

Update for Selmeston Parish Meeting

May 2024

Please accept my apologies that I am unable to join you at your upcoming meeting. I do however have the following updates for the parish.

Government Funding for Roads

I welcome East Sussex County Council's plan for utilising the initial £52 million government funding to resurface local roads. This funding, sourced from savings due to the cancellation of Phase 2 of the HS2 project, underscores the government's commitment to improving transportation networks. With £5.9 million allocated for pothole repairs and a projected increase in road investment from £34,650,000 to £56,496,000, there's a clear dedication to enhancing road infrastructure. Overall, these efforts signify a promising step toward visibly better roads in our community.

Lewes Delivery Office Update

I've been continuing to liaise with Royal Mail and the Minister responsible for Postal Services regarding service levels in Lewes and surrounding villages. The Universal Postal Obligation, set by Ofcom under the Postal Services Act, remains unchanged since 2011, with no plans for alteration by the government. Royal Mail is obligated to meet delivery standards set by Ofcom, with the regulator having enforcement powers. I have been informed that recent disruptions in mail deliveries in Lewes were due to high sickness rates and vacancies among staff, but the situation has improved with new hires and reduced sickness levels. David Gold, Director of External Affairs and Policy for Royal Mail, visited the Lewes Delivery Office unannounced to assess performance and address challenges. Recruitment efforts are underway to further improve service. I'll continue monitoring closely and provide updates as needed. Thanks to our local posties for their hard work, and feel free to reach out if any residents are concerned over their deliveries or if further assistance is required.

Waspi Update

The WASPI Campaign seeks justice for women affected by changes in the state pension age, advocating for those born between April 6, 1950, and April 5, 1960. Since 1995, when the government announced equalising the pension age, concerns have arisen regarding the lack of adequate notice and information provided. As an

MP since 2015, I've supported the campaign, submitting one of the initial test cases. Recently, the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman ruled that the Department for Work and Pensions failed to provide sufficient information, recommending a compensation scheme with payments ranging from £1,000 to £2,950. While constituents welcome the acknowledgment of the need for compensation, there are concerns about the proposed levels. I've been urging ministerial colleagues for a swift establishment of the scheme. Your input on this matter would be valuable and can be shared with me at maria.caulfield.mp@parliament.uk.

Renter's Reform Bill Progressing

In the ongoing progress of the Renters Reform Bill, significant amendments have been introduced during Commons Committee and Report Stages. The Government has proposed measures to introduce a Decent Homes standard in the private rented sector, create a new ground for possession allowing landlords renting to students to seek possession before each new academic year, and prohibit discrimination against potential tenants based on benefits status or having children. Additionally, amendments have been tabled to establish a six-month period for tenants between tenancies, preventing short-term lets, and requiring an assessment on barriers to possession before abolishing Section 21 for existing tenancies.

Best Wishes

Maria Caulfield MP

ENDS

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