

Gareth Johnson MP for Dartford

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



April 2019

Welcome to my latest newsletter.



Dartford to get first camera-enforced yellow box junction outside of London

Towards the end of April, I announced that the first camera-enforced yellow box junction outside of London will be installed by Highways England in Dartford.

These yellow box junctions will be on the A282 Junction 1B at the Princes Road interchange, known as the Blue Star roundabout, which is a notorious traffic hot-spot in Dartford. Lorries and cars entering the yellow boxes and blocking the

SURGERY DATES

By Appointment Only:

Bluewater

14th June

5th July

13th September

Dartford Festival

13th July



 [Website](#)

junction will now face a fine issued by ANPR cameras.

Getting these junctions enforced by cameras has proved to be surprisingly complex in legal terms and has taken a lot of planning with many different agencies involved. This will not end Dartford's traffic problems but it's something that local people have been calling for and it should make a noticeable difference to traffic congestion.

Traffic surveys in the run-up to this announcement, showed that thousands of vehicles infringe the yellow boxes every week, causing longer waits for motorists and snarling up the town centre. We have all been stuck at this junction when there is a problem at the Dartford Crossing and I know that many people feel these box junctions should be properly enforced. I have therefore been working with Kent Police, Highways England and Dartford and Kent County Councils to find a solution.

No one wants to see motorists unfairly targeted but people are sick and tired of being held up at the Blue Star roundabout by selfish motorists who sit in the box junctions blocking people from getting across Dartford and causing traffic chaos.

Work to repaint the boxes and install the Traffic Enforcement Camera signage is due to begin shortly.



Co-Op

Each month I like to feature a local business, large or small and this month's is The Co-op at Colney Road. This is probably one of the oldest Co-ops around as it opened on 29th January 1916. The original sign is still above the front of the building and it is listed so cannot be changed.

The property was originally in two parts, comprising a butcher and a dairy, later on becoming the food shop it is now.

The Area Manager, David Jones, knows the history of this shop well as his



Patrick McKay

Patrick McKay was jailed in 1975 after being convicted on three counts of manslaughter on the grounds of diminished responsibility and sentenced to life imprisonment with a minimum term of 20 years. According to reports, he also confessed to the murder of 11 people. McKay is now said to be in an open prison and being considered for release.

The Parole Board has reviewed his detention on ten occasions since he became eligible for parole in 1995. On each occasion, the Parole Board decided the risk is too high for him to be safely managed in the community.

grandad worked in the butchers.

The Co-op Group has its origins in Rochdale, Lancashire. The Rochdale Pioneers Society was famously established in 1844 based on the notion of ethical trading and belief that the profits of the business should be shared amongst members according to their purchases.

By 1900 there were over 1,400 separate independent co-operative businesses in the UK, all members of a wider Co-operative Movement.

In World War One, the Co-op was the first to introduce rationing and since then the organisation has been the first to introduce degradable plastic bags and the first to sell Fairtrade bananas.

I have raised my grave concerns with the Justice Secretary, about the potential release of this incredibly dangerous man. McKay is originally from Dartford and therefore a return to the area, should he be released, cannot be ruled out.

I have also told the Justice Secretary that an investigation should take place into the other killings Patrick McKay is believed to have carried out.

Although he is probably one of the least known serial killers in the country, that does not stop him from being an incredibly dangerous man and it is my view that he should never be released from prison.

Local Election Results

This month we had the local elections which covered Dartford Borough Council and Hartley and Hodsoll Street ward from Sevenoaks District Council.

The results of these elections were as follows:

Dartford

PARTY	COUNCILLORS	CHANGE +/-	% OF VOTE
Conservative	29	-4	52
Labour	10	+3	29
Residents' Association	3	+3	5
Independent	0	-2	1

If you would like to find out more about the Co-op Group, please click on the link below.

[Co-op](#)



Rowhill School visit to Parliament

It was a pleasure to welcome a group of students from Rowhill School in Longfield, to Parliament earlier this month.

Rowhill School is a designated special school for students with a range of learning and behavioural needs from the ages of five through to 18.

Hartley and Hodsoil Street

PARTY	COUNCILLORS	CHANGE +/-
Conservative	3	0

News from Westminster



Brexit update

As you are aware, we currently have an extension of Article 50 until 31st October 2019. In addition, we now have to participate in European elections, costing us at least £108 million, unless the Prime Minister's deal is passed by 22nd May.

The students who attended were from a mixed age range and seemed to thoroughly enjoy the experience of taking a look around both Houses of Parliament.



Wilmington Grammar Sixth Form Conference

I was delighted to be invited to speak to the Wilmington Grammar Sixth Form Conference (WG6) recently.

I was asked to talk about my experiences as an MP and how I became a politician, together with any tips I could give on

The Prime Minister and her team continue to negotiate with the Labour party, whose position is that any Brexit should include a customs union, which I strongly oppose. This would prevent us securing trade deals with other countries and lead to us taking laws from the EU that we would have no control over. As the Secretary of State for International Trade said, Labour's proposals would be the worst of both worlds, commenting "we ourselves would be traded".

We must move forward to deliver Brexit. As stated before, my votes will continue to be to try and secure a genuine Brexit and to deliver what two-thirds of people in Dartford voted for.

Ultra Low Emission Zone

In April, the Ultra Low Emission Zone came into effect in London in a bid to combat high levels of pollution.

It means that all vehicles from motorbikes and cars to lorries and buses, will have to meet the new low emission standard or pay a fee.

At the moment, around two million people in London live in areas where air pollution exceeds the safe legal limit. Here in Dartford, it is common for the westerly winds to blow those pollutants in our direction.

Under the new rules, cars, motorbikes and vans will have to pay £12.50 per day and lorries, buses and

public speaking. This was followed by a Question and Answer session.



Southeastern franchise

The Government recently announced that the bidding process for the next local rail franchise has been delayed.

During an urgent question to the Rail Minister, I urged the Government to ensure that smart ticketing will be part of any new train franchise agreement for all stations across Dartford.

This comes after the success of Oyster which was extended

coaches will have to pay £100 per day if they don't meet the required low emission standard.

Air pollution is a silent killer with strong evidence that it is linked to the development of many illnesses including heart disease, stroke and lung cancer, for those who are exposed for a long time.

I hope these changes and the plan to build the Lower Thames Crossing away from Dartford, will lead to better air quality for everyone living in our area.

Minimum Wage

At the beginning of April, around two million people in the UK benefited from a pay rise as the National Minimum Wage increased by 4.9%.

The increase, from £7.83 an hour to £8.21 an hour, coupled with a rise in income tax thresholds, means people now have more money in their pockets.

I welcome these changes and an important principle of any welfare policy is that it should always pay to work.

Since 2010, unemployment has gone down in the UK and it is now at the lowest level since the 1970s. Here in Dartford, the unemployment rate is just 1.9%, with the UK's employment rate at an all-time high.

It is good to see that wages are now rising faster than prices and I hope these changes will make a

to Dartford in September 2015 after I and others campaigned successfully on this issue. We now need to see this go further and have either Oyster or some form of smart ticketing extended to all stations throughout Dartford and Kent as part of the new franchise.

A link to the debate can be found below.



Southeastern
Debate

real difference to the millions of people they will benefit.

75th Anniversary of D-Day

In January's newsletter I reported about the 75th anniversary of the D-Day landings which takes place in June.

It has now been announced that 4,000 Armed Forces personnel will lead the nation in marking this at the events in Portsmouth and Normandy.

A major national commemorative event on Southsea Common in Portsmouth will be attended by D-Day veterans, VIP guests and service personnel.

Members of the public are invited to attend the commemorations in Portsmouth, where a flypast of 26 Royal Air Force aircraft will salute the veterans in gratitude for their service.

Up to 300 veterans will leave Portsmouth on a specially commissioned ferry to attend events in Normandy on the following day with up to 11 Royal Navy ships accompanying them as they depart Portsmouth on the eve of the 75th anniversary.

At 0726 on 6th June, a lone piper of the British Army will play at Arromanches in Normandy to mark the exact moment the first British soldier landed on Gold Beach.

Service personnel will then join veterans at the

Bayeux Cathedral and the Commonwealth War
Graves Commission's Bayeux War Cemetery for
The Royal British Legion's traditional annual
commemorative ceremonies.

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