

# Gareth Johnson MP for Dartford

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



February 2019

*Welcome to my latest newsletter.*

## Hyper-acute Stroke Unit announced for Darent Valley Hospital

Darent Valley Hospital is one of three hospitals in Kent and Medway to have been chosen to have a 24/7 hyper-acute stroke unit.

The announcement by the Stroke Joint Committee of Clinical Commissioning Groups means that in future, patients who have a stroke will be taken to one of the three new emergency stroke units based at William Harvey Hospital, Maidstone Hospital and Darent Valley Hospital.

Following success in other parts of the country, evidence shows the best way to treat stroke patients is at one of these hyper-acute stroke units.

## SURGERY DATES

**By Appointment Only:**

**Bluewater**

8th March - FULL

5th April

10th May

14th June

5th July

13th September



Currently around 400 stroke patients are treated at Darent Valley Hospital each year with hundreds more being treated for mini strokes. Having this unit at Dartford, will improve care and reduce disability from a stroke as well as save lives.

It is hoped the new service will be up and running at Darent Valley Hospital in a year's time.

### **Mental Health round table discussion**

Earlier this month I joined a round table discussion about mental health and the role of the emergency services, chaired by Matthew Scott, the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner. Mr Scott is the mental health lead for the National Association of Police and Crime Commissioners.

Other agencies represented at the meeting were Public Health England, the RSPCA and the fire service.

Mr Scott highlighted that people suffering mental ill health need the right support from the right person at the right time. He said it was important to recognise that in cases where no crime has been committed, the presence of a uniformed police officer will sometimes make the situation worse.

Mark Matthews, who is the mental health lead for the National Fire Chief's Council agreed there is a legitimate need for all blue light services to have a more unified approach.

 [Website](#)



### **Angela's Swim School**

Each month I like to feature a local business, large or small and this month's is Angela's Swim School which was set up by Dartford resident, Angela Wilson in 2002.

Angela was Scottish National Champion at age 11 and by 15 she was National Champion before being selected for the Olympics. She also competed in the European, World and Commonwealth Games for Great

Zoe Billingham from Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary highlighted how important it is for all the emergency services to play their part to provide a long-term solution to the current epidemic of mental health problems.

I was pleased to facilitate this meeting and I feel strongly that a collaborative approach is the best way forward.

### **Possible new Urgent Treatment Centre at Darent Valley Hospital**

This month the NHS undertook a consultation on the possibility of creating a new Urgent Treatment Centre at Darent Valley Hospital.

The idea is to create an Urgent Treatment Centre which would bring together a number of current services. At the moment, there is a walk-in centre in Northfleet which provides urgent GP appointments to people from across Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley, a Minor Injuries Unit at Gravesham Community Hospital and a GP out-of-hours service.

Many people have said they are sometimes confused about where they should go to access the right medical care and so the Clinical Commissioning Group is looking at creating one centre which would treat minor illnesses and injuries for all ages.

The other possibility under consideration is locating

Britain. Ill health forced her to retire from competitive swimming in 1996.

Since 2002, Angela's Swim School has taught thousands of children and adults to swim and in 2014 she franchised the company.

Last year, Angela launched Swimstylers in conjunction with CHF Entertainment Ltd. Swimstylers is an innovative programme with five inspirational animated child characters.

The aim of Swimstylers is to take children from complete beginner through to swimming 1500m. The hope is that children aspire to be like the characters and

an Urgent Treatment Centre at Gravesham Community Hospital and relocating the walk-in centre alongside the Minor Injuries Unit.

The consultation has now closed and the results will be published shortly.



### **Dartford Post Office**

The consultation on moving Dartford Post Office into WH Smith is now open and runs until 20th March.

It has now been confirmed that services will be available on Sundays between 10.00 am and 2.00 pm but there will no longer be a cash machine and people won't be able to renew their driving licences in store.

This proposal still concerns me in respect of the ability of the WH Smith store to cope with the number of people in Dartford who rely on postal

improve with style, confidence and technique as they progress through the character badge-based system. An app and videos are also being developed to support the programme.

If you would like to find out more about Angela's Swim School and Swimstylers, please click on the button below.

[Angela's Swim School](#)



**Primark opening at Bluewater**

Primark is opening

services.

If you would like to have your say on this proposal, please click on the link below.

[Post Office consultation](#)

## **Project Update: A2 Bean and Ebbsfleet Junction Improvements**

Last Spring Highways England held a consultation into the proposed junction improvements on the A2 at Bean and Ebbsfleet.

The proposal at the Bean junction is for the current roundabouts to be enlarged and controlled by traffic lights. There will be a new bridge over the A2 for southbound traffic (situated to the east of the existing Bean Lane overbridge, which will be retained for northbound traffic) and a new slip road onto the A2 for eastbound traffic.

At Ebbsfleet, there will be enlarged roundabouts controlled by traffic lights. The road between the roundabouts will be widened to a dual carriageway. The slip roads from the A2 will be retained and the slip roads to the A2 widened.

Highways England has now published the set of Orders required to construct the scheme. Following this publication, there is a period for objections.

If you would like to look at the Orders and find out

its store at Bluewater on 13th March 2019.

The new store has created more than 400 jobs and is located between House of Fraser and All Saints.

## **DFID's Small Charities Challenge Fund**

The Department for International Development has launched the Small Charities Challenge Fund designed for small British charities. It provides grants for development organisations with an annual income of £250,000 or less working in priority countries to deliver the Global Goals. Grants of up to £50,000 are available for projects

more about the process for objections, please click on the link below.

Hard copies of the Orders will also be displayed at Dartford Borough Council and at Swanscombe & Greenhithe Town Council until 28th March 2019.

If you want to see what the proposed changes will look like, take a look at the A2 Bean and Ebbsfleet flythrough below

### [Orders for A2 Bean and Ebbsfleet Junction Improvements Scheme](#)



Highways England A2 Bean and Ebbsfleet flythrough

of two years or less.

To date, £2.7 million has been committed to 55 small charities delivering a diverse range of projects which include providing prosthetic limbs to amputees in the Gambia, amongst others.

The closing date for the next review of applications is Thursday 28th March 2019. If you would like to find out more please click on the link below.

### [Small Charities Challenge Fund](#)



### **Knife Crime**

## News from Westminster



### Brexit update

The Prime Minister has announced that her deal will come back to the House of Commons for a vote by 12th March.

If her deal is not approved, MPs will be asked to consider removing the possibility of no deal. If this is agreed there will be a vote on an extension of Article 50.

The issue of Brexit has divided both the country and the two main political parties. I remain fully committed to supporting Brexit. Any second referendum or failure to implement Brexit would be an insult to democracy.

In a recent Prime Minister's Question, I raised the issue of knife crime and police stop and search records with the Prime Minister. My question can be viewed by clicking on the photo below.



PMQ's 13th  
February

### Further action to tackle youth violence

The Home Secretary has recently set out details of a new youth advocates programme that will see respected members of communities, such

## Noxious Substance Assault

I recently asked the Justice Secretary about sentencing for those committing noxious substance attacks, following a recent assault in Dartford.

During Justice Questions, I asked the Secretary of State for a clear commitment that not only will the sale and possession of acid be targeted, but also to ensure that those guilty of these acts receive significant terms of imprisonment.

In response, Justice Secretary David Gauke, said that anyone committing such acts must feel the full force of the law. The Offensive Weapons Bill, currently in the Lords, will change the law to stop the sale of acid to under 18s and make it an offence to possess a corrosive substance in a public place. It is already the case that for any offence with the use of a weapon, including acid, it will be treated as an aggravating factor meriting an increased sentence.

Home Secretary, Sajid Javid, has also said the police will get more powers to stop and search anyone suspected of carrying a corrosive substance in public. The move will enable police officers to enforce a new offence of carrying corrosives in a public place, which is part of the Offensive Weapons Bill. Currently police can only stop and search people they suspect of carrying acid with intent to cause injury.

*Gareth Johnson MP  
House of Commons*

as sports coaches and youth workers, receive specialist training for dealing with young people carrying knives.

This programme is running in London and Manchester and provides local role models expert training on safeguarding, diffusing conflict and substance misuse.

Also announced was the next stage of the #knifefree advertising campaign which aims to educate 10-21 year olds on the dangers of carrying knives. This is part of the 61 commitments in the Serious Violence Strategy which stresses the importance of early intervention to tackle the root causes of violent crime and provide young

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people with the skills  
and resilience to  
lead productive lives  
free from violence.