

31/01/2025

This week, I've been very pleased to see my call for the Camel Trail extension to Camelford gain serious traction across North Cornwall. The idea has been picked up by regional news outlets and is sparking much-needed discussion, which is exactly what we need to push for real action. Extending the trail would bring huge economic and health benefits, providing a serious boost for Camelford and creating opportunities for local businesses. Cycling is a fantastic way to encourage people of all ages to get outdoors, and this new part of the trail would make cycling more accessible for families, visitors, and locals alike.

Also this week, I continued to apply pressure on the Government over their decision to delay urgent rebuilding work at North Devon District Hospital. The hospital was placed by Health Secretary Wes Streeting in 'Wave 3' of the New Hospital Programme review, meaning work might not even begin until 2035. This delay is completely unacceptable for patients and staff who rely on the hospital for essential care, and that's why I supported my colleague Ian Roome MP's open letter to the Health Secretary, urging him to visit the hospital and see the dire situation for himself. The maintenance backlog now exceeds £40 million, and without urgent investment, the strain on services will only worsen. If you live in North Cornwall and are affected by the hospital's condition, I strongly encourage you to sign the letter, which you can find on Ian Roome's Facebook page. The more voices we have pushing for change, the better chance we have of speeding up urgent work at the hospital.

Here in the constituency, I've been out meeting people face-to-face, hearing about the issues that matter most. I spent a full day in Bude, where I visited The Pearl Exchange before stopping by Stratton Primary School to meet with pupils and staff. I also had the chance to chat with Bude Surf Veterans, who do fantastic work supporting mental health through surfing. Finally, I rounded off the day with a doorstep surgery in Bude, knocking on doors and speaking directly with residents about their concerns.

Earlier in the week, I also spent time in Launceston for a doorstep surgery, alongside members of the local party, including our Council candidate Damon Dennis. A major issue that came up time and again was the closure of Lloyds Bank, which has left many locals deeply concerned about access to in-person banking services. I'll be raising this issue with Lloyds directly, as well as writing to relevant Ministers and campaign groups, to push for better banking access for the town. I want to make it very clear that no community here in North Cornwall should be left without vital banking services, and will make sure to update Launceston residents on my progress on this front.

Lastly, I also wrote directly to Linda Taylor, the Leader of Cornwall Council, demanding that she release the total cost of her Conservative Cabinet's botched sale of Newquay Airport, and reveal exactly how much taxpayer money was spent.. I will update you all as and when she responds - and if you're wanting to get in touch in the meantime, please kindly drop me an email at ben.maguire.mp@parliament.uk and I'll get back to you as soon as I can.

Until then, take care.

Ben Maguire

Liberal Democrat MP for North Cornwall

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