

31/10/2025

Hello to you all across North Cornwall,

One of my most important debates this week was during the Sentencing Bill, where I stood up in Parliament to make the case for Ryan's Law - a campaign started by a family right here in North Cornwall. Mark and Helen Saltern lost their son, Ryan, a few years ago after he was hit and killed by a drunk driver leaving St. Teath carnival. The driver didn't stop to check if Ryan was OK, he didn't think to administer first aid, or even call an ambulance or the police. Instead, he drove off, leaving Ryan for dead. You might think the man was sentenced to years in prison for this cowardly, callous act - but instead, he received a mere four month suspended sentence from a magistrates court. Ryan's family quite rightly feel that he evaded justice - and since then, have campaigned tirelessly over the last few years for harsher sentencing, for criminals found guilty of causing death or serious injury by dangerous driving.

That's why I was so proud to have the opportunity to bring their story, and their campaign, to the national stage in the House. I tabled an amendment to the Sentencing Bill which would bring their campaign demands into law - treating failure to stop at the scene, call 999, or attempt to administer first aid, all as aggravating factors when it comes to sentencing. If you'd like to see a clip of my speech on behalf of the family, you can do so by visiting my Facebook page, or alternatively searching for the record on Hansard (just search my name and look for the 'Sentencing Bill' contributions). I'd like to thank Mark, Helen, and their daughter Leanne for their incredible hard work on this campaign, and reassure them, and every family affected by similar tragedies, that I'll continue to fight on their behalf as best I can as North Cornwall's MP.

I also condemned Nigel Farage's dangerous plans this week to withdraw the UK from the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) altogether. This treaty has protected victims of injustice, from the Hillsborough families to those affected by modern slavery, and is a pillar of post-war British values - which was devised by Churchill and other British officials. I voted against this divisive proposal and made clear that we must never follow Farage's lead, which would drag us down to the standards of countries like Russia or Belarus. If changes are required, this must be done in partnership with other signatories.

Additionally, I also followed up my official Parliamentary question this week about Cornwall's brilliant museums (like Bodmin Keep!) with a formal letter to the Minister for Creative Industries, Media and Arts, pushing for fairer access to national funding in the new year. These local institutions must not be left behind, and I'll be keeping the pressure on, on behalf of so many of Cornwall's excellent museums, to ensure they get the proper funding they need to thrive. I had the pleasure this week of visiting the fantastic Charles Causley museum in Launceston.

And finally, a huge thank you to everyone who came along to my latest 'Brew with Ben' event at the Willow Tree Café in North Petherwin on Friday. It was a fantastic afternoon, with a great turnout and lots of valuable conversations about everything from rural transport to local health services and youth opportunities. These community sessions are a brilliant way to stay connected, hear from residents, and share ideas, and I'll be arranging more across the constituency very soon.

That's all for now, so until next time, take care, and be sure to reach out via email (or post) with any casework, questions, or queries I might be able to help with as your MP.

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