

09/08/24

Hello North Cornwall,

It's been another busy and productive week, mostly filled with time spent in our community now that Parliament is in summer recess. I've spent this week listening to your concerns, and being back on the doorsteps has been a real highlight for me. There's nothing more important than hearing directly from you, all about the issues that matter most. Of course for many this week, there are still deep worries about the recent cuts to the Winter Fuel Payment. Let me assure you that I'm standing firm against these cuts, and the Lib Dems and I are pushing hard for the government to reverse this decision.

I had the opportunity to visit Bude this week, where I met residents and staff at Eventide Care Home. We had a discussion about my priorities in this new Parliament going forth, and for those who are familiar with the latest Lib Dem manifesto, you'll know that social care sits at the core of our priorities. Particularly for me down here in North Cornwall, this includes my commitment to ensuring pensioners can cover their energy costs this winter. We also talked about the pressing need for social care reform. If we're serious about fixing the NHS, we must start with social care - it's a crucial piece of the puzzle that's been overlooked for far too long.

While in Bude, I also met with the Town Council to discuss the exciting progress on the new skate park and youth hub. These projects are essential for our young people, giving them a safe space to gather, stay active, and feel supported. The enthusiasm from the council and the community is truly encouraging to see, and I'm looking forward to seeing these plans come to life.

In other news, I'm due to meet Chief Executive of South West Water Susan Davy in the coming weeks to discuss a number of urgent issues facing constituents - the most recent of these being the water shortages down in St Eval. Having called on her to seriously consider her position, especially taking into consideration the huge wage she is paid while her company underdelivers and causes catastrophes to communities right across my constituency, I am very glad she has finally been forced into action and has agreed to meet with me.

Additionally, I spent time in Truro this week, starting with a visit to Treliske Hospital, where I met with Chief Executive Steve Williamson. We discussed ongoing efforts to reduce ambulance wait times and tackle the growing waiting lists, which affect not just residents here in North Cornwall, but the whole of our county. I spoke with Brian Johnson, the hospital's Director of Estates & Facilities, about the new Women and Children's Hospital. While progress is being made, it's clear that there is still a long road ahead, and I'll be sure to monitor these developments closely.

After this, I had a productive conversation with Debbie Gilbert, CEO of Healthwatch Cornwall, about the shortage of NHS dental services in our region - an issue I know many of you are struggling with, and one that was brought up time and time again during my campaign. It was also a privilege to meet representatives from Volunteer Cornwall, whose work through community hubs and transport services is vital for so many of our residents.

I was also pleased to attend County Hall this week, where I met with Cornwall Council Chief Executive Kate Kennally to discuss key issues like the sale of Newquay Airport, the A39 in Camelford, and the council's plans to sell off car parks. We also touched on the severe funding shortages facing vital services like Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) here in Cornwall. My own nephew has special educational needs, attending a brilliant school in Nanstallon, so my family and I know firsthand just how important these services are.

As always, I'm here to listen and act on your concerns - and thank you ever so much for your patience and continued support in these first few weeks as your MP.

Ben Maguire

Liberal Democrat MP for North Cornwall

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