

# Ruth's Rushcliffe Round-up



September 2022

## Remembering Her Majesty the Queen

Like you, I was devastated to learn of the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

For me, as for most of us, the Queen has been a constant and reassuring presence. Many of us have never known a time when she wasn't on the throne. She has symbolised stability and she has been a guiding light to our nation through the seven decades of her reign. The day after the Queen died, Parliament was recalled to pay tribute to her and to agree a message of condolence to the King. You can watch my tribute on behalf of constituents [here](#).



HER MAJESTY,  
**QUEEN ELIZABETH II**

21 APRIL 1926 – 8 SEPTEMBER 2022



a good wind up and sporting  
the ultimate rainbow hued wardrobe.

Before Parliament met, my husband and I went to lay flowers outside Buckingham Palace. People from all over the world were there to do the same. It was wonderful to see the outpouring of love and affection. It was also an honour to be present in Westminster Hall when both Houses of Parliament addressed their messages of condolence to King Charles and heard his response. You can read those messages in full [here](#).

I also went to Westminster Hall to pay my respects to Queen Elizabeth and to do so on behalf of constituents. It was very moving to see the thousands of people doing the same, and to see the Queen's children and grandchildren standing vigil. I didn't know what I would feel as I paused in front of her coffin. In the event, I was overwhelmed by a deep pang of loss and great sadness at that loss. Westminster Hall is usually such a busy and bustling place, full of tour groups, people taking photographs and meeting constituents. That day it was silent and filled with a sense of shared sadness. The Queen brought us together as a nation and we will come together again to remember her and to give thanks for the selfless way in which she served us, her people and her country, right until her very last moment.



## Helping people with their energy bills

I know that many people and businesses across Rushcliffe are worried about their energy costs. I wanted to let you know about the support the Government has provided to help individuals and families, as well as businesses.

The Energy Price Guarantee, which will apply from 1 October, will discount the unit cost for gas and electricity use. The Government expects a typical household will save £1000 a year under the EPG and pay around £2500 a year on energy costs.

The Energy Bill Discount will remove £400 off energy bills for all households with a domestic electricity connection in England, Scotland and Wales from this October. You do not need to apply for the discount, and there's no need to contact your energy supplier.

The discount will be applied to your monthly household electricity bill for 6 months starting in October 2022 in fairly equal installments.

This support for individuals and families is in addition to the support announced earlier this year, including the:

- £650 Cost of Living payment
- £150 Disability Cost of Living payment
- Pensioner Cost of Living payment
- Winter Fuel payments
- Cold Weather payments
- Warm Home discount.

The Government has compiled all of the information on these schemes, including eligibility criteria and how to get the payments on their website, which you can view [here](#).

For businesses, public sector organisations and charities the Government has introduced The Energy Bill Relief Scheme. This will cap how much businesses

and public bodies, including schools, hospitals and charities, can be charged for energy. This will cap bills at £211 per MWh for electricity and £75 per MWh for gas – less than half the expected cost this winter. These measures will be applied directly to bills and will begin in October and last for six months.

[The Industrial Energy Transformation Fund](#) also helps businesses with high energy use to cut their energy bills and carbon emissions through investing in energy efficiency and low carbon technologies. Phase 2 of this fund is open to businesses of any size in England, Wales, or Northern Ireland. Find out more, including how to apply [here](#).

This is one of the most comprehensive support packages in the world and I hope will go a long way towards getting inflation back under control and helping people with the cost of energy in the meantime. If you, or anyone you know is having any trouble accessing this support, please let me know by emailing me at [ruth.edwards.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:ruth.edwards.mp@parliament.uk)

## Investing in the UK's energy security

The war in Ukraine has highlighted the need for the UK to improve its energy security. As part of this, the Government published its [Energy Security Strategy](#) earlier this year. It invests in boosting offshore wind production and nuclear energy as well as the UK's own domestic oil and gas industry. The strategy looks to make 95% of all the UK's electricity production will be low carbon by 2030.

You may have seen that the Government has also announced that it will lift the moratorium on fracking. While I agree that every avenue should be considered for lower energy bills and for increasing our energy security, the case for fracking remains weak. It is unpopular, expensive, and most importantly, unlikely to yield enough gas to make a difference to either prices or our energy security. I wrote about this in *The New Statesman* which you can read [here](#).

It is absolutely vital that fracking is only carried out if it has the consent of the local community. This is what was promised by the Prime Minister in her leadership election. But, despite lifting the moratorium, ministers are yet to tell us how this consent will be defined and measured. I pushed Jacob Rees-Mogg MP on this in Parliament which you can watch [here](#).



I also discussed this on BBC Radio Nottingham which you can listen to [here](#).

## The Chancellor's "Mini Budget" announcement

I know that many people will be concerned by the volatility in the markets in recent days. Particularly the gilts market and the currency exchange.

The Bank of England has rightly taken action to stabilise the situation and ensure the integrity of the UK's financial system, such as introducing a temporary UK government bond-buying programme as an emergency measure. The Bank will start buying long-dated gilts to restore orderly market conditions" and stave off a "material risk to UK financial stability.

Both the Chancellor and the Prime Minister have been clear that they want to help people keep more of the money they earn, support businesses, and encourage investment and growth in the economy. I support many of the measures announced by the Chancellor last Friday. This has to be done in a responsible manner however and I hope that lessons from the fallout have been learnt. I would like to see a credible plan from the Chancellor as to how he plans to reduce the UK debt and pay for many of the measures announced. I also would like to see an independent forecast from the OBR published as soon as possible. Both of these I hope will help restore market confidence.

To help people with the cost of living:

- From 6th November the government is cutting National Insurance by 1.25% and cancelling the Health & Social Care Levy.
- From April 2023 the basic rate of Income Tax will be cut from 20p to 19p.
- The government is also removing the additional 45% rate of Income Tax meaning all annual income above £50,270 will be taxed at 40%, the current higher rate of Income Tax.
- Stamp Duty will be cut to with the nil-rate band doubled for all buyers, up to £250,000.
- First Time Buyers Relief will also raise the threshold at which first time buyers begin to pay residential Stamp Duty from £300,000 to £425,000.

To support businesses across the UK:

- Alcohol duty will be frozen from February 2023. This is a tax cut worth £600 million and will help our hospitality sector.
- Corporation Tax will stay at 19%, the lowest in the G20. This will support business investment and help economic growth.
- The government will introduce a modern, digital, VAT-free shopping scheme for international tourists. This will support high streets, shopping centres and airports, creating jobs in the retail and tourism sectors.
- The Annual Investment Allowance will be permanently set at its highest ever level of £1 million from 1 April 2023. This will give 100% tax relief to businesses on their plant and machinery investments up to the level of £1 million.

To encourage investment and growth in the economy:

- The creation of 38 tax-cutting Investment Zones which will drive growth and incentivise business investment.
- The Seed Enterprise Investment Scheme (SEIS) criteria will widen to include allowing firms to now raise £250,000 under the scheme - 66% more funding than previously. This will help businesses to access the finance they need to grow. You can read more about this below.
- Changes are being made to Universal Credit to encourage more people into work and take steps to increase their earnings.
- The Company Share Option Plan (CSOP) limit which allows businesses to offer employees share options worth up to £30,000, will now double. This will encourage employers to offer more shares to their employees, so everyone can share in the success.

Read more [here](#).

## Better Healthcare for Rushcliffe

This month, the Health Secretary set out the 'Plan for Patients' to increase the number of available doctors and dentists appointments and to relieve pressures on hospitals by increasing capacity in the social care system. This plan focuses on ABCD – ambulances, backlogs, care, doctors and dentists,

and includes practical measures to improve healthcare outcomes. Some of these include:

- An Adult Social Care Discharge Fund of £500 million to help people get out of hospitals and into social care support. This will help speed up the safe discharge of patients from hospital this winter to free up beds as well as helping to retain and recruit more care workers
- Expanding the range of services available from community pharmacies, increasing convenience for patients and freeing up GP time for more complex needs of patients.  
Pharmacists will be able to manage and supply more medicines, without a prescription from a GP.
- Changing the dental contract to incentivise dentists to do more NHS work and take on more difficult cases.
  - Amending the law to allow the General Dental Council to simplify registration for dentists not trained in England, so that they can start practising in the NHS more quickly.
- From November 2022, it will be easier for patients to see information on the NHS website as to whether practices will treat new patients, as we will make it a contractual requirement for practices to keep the NHS website up to date.

I have had emails from constituents who are concerned about the current issues at the QMC, particularly over waiting times for elective surgeries. The Government is investing £1.5 billion for new surgical hubs across the country which will be focused on tackling the backlog of elective surgeries that built up over the pandemic. It is really important that our local hospitals can benefit from this. During the Health Secretary's announcement, I asked if she would join me in supporting Nottingham University Hospitals Trust's bid for an elective surgery hub at City Hospital which would enable an additional 1,670 elective surgeries each year and will directly benefit patients in Rushcliffe and in the rest of the county. Watch [here](#).



## Campaign Win! Supporting Women Entrepreneurs

As you may know, I have been working with WeAreRaiki, a group of female

entrepreneurs based in West Bridgford who are leading the 'Over Being Underfunded' campaign. This campaign aims to improve access to investment for businesses run by women. I have championed this campaign and have spoken in support of WeAreRadikl's aims in Parliament several times.

One of the main asks of the campaign was to improve the accessibility of a Government funding scheme for new business known as the Seed Enterprise Investment Scheme (SEIS). This scheme offers great tax efficient benefits to investors in return for investment in small and early stage startup businesses in the UK.

Many women are treated differently by potential investors than male entrepreneurs, which leaves them far less likely to be able to access vital venture capital funding. As a result, only 1% of venture capital funding in the UK goes to businesses founded by women.

As a result of the successful #overbeingunderfunded campaign, the Government will now be leading the way in making investment funding more accessible to women. It will do this by increasing the time frame for businesses to apply for funding from SEIS from two years to three.

I am delighted that the Government has listened to WeAreRadikl's campaign and has extended the deadline to three years, and is continuing to lead the way in designing investment schemes that better meet the needs of women entrepreneurs and grow our economy overall. Many congratulations to Sarah and Claire from WeAreRadikl for all their hard work to help more women set up and grow great businesses in the UK!



## Working to protect Rushcliffe's Fire and Rescue Service

We heard this month that plans have been put forward by the Labour-controlled Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Authority to reduce the Fire Service's capabilities in South Nottinghamshire.

These proposals include cutting wholetime appliance at West Bridgford Fire

Station. I have serious concerns about the data these proposals are based on and that other options for increasing revenue or making savings appear not to have been considered.

I have met with firefighters in West Bridgford to get their views on these proposals. Along with County Councillor Jonathan Wheeler, I have written to the new Minister for Police and Fire Services to ask that Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service is given the option of raising the precept, as other authorities were last year, enabling them to increase revenue and avoid cuts to essential services.

I have also written to the Chief Fire Officer for Nottinghamshire to voice my concerns in detail and I look forward to meeting with him in early October to discuss them further.

The Fire Authority has voted for these plans to go to public consultation. You can take part in the consultation [here](#) and have your say on this very important issue.

## Fighting to keep vital bus links in Rushcliffe

This month, I met with TrentBarton and Cllr Matt Barney to discuss the Skylink Nottingham bus service. TrentBarton recently announced that the service would be cancelled in October, leaving the villages of Sutton Bonington, Normanton on Soar, and the surrounding area with a severely reduced bus service.

After the County Council stepped in to provide funding, TrentBarton announced that they will now be keeping this service operational until April whilst a review of bus services in the area takes place.

I was also pleased to hear that TrentBarton is open to working with Nottinghamshire County Council to find a solution for a bus service in the area after April. I will continue to work with Matt and the County Council to ensure residents' views are taken into account.



## Out and About!

I was pleased to welcome the Tour of Britain to Rushcliffe this month! The Tour leg started on Central Avenue in West Bridgford and visited Ruddington, Bunny, East Leake, Costock, Keyworth, Plumtree, Normanton on the Wolds, Cotgrave, Tollerton, Cropwell Bishop, Cropwell Butler, Radcliffe and Shelford and finished in Mansfield..





What a great crowd we had for Aleesha Gadhia's litter pick in West Bridgford this weekend! Thank you for organising such a good event Aleesha, and thank you to everyone who joined us! Aleesha is a Rushcliffe local and climate activist/mini ambassador for 'Cool Earth' who raises awareness about deforestation and climate change. She was recently awarded a Child of Britain award and also a Point of light award from the Prime Minister for her efforts, which you can read more about [here](#).



This month, I met with Martin Fagan from the Community Heartbeat Trust to discuss VAT on defibrillators and how we can work together to continue to push for a VAT exemption on these vital, life-saving pieces of kit, making them more affordable and easier for people to access.

It was great to catch up with the Neighbourhood Policing Inspector for Rushcliffe, Rob Lawton, for our monthly meeting. In these meetings, Rob gives me an overview of the current crime and policing issues in Rushcliffe, and I raise issues with him that constituents have come to me with.

It was a pleasure to join Upper Broughton Parish Council this month to hear about the issues that councillors and local residents had on their mind. If you would like me to come along to a meeting of your Parish/Town council, please do get in touch with them, I would be more than happy to attend.



This month, I was invited to the Dogs Trust rescue centre near Loughborough, to have a tour of the centre and hear from the staff about the work they do to support the dogs in their care and pet owners across the area. We spoke about the Kept Animals Bill currently working its way through Parliament and potential legislation to curb cruel puppy smuggling practices.



While on the subject of dogs, I'd like to introduce you to the newest member of the Edwards' household. Meet our new black lab Clemmie! If you'd like to see more of Clemmie and what I'm up to when I'm not in parliament, you can follow my Instagram [here](#).



## Join me in Keyworth for J9 Safer Spaces training

J9 Safer Spaces training will be coming to Keyworth in October. As many of you will know, I am supporting the J9 initiative which aims to create a network of safe spaces for survivors of domestic abuse and help them access support.

This training is open to anyone, whether you volunteer at a charity shop, work in a pub, or regularly interact with the public. Once you have been J9 trained, you will receive a J9 logo to display on your organisation's premises, letting survivors know that they have a safe place to access vital information and use a telephone to contact support services. Sign up for free and learn more [here](#).

We have already completed training in East Leake, West Bridgford, Ruddington, and Radcliffe, so it would be great to get a brilliant turnout from Keyworth!



## Sign up for J9 Safer Places Training in Keyworth

Ensure that you are equipped to respond appropriately and effectively to survivors of abuse.



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