

HUW MERRIMAN MP NEWSLETTER

Dear Resident,

I hope that this newsletter finds you well. This has been a solemn last month. The loss of Her late Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, brought profound sadness. I've included the tribute I gave in Parliament on behalf of constituents and how the period of mourning operated in Parliament.

During Queen Elizabeth II's glorious reign, she has asked 15 Prime Ministers to form a Government. The formation of Prime Minister Liz Truss' Government took place just two days before the Queen's passing.

As I have stated previously, I supported Rishi Sunak to be our next Prime Minister. I felt he had the economic experience, and policies, which we needed at this difficult time. Members of the Conservative Party took a different view and Liz Truss won the vote by 57 to 43%. Like Rishi, I accept the result and the desire of this Prime Minister to do things differently to the position we took. I am, however, mindful of the need to maintain our manifesto commitments from 2019. These remain the commitments and policies which got us elected. Any attempts to fund tax cuts for the wealthiest by increasing public borrowing or reneging on pension increases or cuts to other programmes we promised, would not be in keeping with the last election. I comment more on these plans below.

These are challenging times for households. My votes in Parliament will be guided by what I feel is the right course of action to help households and the wider economy.

With best wishes,

Huw



[Her Late Majesty the Queen](#)

Following the sad news of the passing of Queen Elizabeth II, the



[Mini-budget](#)

Building on my introduction to this newsletter, you can find [here](#) my

business in the Houses of Parliament was immediately suspended. We met on the Friday 9th and Saturday 10th September for MPs and Peers to deliver tributes. Such was the demand, we only got a few minutes each. You can view mine, for the constituency, [here](#). On Monday 12th, our new King came to Parliament and received the motions of condolence from both Houses, in Westminster Hall. The King addressed the assembled MPs and Peers. On Wednesday 14th, this same hall opened for the Lying in State. I attended and paid my respects in a moving event. On Monday 19th September, I joined thousands of people lining the route to offer my final respects as the cortege came past. As I said goodbye, in Hyde Park, I felt proud to have lived my life under the reign of this remarkable woman.

views on the mini-budget and the impact I feel it has had on the market and the economy. To give you a balanced picture, this will also take you to a letter from the Chancellor where he sets out his rationale for these fiscal changes.

Things have not gone to plan. Whilst it was not a plan I voted for, nor am I a Government Minister carrying it out, I am a Conservative MP and it would be wrong of me not to say that I am extremely sorry for the impact it has had.



DEFRA Roundtable

I have organised a roundtable for local farmers and officials from the Rural Payments Agency and Defra about the new government farming schemes which are available to them, this will take place on Friday 14 October. Local farmers and land agents who wish to attend are welcome to email huw.merriman.mp@parliament.uk or phone my office on 01424 736861 for further details.



Environmental Standards

Following the mini-budget, concern has been raised that we will see environmental commitments, made in our 2019 manifesto, watered down. With 85% of the constituency designated as AONB, I spoke with the Environment Minister to seek reassurances. I've been assured that our commitments remain but, when it comes to paying for land management, there will be a focus not just on nature and conservation but also on food production. I strongly support this added emphasis. I campaigned for it when the Agriculture Bill went through Parliament. New Investment Zones may deviate from certain rules but these are designed to help areas where development is already underway (not fields or habitat in the AONB). You can read [here](#) more of an explanation as to protections which will remain. It's fair to say



Sewage Discharges

I am still working closely with Southern Water, the Environment Agency and Rother District Council on this matter. During the first week back in Parliament, I spoke in an Urgent Question on Sewage Discharges and I have also been

we should have made the protection of the environmental standards clearer when we announced the mini-budget.

granted a Westminster Hall Debate on this. The Westminster Hall Debate will be on 12th October at 14:30, you can watch live [here](#). my website is still being updated regularly which you can see [here](#).



Ticehurst Big Green Week

I was kindly invited to return to the Big Green Week in Ticehurst to talk about transport decarbonisation and the future of energy with members of the local community.

Transport decarbonisation is critical to meeting Net Zero as transport accounts for the largest source of CO2 emissions in the UK. Larger reductions in other sectors, notably energy and business, mean that the share of UK emissions from transport rose from 18% in 1990, to 24% in 2020.

We discussed work the Transport Select Committee has undertaken in this area, including on electric vehicles and the rollout of charging infrastructure in rural areas, before moving on to talk about other issues such as the use of heat pumps, solar panels, fracking, and the Environmental Land Management Scheme. It was a fantastic evening with some great discussions.



New Investment Zones

The mini-budget unveiled proposed Investment Zones, where help would be provided to speed up development in areas where it is planned. The initial list of local authorities did not include East Sussex. I checked in with our County leader who confirmed we had not been approached. I then met with Ministers and was assured that East Sussex could apply. With my neighbour, Sally-Ann Hart, we are proposing that the land off the Link Road and A21, from Bexhill to Hastings, be our County bid. It's designed to take the new businesses, jobs and housing but is taking time. We could help deliver the power and utilities needed and the Queensway Gateway to the A21. We will do all we can to ensure East Sussex is on the list. More details of the proposals, which are at an early stage, can be found [here](#).

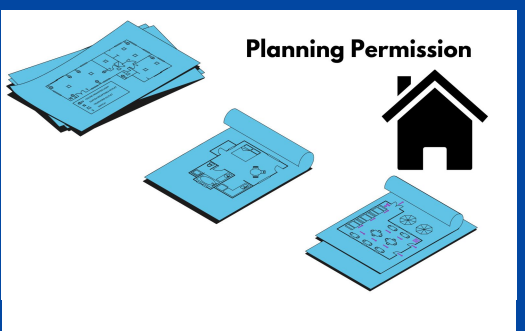


Pavement Parking.

Pavement parking is a real concern for many local residents. In 2019, the Transport Select Committee published a report in which we recommended Government



legislate for a nation-wide ban. Despite receiving assurances from the Government that this would happen, a ban is yet to be brought in. During a recent committee session on active travel with Active Travel England's CEO Danny Williams and Commissioner Chris Boardman, I raised this issue again and will continue to press for the ban to be delivered. You can watch the full session [here](#).



Sedlescombe planning

Planning is not a matter for which MPs have powers and I rarely comment on this as a result. A planning application has been granted for a new home in the AONB by Rother District Council. The planning committee approved the application (against the officer's recommendation to refuse) on the grounds that it qualified for an exceptional design status. The applicant is the Head of the Planning Committee and the Portfolio holder for Strategic Development. I've been written to by a number of Parish Councils and, whilst not wishing to interfere in Local Government democracy, I have written a letter to the Secretary of State, so all parties are aware of the procedure for further determination. A copy of the letter, and the subsequent actions, can be found [here](#). It will now be for the Secretary of State and those in Local Government to determine.

Boosting Growth

Whilst I have written about misgivings on unfunded tax cuts for the wealthiest and the knock-on impact on the markets and the economy, I welcome supply-side changes which will help us increase growth. As Chairman of the Transport Select Committee, we have reviewed numerous projects, from HS2, new road building, to Heathrow Expansion, which have hit the buffers due to cost and time overruns, judicial review or red-tape. I am all for removing the shackles on transport projects and other infrastructure delivery which will help provide homes, jobs and a better return to the taxpayer. I've copied one of our previous reports [here](#) which goes into more detail.



Bexhill and Rother Environmental Groups

It was a pleasure to hold my second local event in a week on Decarbonising Transport. Over 90 minutes, we discussed and debated the challenges ahead. It's great to be able to report back on the Transport Select Committee's work on decarbonising transport and take some superb ideas back to Parliament. Thanks to the two groups for inviting me and for braving the weather on a wet and windy Friday night.



Observer Article

My latest article for the Bexhill and Battle Observer in which I discuss the passing of Her Late Majesty the Queen and the impact she had on us all.

Read more [here](#).

Rother Business Visits

I recently visited a number of businesses in our constituency with local Rother District and East Sussex County Councillors. We visited Oastbrook Vineyard to see how their production of local Sussex wine is growing and the steps they are taking as a business to attract more people to visit their vineyard. We also visited Planters Farm Shop on the A21 who have recently received a grant from the council to upgrade part of their store. This has allowed them to increase the products they can sell creating a bigger customer base. This was a great day seeing how local businesses are continuing to grow and thrive.



Eurostar services from Ashford and Ebbsfleet

Eurostar has recently confirmed that services will not resume at Ashford International or Ebbsfleet International during this year or in 2023. Through these station stops, Eurostar has played a significant role in the economic prosperity in the South East and the decision not to resume services will have a knock-on effect to the regional economy in addition to the loss of choice for individual travellers. I recently wrote to Jacques Damas, the CEO of Eurostar, to try to better understand the challenges Eurostar faces that drove their decision. You can read his response [here](#).



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