

Laura Trott MP

Member of Parliament for
Sevenoaks and Swanley

A strong voice for Sevenoaks



Dear all,

Welcome to the June edition of my newsletter.

With the return of physical sittings in Parliament, it is great to be fully back in the chamber and raising local issues with the relevant Secretaries of State and Ministers. Below is an overview of some of these interventions, including one which secured a national policy change on care home testing.

There have also been many local developments this month which I have been closely involved with, particularly around antisocial behaviour. This has been a running issue following the tragic death at Lullingstone Castle. I have been in frequent communication with the police about this, as well issues which have arisen including the behaviour at Knole Park, Chipstead Lakes and further activity in Eynsford. We are seeing an increased police presence in our area as a result, and I would urge everyone to continue to report incidents as they happen as this helps further the case for more police to be visible in our area.

I continue to share many of your concerns regarding schools remaining shut, and some of you may have seen my article on the topic for [Conservative Home](#) earlier this month. I hope the National Education Union (NEU) will start to work with, rather than against, the Government so that all schools can open for all children as soon as possible – and before the window we have to repair the damage that is being done by current closures. While I agree that teachers must be sure that it is safe to go back, that should be achieved through engagement and constructive discussion, not through blanket opposition and baseless scaremongering.

And finally, with further restrictions lifting this weekend, I hope that some form of normality can return to our community. The people across Sevenoaks and Swanley have over the last few months stayed home, and as a result we have amongst the lowest infection rates in Kent. We are now past the peak, however the news from Leicester is a timely reminder that we must remain vigilant.

As ever, I continue to post updates on my [website](#) and [Facebook](#) – so if you don't already, please do follow, as this is the quickest way for me to communicate with you all on the latest developments. I will be holding another Facebook Live in the next few weeks, however if there is something I can support with in the meantime, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Keep safe.



Laura Trott
MP for Sevenoaks and Swanley

Below is a snapshot of what we have been working on. If there is anything I can do to support you, please get in touch.



I was deeply concerned to hear about the challenges the Leonard Cheshire at Chipstead Lakes care home was facing in accessing testing kits. While I welcome the extraordinary steps taken by the Secretary of State to increase testing capacity, I felt that care homes who support those with disabilities had been inadvertently overlooked. Following my question to the Health Secretary in the House of Commons, I was delighted the Department acted so quickly to rectify the problem and [nationally expand care home testing to all adult settings](#) including those with residents under 65s and with disabilities. A huge success – and one that will also benefit 6,000 similar care homes across the country.



Cultural organisations have understandably struggled during the COVID-19 outbreak and this month I have been in close communication with the team at the Stag Theatre, which for nearly 90 years has been at the beating heart of Sevenoaks – and must remain so. The loss of the theatre would be devastating, not only to its loyal visitors, but also to our wider local economy. The vital role it plays in our community has never been clearer and I will continue to offer my [support](#) through these challenging times. Please visit their [website](#) to see how you can get involved.



Sadly, as with many communities across the country, we have seen a rise in anti-social behaviour during lock down. This should not, and will not, be tolerated. I made an election promise to get more police on the streets in Sevenoaks, and you have been clear in your correspondence that this is exactly what you want to see too. Following the tragic incident at Lullingstone Castle, [I asked the Prime Minister](#) to confirm that the 147 police officers pledged to Kent by March next year will not be delayed. I have also submitted a [written question to the Home Secretary](#) regarding unauthorised travellers and increased powers for the police so they can remove such arrivals as quickly as possible. Accessing and occupying private land is a criminal offence, and this should be echoed in law.



On 15th June, we saw the reopening of retail across the constituency and it was a pleasure to mark this occasion by [visiting Sevenoaks High Street](#) to meet some of the retailers. The team at Sevenoaks District Council have done a wonderful job to ensure extra bins, signage and sanitiser points are available on high streets across the constituency. However, it's now down to all of us to support our local businesses and help them get back up and running in a responsible way. If you can, please visit your local shops and help get the wheels of our economy turning.



Alongside my colleagues Tom Tugendhat MBE MP and Gareth Johnson MP, I [wrote](#) to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government asking him to use his powers to force reconsideration of the Planning Inspectorate judgement on our Local Plan. I hope the Secretary of State will intervene so that the examination of the Plan can proceed and enable much needed housing and infrastructure (such as medical centres, transport and schools) to be provided across the district.



And finally, this month we concluded the Community Hero awards following another four worthy winners - Claire Ritchie, Claire Keys, Community Meals - delivered and Lola Piotrowski. I set up this initiative to recognise the wonderful work taking place across the constituency during the COVID-19 outbreak – and I was not disappointed. Our winners and nominees have all made an outstanding contribution, and demonstrate the community spirit that has thrived during this difficult period.



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