ST HELENS NORTH Matters

David Baines MP
Member of Parliament for St Helens North

Latest news from David Baines MP
Your Member of Parliament for St Helens North

October 2026 Edition



PLUS: Labour government delivers Autumn budget... Billinge Medical Practice update... Halton & St Helens VCA Awards... Earlestown Town Hall regeneration... Eddies in Parliament AND MORE

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Welcome to my October newsletter.

Remember you can encourage your friends and family to subscribe via this sign-up form on my website.

I hope you find it interesting and please do feel free to contact me anytime using the details on the back page if you need my support.

Autumn Budget 2026

October saw the Chancellor deliver the Labour government's Autumn Budget. It is a budget to give people breathing space and fresh hope for the future.

Families will receive direct help with energy bills, motorists will see fuel duty frozen and thousands more high-street businesses will be taken out of business rates, as the Labour Government backs working people today while investing in Britain's future.

John Healey's Budget has set out new measures to provide breathing space for families and businesses, while making the long-term choices needed to put the country on a better course.

Families facing rising energy costs, driven in part by wars Britain did not start, will receive immediate support. **A £100 Household Energy Payment will be paid to eligible Band A-D households in England, benefiting around 43,470 households in St Helens North,** alongside £100 million for local authorities to support households in greatest need.

The temporary 0% VAT rate on electricity will also be extended until 30 June 2027, while Ofgem will work to abolish gas standing charges, helping reduce costs for millions of households.

Motorists will be supported too, with the 5p fuel duty cut extended and fuel duty rates frozen until 1 July 2027. More generous mileage rates will also become permanent for employees and self employed people using their own vehicles for work.

Businesses and high streets will benefit from a £1 billion business-rates package, taking around 70,000 additional retail, hospitality and leisure businesses out of business rates altogether. More than half of businesses in those sectors will therefore pay no business rates.





But alongside that immediate breathing space, **the Budget begins the bigger changes needed to deliver good growth in every postcode and fresh hope for the future.**

More than £20 billion of additional capital for the National Wealth Fund and British Business Bank will help drive investment, alongside £1.85 billion for scale-ups and a new Founders' Relief to back entrepreneurs and early investors.

Local leaders will be given greater control over their economic futures, backed by £285 million for Good Growth Funds, putting more decisions about investment and growth in the hands of the people closest to the challenges.

The Budget will also invest £4.7 billion in Your First Home, expected to support around 70,000 first-time buyers, while providing an additional £1.5 billion for social and affordable housing, intended to deliver 10,000 more homes.

And it will invest in Britain's long-term economic and national security, including £700 million to strengthen Britain's AI sovereignty and nearly £300 billion for defence over four years.

Every decision is underpinned by fiscal discipline, the bedrock of a strong economy, providing the foundation for the Government's 10-Year Plan and Spending Review.

We are making the long-term choices Britain and St Helens North needs: building more homes, backing British businesses and entrepreneurs, putting power in the hands of local communities, and investing in the technologies and national security that will shape our future.

But we also know that the cost-of-living is still high and putting a lot of pressure on families up and down the country. From everyday essentials to the small luxuries everyone deserves, I hear from people in our area worrying about how they can afford it all – that's why we're helping give people breathing space going into the winter months. From a direct £100 payment to abolishing standing charges on gas, these are the necessary decisions this Labour government is making.

And we can make those choices because everything we do is built on fiscal discipline. These are Labour decisions: backing families and businesses today while building a stronger Britain for tomorrow.



Eddies in Parliament

It was absolutely brilliant to welcome pupils and staff from my old high school St Edmund Arrowsmith in Ashton to Parliament today alongside the Prime Minister whose children also attended the school. It was especially great to meet Brandon whose dad I was at Eddies with back in the 90s!





All the children are a credit to Eddies, to our local area, and to their families.

I hope they had a fantastic time in London doing important work as part of the brilliant Sir David Amess Children's Parliament programme.

I didn't have the privilege of meeting Sir David, however I have heard nothing but positive things about him from those who did. His legacy lives on and grows brighter every year.

He is much missed, and I will do all I can to support his legacy.

Halton & St Helens VCA Awards

It was a wonderful night at the Halton & St Helens Voluntary and Community Action Volunteer Awards. I nominated Cetra from Haydock for an award and it is fantastic to see Sharon, Jill and the team get some well-deserved recognition for their amazing efforts.

It was also great to see so many brilliant St Helens organisations and people including Friends of Victoria Park who won the Volunteer Team award, Violet-Rose Waring who won the Personal Achievement award, Rockets Community Club CIC, Cath Brooks and the Derbyshire Hill Family Centre Parr St Helens Food Pantry team, and the incredible Pam Meredith from St Helens Chain Lane Community Centre who won the prestigious Pilkington Award.

Thank you to Sally Yeoman and the VCA team for organising the event and for the support they give to volunteers and groups across Halton and St Helens, and to all those who give so much time and energy to make our communities a better place.





In St Helens North

After cheering on Sir Kevin Sinfield at the Railway pub in Garswood I headed to BrewDog Stadium to welcome him there as he completed the latest stage of his incredible fundraising efforts for Motor Neurone Disease. Among the crowd I was delighted to see Chris and Brian Cummings who I've known since I was a kid - I played rugby with their son Ian who is now fighting MND too.



It was an honour to meet Harrison Lee at my latest advice surgery at Seneley Green Parish Hall. Harrison is a Clinical Associate Psychologist and a Trustee of FASD Awareness. FASD is Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and Harrison is working to help support victims as well as campaign for more awareness and prevention. I'll be doing all I can to help spread the word and will be writing to local health leaders and Ministers to urge for more education, diagnosis and support.



What an honour to be invited to cut the ribbon and officially open the new school-based nursery at St James CE Primary in Haydock! This is part of the Labour government's mission to give every child the best possible start in life, to help parents with childcare and invest in our brilliant schools. Thank you to Mrs Young and all the staff, children, parents and governors for welcoming me today and for everything they do each and every day.



Years in the making. No corners cut. The right thing to do for Earlestown, for our community, for our heritage and our future. Six years ago when your local Labour team started this journey and I was council leader, some didn't believe it would ever happen. Well, it has. Across the road the new police station is open and the new market square is taking shape. It just shows what we can do when we work together and aren't afraid to take risks. It's all worth it in the end.



It was great to catch up with Mr Cormack at Cowley Sixth Form College. Thank you to him and all his staff and governors for everything they do day in, day out to support pupils. And it was a privilege to meet the young people who put themselves forward for election as the Outwood Academy Haydock Student Prime Minister and to announce the winner via Google Classroom to the whole school! The school takes its Student Voice extremely seriously and it is so good to see young people stepping up as candidates and everyone taking part as voters.



I had the pleasure of visiting Community CIC at Mill Point and seeing first hand all of the absolutely incredible work that the staff are doing there, and meeting some of their lovely residents. Social care and everyone that works in it is a bedrock of this country, and it was inspiring to see the difference they make every day. This Labour government is committed to building a social care service and fixing the issues that staff at places like Mill Point face.









Too often, many horses across the UK lose their lives due to dangerous driving, with many riders - including children, parents, relatives and friends - falling victim to injuries and road rage or abuse. I visited Lower Billinge Lane Farm to hear about their experiences in the area, with high-speed roads near the farm causing distress and danger for the horses and themselves. They drew attention to the problems and dangers that they, and horse owners in St Helens North, face and what we can do to help make our roads safer for both horses and their owners.

As always, it was a pleasure to pop in to the CAMRA award winning Turks Head in between meetings! It was also great catching up with Steve, Mark, Judith and everyone at FC St Helens in Windle, and to thank the volunteers of the Billinge Residents Association for all their work including the fantastic Halloween party for local children.

Billinge Medical Practice update

Thank you to Erika Howell and staff at Billinge Medical Practice for showing me around their new site at Garswood Medical Centre. The move was a difficult thing for everyone, staff included, and it is great to see them settling into their new surroundings. Most importantly, it's good to hear that the service for patients is continuing to be great.

As for the future, my position hasn't changed: from the day this move was first suggested I've said Billinge needs and deserves its own medical centre and GP service in the village, and that's still my position.



I have written to the ICB to ask what they are doing to assess the ongoing success or otherwise of the move to Garswood, the impact on patients (particularly those without their own transport or other vulnerabilities), and what ongoing assessment they are making of future sites in Billinge including at Birchley Hall and also at Billinge Clinic, which with investment could also be an ideal location. You can read more from my post on this here.

In Westminster

I was pleased to see that the Prime Minister is making dementia research a priority having set out an ambition for the UK to lead the world in discovering new treatments to beat dementia, alongside substantial new investment in the BARBARA Alliance.

Children's care costs are in the news, and it's good to see. The cost of children's social care and the siphoning off of profits to private companies and investors is a scandal and. That's why Labour's Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act - opposed by the Tories and Reform - included measures to give Ministers power to cap the profits of private care companies, alongside more government investment in prevention and support for families like through Family Hubs. Read my full statement here.

The Energy Secretary has given the green light to the Jackdaw gas field in the North Sea. The Jackdaw decision will boost our energy security, protect British jobs, add £3 billion to our economy and heat homes across the country – starting this winter. And on electricity - we will now use the new Energy Wealth Fund to boost investment in renewable energy. This is all part of the fundamental changes we're making to reduce energy costs over the next 10 years.

I was delighted to see that the Prime Minister is intervening on car parking charges. With new rules announced in October, you'll get 5 minutes to read the signs and decide whether to park before being charged and 10 minutes to leave once your session ends. And if you're charged for something you couldn't help, like a breakdown, a medical emergency or a broken ticket machine, or for an honest mistake like stopping briefly to check directions, the charge can be cancelled on appeal.

I was pleased to see the Prime Minister doubling funding to end rough sleeping. Not just to get people through the winter but to help people off the streets for good. It was great to see businesses, charities, mayors and council leaders join the first Rough Sleeping Summit.

And finally it was great to welcome students and staff from Carmel College to Parliament to hear their call for support for the Good Business Matters campaign.

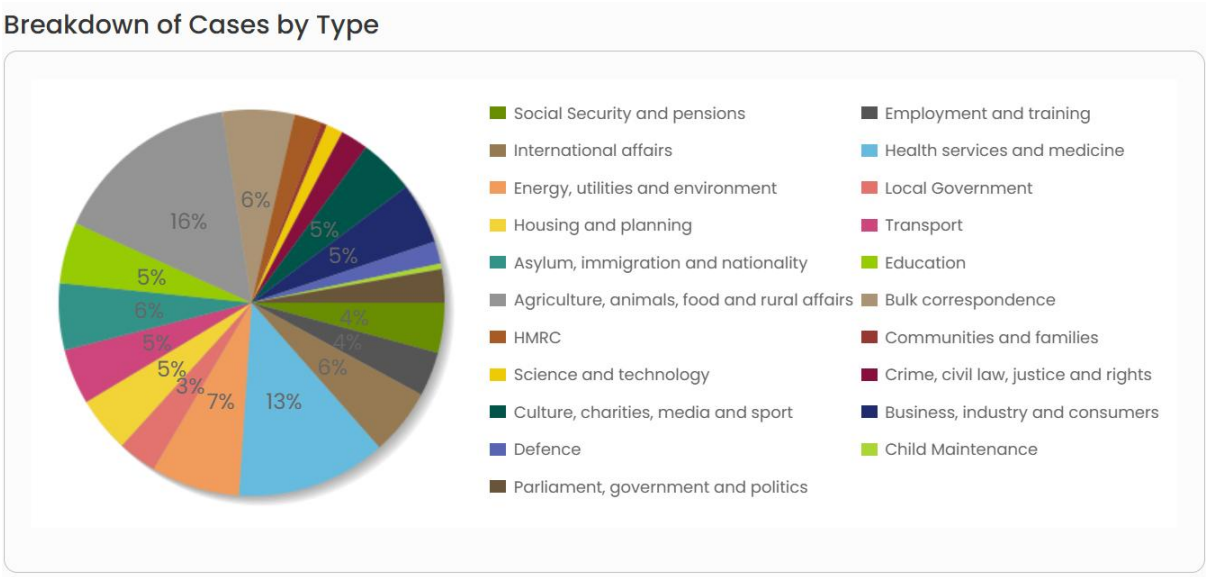








Casework update



This month we have dealt with over 250 cases this month ranging from the EU, to north sea oil drilling, to animal rights, to reform donations, and council tax issues. Some examples of the cases we have dealt with are as follows:

Housing Support

Assisted a constituent with raising their situation to Under One Roof and ensured that they were awarded the correct banding thus leading to their acquisition of a property.

Visa Status

A constituent was awaiting visa approval and asked for assistance. They then received a response from the Home Office confirming the approval of their visa as a result of our intervention.

Anti-social behaviour

A constituent had issues with antisocial behaviour from a neighbour which we were able to successfully raise to their landlord to ensure that action was taken to reduce the disturbance caused by the neighbour.

Bridge Tolls

Helped raise a constituent's case regarding being incorrectly fined for failure to pay a toll that they had paid. We ensured that the toll company was aware of the error resulting in their rescinding of the fine.

If you need support or have a question please do get in touch. See my contact details on the back page.

National Fostering campaign



The Labour government has launched a national campaign to encourage people from all walks of life to find out about fostering.

It is part of a wider plan to create 10,000 more foster places and give existing carers better support.

If you live in St Helens North and want to find out more, find out more here and here.

And to all our local foster carers: thank you for the difference you make every day!

As ever I encourage you to get in touch at david.baines.mp@parliament.uk if you need my support or if you have a question, and please do tell me your priorities too. Thank you for reading.

Best wishes,

David



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