

Gareth Johnson MP for Dartford

Reporting back from Dartford
and Westminster - now reaching
over 5,000 people in the local
area



October 2018

Welcome to my latest monthly newsletter.



Dartford Post Office

You may have seen the proposal to move the Post Office in Dartford to the WH Smith store. No date has been given for this but it is expected the move could take place early next year.

A six-week consultation will take place and this is being advertised in the existing Post Office.

Although WH Smith opens for longer hours than the Post Office and on a Sunday, no confirmation has been given on what the opening hours of a Post Office in the store would be. Clearly, people need to be able to fully access the Post Offices' services.

SURGERY DATES

By Appointment Only:

Bluewater

16th November - FULL
14th December
11th January
8th February
8th March
5th April
10th May



 [Website](#)

This proposal also raises capacity issues. The queues in the current Post Office can be very long and we need to know how WH Smith will deal with the large demand in their fairly small store.

In 2008, Dartford saw Post Offices close on the Tree Estate, Temple Hill, Wilmington and Longfield Hill and therefore Post Office services in the town centre are very important.

In the last couple of years we have seen new Post Offices open in Henderson Drive and The Brent but people need assurances that services can also be accessed in the town centre.

CARDS FOR GOOD CAUSES
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*** * CHRISTMAS * ***
*** * CARD SHOP * ***

SUPPORTING OVER 25 LOCAL & NATIONAL CHARITIES

SO, DON'T FORGET ANYONE THIS YEAR!

DARTFORD LIBRARY
Central Park, Dartford
3 NOVEMBER - 15 DECEMBER
Monday to Saturday
10.00am - 4.00pm

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Cards for Good Causes

This year, Cards for Good Causes will open on 3rd November at Dartford Library and the last day will be on 15th December. Two new charities will benefit this year and they are Military Wives and the PDSA.



The Paul Page Golf Academy

Each month I like to feature a local business, large or small and this month's is The Paul Page Golf Academy.

I was delighted to visit this family-run 9 hole, par 3 golf course recently, which is located on the same site as Dartford Football Club.

It was a pleasure to meet Paul, who was born in Dartford, is a qualified PGA instructor and has been playing golf since he was 14 years old. One of the highlights of Paul's career was beating Tiger Woods at the 1993 US Amateur Championship. He then turned professional in 1994



Lower Thames Crossing

Earlier in October, Highways England launched a ten-week consultation on the latest plans for the Lower Thames Crossing.

The new crossing, which will be built between Gravesham and Thurrock, will boost road capacity by 90 percent and reduce traffic in Dartford by 22 percent.

The new designs show the crossing is set to be three lanes in each direction and traffic will be able to travel at 70 mph. Plans are also included for improvements with the junction of the A2 and a new design for the Tilbury junction.

This crossing cannot be built soon enough to alleviate the traffic problems experienced here in Dartford. I have campaigned for years for the new crossing to be built well away from the existing one at Dartford and it is long overdue. The Dartford Crossing has been working substantially over capacity for many years and this new crossing will reduce the annual number of vehicles by around 14 million.

The consultation runs until 20th December and if you would like to take part, please click on the link below.

[Lower Thames Crossing Consultation](#)

and travelled the world on the professional golf tour for the next six years. After gaining his PGA qualifications, he has spent many years coaching players.

Paul and his wife, Sarah, opened the academy in April this year and he has been working hard to improve the greens throughout the long hot summer.

The Academy is open to everyone and Paul offers classes and lessons from absolute beginner to advanced level. He is passionate about encouraging young people to start/play golf and offers a variety of youth programmes to suit different ages and abilities. Membership packages are also available and the club now has 32 members signed-up.

Whilst there, I tried my hand at the Academy's indoor simulator, which provides a virtual experience and allows you to play



Bluelight Jobs Fair

I was asked to open the Bluelight Jobs Fair which was held at North Kent College and was organised by Matthew Scott, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Kent.

The Jobs Fair was supporting Kent Police's biggest recruitment drive in a generation and was a collaboration between the Police, Fire, NHS and criminal justice system, who all had stands and representatives at the event.

There was also a volunteering zone with recruiters from Special Constabulary, Appropriate Adults, Independent Custody Visitors, Victim Support and Restorative Justice Services.

People looking for a career or for volunteering were able to attend and find out more about opportunities that exist within these sectors.

some of the most recognisable courses in the world.

This family-run golf course is a hidden gem in the heart of Dartford and it offers people the chance to enjoy the outdoors in the centre of town. It is a real asset to the community.

If you would like to find out more about The Paul Page Golf Academy, check out their website page by clicking on the link below.

The Paul Page Golf Academy



Meeting representatives from Victim Support at the Bluelight Jobs Fair

News from Westminster



Crossrail

I recently met with fellow MP's, representatives from Dartford and Gravesham Council, Kent County Council and the former Transport Minister, Jo Johnson, to deliver our submission to the Treasury for the C2E extension.

The extension would see the Elizabeth line extending to the Garden City and completing the original vision of Crossrail reaching across London and into three surrounding counties. The line would serve Dartford, Gravesend and the new Garden City at Ebbsfleet.



Leaseholders

The Communities Secretary has launched a consultation on plans to improve the leaseholder sector for would-be home owners which will bring to an end the unjustified selling of new houses as leasehold.

The consultation will also propose that ground rents for new leases will be capped at just £10. On average, leaseholders pay over £300 ground rent each year, with some paying as much as £700.

To further support leaseholders, Ministers have also made it easier for them to form recognised tenant associations by reducing the minimum membership required. This will further empower leaseholders to

Margaret Thatcher's Dartford election leaflet

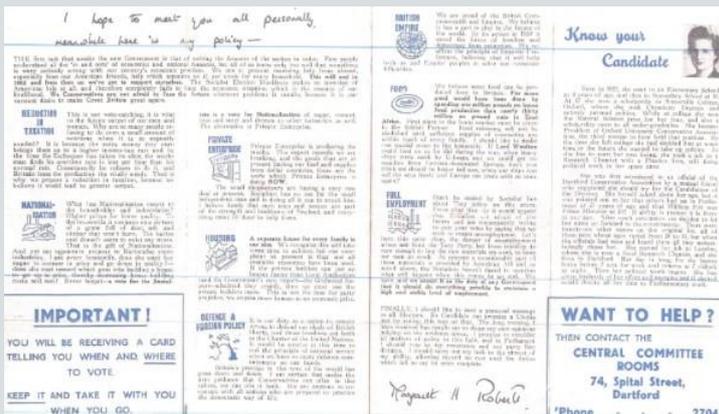
For those of you interested in the political history of Dartford, here is a copy of Margaret Thatcher's leaflet for the 1950 General Election which was given to me recently.



enforce their collective rights and hold landlords to account.

This technical consultation opened on 15th October 2018 for six weeks and is open to all. Please see below a link to the consultation.

Leasehold system reforms consultation



Parliament Week

Every year, UK Parliament Week hosts a programme of events which aims to build closer links between the public and their Parliament.

Now in its eighth year, UK Parliament Week is set to be bigger than ever.

There are numerous organisations in Dartford taking part in Parliament Week this year, including many primary schools. Rainbows, Brownies, Cubs and



The Budget

Highlights from the Autumn Statement:

- The deficit has fallen by four-fifths from 9.9% to 1.9%.
- The tax-free personal allowance will rise to £12,500 in April 2019.
- The Higher Rate Threshold will increase from £46,350 to £50,000 in April 2019.
- £1.7 billion for Universal Credit to increase existing work allowances, meaning working parents and people with disabilities will be £630 better off each year.
- Living wage increased to £8.21 from April 2019.
- Duty on beer, cider and spirits frozen.
- Fuel duty frozen.
- Local authorities in England will receive a further £650 million in social care funding next year.
- £400 million extra for schools this year.
- £30 billion to improve road infrastructure.
- Over £1.5 billion to support the High Street.
- A 2% digital services tax on large digital firms.
- £1 billion more for Defence over the next two years.

Scouts are also holding events which can range from debates and ballots to quiz nights.

I am always happy to visit schools and other organisations during Parliament Week, diary permitting, or at any time through the year. If you would like me to visit or you would like to organise a tour for Parliament for your group, please get in touch with my office.

This year is particularly special as it is 100 years since Parliament passed the Act which allowed some women and all men to vote for the first time.

A link to UK Parliament Week and Vote100 can be found below.

**Parliament Week
and Vote 100**



Battersea Dogs and Cats Home

Attending the Battersea Dogs and Cats Home breakfast briefing alongside Neil Parrish MP and Sheryll Murray MP to support changes to the law for increased animal welfare.

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