with car sharing schemes which would help save the environment. If every person who regularly drives to work on their own were to get a lift with someone else just once a week instead, the number of car journeys would be reduced by 12% - 15% - think what a difference that could make to congestion on the A27 and local pollution.

West Sussex runs its very own car sharing scheme and you can find out about it by visiting <http://www.westsussexcarshare.com/>

Tim to attend dinner in support of Children's Hospices

This Wednesday Tim is to attend a meeting organised by the charity *Fair Play for Children's Hospices* to discuss the difficult funding situation many children's hospices find themselves in now National Lottery funding has come to an end.

Tim is Patron of the parent organisation of the West Sussex children's hospice the Chestnut Tree House and as a Shadow Health Minister is well aware of the crucial work that is done in this and other hospices up and down the country. At the last election the Conservative Party committed themselves to raising the level of state funding for children's hospices from its current level of 5% to 30% - which is the same level of funding received by adult hospices.

Catholic Adoption Agency

Tim's mailbag has slowly been filling up with letters from constituents concerned by the way the Equality Act regulations will effect the work of the Catholic adoption agency.

It is important to note that this current 'furore' is not about same sex adoption. That was legalised in the 2001 Adoption & Children Act, although many MPs expressed reservations at the time. The current debate relates to the application of regulations relating to the Equality Act 2006 which are due to be published shortly and come into force from April. The Act will make it illegal for providers of goods, services, facilities, premises, education or public functions from discriminating against their recipients on the grounds of their sexual orientation, as well as on grounds of race, disability etc.

The regulations means that some faith based adoption agencies, which last year placed around 700 children for adoption, will be in conflict with their religious beliefs if they have to comply with the likely new regulations. It is notable that the Catholic Adoption Agency for exam-

ple is responsible for placing some 30% of the most challenging children and they have an excellent record for the quality of those placements, few of which subsequently breakdown. Clearly if they are prevented from offering that service then a large number of children stand to lose out given the shortage of adoptive families and that would not be in the best interests of often very vulnerable children and their welfare should be our paramount concern.

Tim has commented: "I hope that common sense will prevail so that faith based adoption agencies are free to continue the excellent service that they have performed up to now unencumbered by what seems to be excessive Government interference, and where there area a large variety of other adoption agencies and local authorities who are in a position to place children with same sex couples. If this is not the case then it will be my intention to vote against the regulations if given the opportunity before the Act becomes law in April of this year."

Bills before this session of Parliament include:

- The Criminal Justice Bill which will give the police and the probation service more powers.
- An Immigration Bill which will aim better to secure our borders.
- A Bill which will limit the use of juries in fraud trials
- A Climate Change Bill which will aim to protect the environment
- A Bill to tackle the problems at the Child Support Agency (CSA)
- A Pensions Bill
- A Mental Health Bill which will widen the criteria for detaining people who are mentally ill.

Tim's next surgeries are as follows:

Friday 9th February in Southwick, Friday 23rd February in Lancing & 9th March in Worthing
Please ring 01903 235168 to book an appointment

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.