

Ruth's Rushcliffe Round-up



January 2024

Continuing our fight against flooding after the recent storms

At the start of this month, communities across Rushcliffe and the rest of the UK were hit by Storm Henk. The unrelenting rain and bad weather caused many of our communities to flood.

I would first like to thank all of the flood wardens and local agencies who worked hard to help local communities manage and to clear the flood water. I would particularly like to praise the constituents who went over and above to help residents rescue their livestock in flooded areas.

As soon as I heard the news of the flooding, I went to see the damage for myself. I saw some of the flood damage in Zouch, Gotham, and East Leake with local County Councillor, Matt Barney.

I also brought the Minister for Water, Robbie Moore MP, to see the flooding in Rushcliffe for himself. We first went to Radcliffe-on-Trent Residential Park which is located right next to the River Trent. A number of the residents there had to be evacuated because of the

flooding. I am pleased the Minister was able to see the huge impact of the flooding for himself. I would also like to thank local councillors Neil Clarke, Roger Upton, and Abby Brennan for their work to support residents at this very difficult time.

We then made our way to Cropwell Butler which has seen repeated flooding last year despite work to improve the drainage system. I've worked with Nottinghamshire County Council to apply for Government funding for a natural flood management scheme to hold more water on the land and slow its progress into the village. Whilst there, Parish Council Chairman Chris Davenport was able to show the Minister the extent of the problem and show him the difference such a scheme would make.

In West Bridgford, I was dismayed to see the damage caused by flooding at Nottingham Rugby. The pitches, clubhouse and training facilities all faced damage from severe flooding, leaving the club in dire need of help. I have been in contact with both DCMS and DEFRA to make the case for financial support for the club to repair the damage. Nottingham Ruby is also raising funds and had recently surpassed £40,000 of its target to raise £50,000. You can find more information about this or donate [here](#).

My Rushcliffe Flood Report published in 2020 highlighted a lot of the work needed to mitigate flooding and we have made some good progress. However, the recent flooding has shown there is more work to be done and where it is needed. I am as determined as ever to continue working with Nottinghamshire County Council as the local lead flood authority, local councillors, central government, and other agencies involved to keep tackling flooding in Rushcliffe.

If you have any specific concerns about flooding in your area, please do not hesitate to contact me at ruth.edwards.mp@parliament.uk



More money in your pocket

Changes to National Insurance came into force at the beginning of this month. The Government has cut the rate of National Insurance from 12% to 10%, giving 27 million people a tax cut. For a worker

earning an average wage of £35,000 a year, that means a £450 tax cut. This will allow over two million people in our region to keep more of the money they earn.

From this year, Class 4 NICs for the self-employed will also be reduced from 9% to 8% and no self-employed person will have to pay Class 2 NICs, saving the average self-employed person on £28,200 a year, £350 in 2024/25. Taken together, this is a tax cut of over £9 billion per year and represents the largest ever cut to employee and self-employed National Insurance.

You may remember these changes were announced in last year's Autumn Statement which delivered a whole host of measures to reward hard work and grow our economy, including the biggest permanent tax cut in modern British history worth £20 billion, increasing the National Living Wage by 9%, and increasing the State Pension by 8.5% honouring our Pension Triple Lock Pledge.

You can read more about these changes and how they will affect you [here](#).

New scheme to help customers make better choices at the petrol pump

To support motorists in Rushcliffe and the rest of the UK, the Government announced a new 'Pump Watch' scheme which would give real-time pump prices to drive down fuel costs for motorists. This would make it easier for drivers to find the cheapest price at the pump and force fuel retailers to provide live price information which will increase competition and bring down prices.

Under the new proposals, forecourts across the country will be legally required to share live information on their pump prices within 30 minutes of any change in price, which could save drivers 3p per litre on fuel by helping them find the best deal at the pump.

The Government is currently consulting on the new scheme which you can complete [here](#).

Protecting consumers and banning fake reviews

Take a second to think about this:

You see a fantastic investment opportunity online from a well known name. It appears at the very top of the search engine and you find it surrounded by 5-star reviews. It's a no brainer - you trust the name, you trust the reviews and you trust the search engine.

But it turns out to be a scam. Your money drained by someone posing as a well known investment house, on a major search engine, surrounded by five star reviews.

I am contacted by businesses and consumers around Rushcliffe who are fed up with fake reviews that are misleading people and tricking them into handing over their hard earned money.

This month the Government has stepped in and legislation published earlier this month will ban fake reviews online, end misleading shop labelling and stamp-out hidden fees on online purchases.

Our proposed changes will ensure unit pricing is consistently applied, including to promotions and special offers, helping consumers compare products easily and identify what items represent the best value to them.

To make it easier for consumers to compare products and services, fees that are mandatory must be included in the headline price or at the start of the shopping process – these include booking fees for cinemas and train tickets. Optional fees such as airline seat and luggage upgrades for flights will not be included in these measures

I'm delighted to see these changes, having campaigned against scam adverts for several years as a back bencher. This package goes even further and will protect people from being scammed. Online platforms must take responsibility for safeguarding the people using their platforms, from scammers who want to take advantage of them. This legislation will help achieve that.

You can see the full information about the new law [here](#).

Fighting crime with a new Immediate Justice pilot

Last year, the Government announced a new plan to crackdown on anti-social behaviour. This new plan contained two new trials, new 'hotspot' police and enforcement patrols and a new immediate justice scheme. 16 areas across England and Wales were selected to trial one of these schemes. Nottinghamshire was selected as one of these areas, and the new immediate justice scheme trial officially launched on January 6th.

Under this scheme offenders give something back to the community they've harmed, by picking up litter, removing graffiti or helping with a variety of community activities. The scheme is also designed to make sure this is done quickly, as soon as 48 hours after the offence.

On top of this, victims of anti-social behaviour from the local community will be given a say in offenders' punishments to ensure justice is visible and fits the crime. Stronger punishments will also be handed out to those who graffiti, litter or fly tip, with increased fines of up to £500 and £1,000.

I met up with the Neighbourhood Policing Inspector for Rushcliffe, Insp. Tim Cuthbert to learn more about how this scheme will fit in Rushcliffe Police's arsenal for tackling anti-social behaviour across our communities.



Meeting with the Roads Minister to discuss funding for pothole repairs in Nottinghamshire

This month, I met with the Roads Minister, Guy Opperman MP, to highlight the need for more road repairs in Rushcliffe, to fix the increased number of potholes.

Nottinghamshire has received an increase of £4.6m in our road repairs budget this year (an increase of about 30%) but the damage from recent winter storms has been severe. I've asked the Minister to come to Rushcliffe to see the situation for himself and the work Nottinghamshire County Council is doing to repair our roads.

If you know of any roads in need of repair, you can report them directly to the county council [here](#).



Justice for those impacted by the Horizon scandal

The Horizon scandal is one of the greatest miscarriages of justice in our nation's history, destroying the reputations of innocent sub-postmasters and sub-postmistresses through no fault of their own.

The recent ITV drama "Mr Bates vs The Post Office", which many of you may have watched this month, has brought a greater understanding of the Horizon scandal to a much broader audience and raised awareness. I have had a great deal of correspondence from many of you about the scandal and how we can deliver justice for victims.

Four years ago, the Government opened an inquiry into the scandal, the Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry, which was made statutory the following year. The inquiry is hearing evidence on what happened and who was responsible. As a statutory inquiry, it has legal powers to require the production of evidence and the attendance of witnesses. The final report will be published this year.

I know many of you will join me in supporting the Prime Minister to quash all convictions that were based on this miscarriage of justice.

In terms of compensation, a number of different compensation schemes have been in operation for several years, to cover the different situation of sub-postmasters. In March 2021 the Government set up the Horizon Shortfall Scheme to compensate sub-postmasters who were not involved in the Group Litigation Order against the Post Office and who were not wrongly convicted, but who did pay money to the Post Office to make up Horizon shortfalls. The 2,417 postmasters who claimed compensation through this scheme have all received offers of compensation. Around 85 per cent have accepted those offers, worth over £107 million. In total, over £91 million has been paid out through the scheme, with the Post Office now dealing with late applications and with cases where initial offers were not accepted.

The Government also set up the Group Litigation Order scheme, to compensate sub-postmasters who had been part of the group action brought against the Post Office by Alan Bates and others and who don't hold a criminal conviction. The Government has announced it will speed up compensation payments by introducing an upfront offer of £75,000 compensation for each member of the Group Litigation Cohort, which they are entitled to without having to go through assessment. Those who believe they are entitled to more can still opt to go through the full assessment.

Finally, last year the Government announced an upfront offer of £600,000 in full and final settlement to postmasters whose Horizon-related conviction has been overturned. If a postmaster does not wish to accept the upfront offer, they can pursue their claim via the usual process with the Post Office and may be eligible for interim compensation payments of up to £163,000.

You can read more about the Government's action [here](#).

Improving the bus services in Keyworth, Tollerton and Plumtree

Many of you will be aware I have been working with local residents and councillors to improve 'the Keyworth' bus service that connects Keyworth, Tollerton and Plumtree with the city.

I will soon be writing to everyone in those villages with more details about our campaign, but I have recently met with the CEO of TrentBarton, representatives from the County Council and local councillors to discuss how we can improve the service going

forward.

Together we have agreed a set of actions to improve the service in the short and long term. This includes the Council Council carrying out a feasibility study on improving the flow of bus traffic on the Main Road/A606 junction; asking National Highways to put in bus priority measures to mitigate any disruption caused by the A52 Wheatcroft roundabout works; and introducing a temporary 20-minute service as opposed to the current 15-minute one so residents can be reassured their bus will turn up on time (this change was suggested by the Keyworth Bus Users group because the current 60-minute loop actually takes around 80 minutes to complete, making a 15-minute frequency very unreliable).

I'm looking forward to keeping up the pressure and making sure residents are getting the best possible service. If you are having issues with public transport in your area, please do let me know by emailing me at ruth.edwards.mp@parliament.uk

Nominate a Rushcliffe Hero

As you may remember from my last newsletter, the recent flooding in Rushcliffe highlighted where more work was needed to reduce the risk of This month, I opened the Rushcliffe Hero nominations.

I want to recognise those in our communities that have made an outstanding or selfless contribution and highlight their work to make Rushcliffe a better place.

If you think you know someone or an organisation that fits the criteria above, I would love to hear about them! Please nominate a person or organisation using this [webform](#).

Giving pharmacies the tools they need to treat people in the community.

From the end of January, 10,000 NHS pharmacies can begin treating people for common conditions.

Patients in England will be able to get treatment for seven common conditions at their high street pharmacy without needing to see a GP, as part of a major transformation in the way the NHS delivers care.

Highly trained pharmacists will be able to assess and treat patients for sinusitis, sore throat, earache, infected insect bite, impetigo, shingles, and uncomplicated urinary tract infections in women (under the age of 65) without the need for a GP appointment or prescription

This is part of the Government's plan to free up more GP appointments and give patients more choice about where they get their care from. It is estimated that this scheme will free up 10 million GP appointments a year.

Local pharmacies are a lifeline for many people in Rushcliffe. I have been contacted recently by constituents who were concerned about the availability of some over-the-counter medicines in pharmacies.

I've met with Minister of State for Health and Secondary Care, Stuart Andrew, to raise the issue with him directly. His team at the department are looking into the specific cases I brought to him and will reply urgently. It is really important to reassure everyone that the vast majority of the 14,000 medicines approved for use in the NHS are in good supply. If you ever have trouble accessing medicine or NHS care, please do not hesitate to contact me directly at ruth.edwards.mp@parliament.uk



Nezlamni Allianz: Our support for Ukraine

Our support for Ukraine was again bolstered this month with the Prime Minister announcing a major new package of support and reaffirming the close UK-Ukraine nezlamni allianz, or unbreakable alliance.

Rishi Sunak addressed the Ukrainian Parliament earlier this month and announced that the UK will provide £2.5 billion in military aid to Ukraine in 2024/25. To ensure Ukraine can continue to defend itself against Russia's aggression, this money will fund long-range missiles, air defence, artillery ammunition and maritime security.

At least £200 million of this will be spent on a major push to rapidly procure and produce thousands of military drones for Ukraine, including surveillance, long-range strike and sea drones.

We will also be supporting Ukrainian Government proposals to promote the English language in Ukraine, boosting economic competitiveness and diplomatic ties. To support this, we will fund online English lessons for Ukrainians of all ages, as well as providing resources and teacher training.

You can read more about our support and the Prime Minister's visit to Ukraine [here](#).



Protecting shipping lanes in the Red Sea

Many of you will have seen the recent action our Royal Air Force took against Houthi rebels in Yemen.

Beginning in November 2023, the Houthis have been launching attacks against ships, causing shipping to be diverted away from the Red Sea, threatening trade and freedom of navigation. Despite the repeated warnings from the international community, the Houthis have continued to carry out attacks in the Red Sea, including against UK and US warships just this month.

I fully support the Prime Minister's decision to strike key Houthi military targets. The UK will always stand up for freedom of navigation and the free flow of trade and we have taken limited, necessary and proportionate action in self-defence.

In line with UK standard practice, a very rigorous analysis was applied in planning the strikes to minimise any risk of civilian casualties.

Half a billion for social care budgets

This month, the Government provided £7 million of funding for Nottinghamshire County Council's social care budget.

£500 million is being shared out amongst councils in England to bolster social care budgets. This was awarded after the Government consulted with local authorities to understand where their greatest financial pressures are. As a result key services many people rely on such as funding residential children's care and care for elderly people have received this additional funding.

I know Nottinghamshire County Council is working hard to ensure Rushcliffe and the rest of the county can rely on good social care. Many thanks to Ben Bradley MP, the leader of Nottinghamshire County Council, for helping put our case to the Treasury and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

£15 million to support school's tackling school absence

The Government announced a major expansion of attendance hubs across England to tackle persistent school absence.

These hubs are run by schools with excellent attendance, to share

practical ideas with other primary, secondary, alternative provision and special schools in England who need help to boost their attendance.

£15 million will establish 18 new attendance hubs across 6 regions, bringing the total to 32 and will see nearly 2,000 schools helped to tackle persistent absence, supporting more than 10,000 persistent and severely absent pupils and their families.

St Giles School in West Bridgford is already one of these hubs, but our area will benefit from another new hub based at the Bluecoat Wollaton Academy in the city.

Remembering the Holocaust

This month, it was Holocaust Memorial Day.

To mark the day, I joined other MPs in signing the Holocaust Educational Trust Book of Commitment in Parliament. This pledges our commitment to Holocaust Memorial Day and pays tribute to those who perished at the hands of Nazi persecution, and to those that survived the horrors of the Holocaust. It also signals our resolve to continue fighting against antisemitism and hate today.

This year's memorial day was particularly important as the October 7 Hamas attacks on Israel were the deadliest attacks against Jews since the Holocaust. The footage I saw from the attacks will stay with me for the rest of my life. We have seen the bloodshed antisemitism can cause and we must do all we can to fight it.

Before the memorial day, I joined the Jewish community in Nottingham and the Jewish Leadership Council (JLC) at one of their Shabbat dinners. It was a wonderful evening and a privilege to experience an important part of Jewish culture and faith. Many thanks to Leo from the JLC for inviting me and to Rabbi Mendy and his wife Broscha for hosting me!



Ending live exports of animals for slaughter

Each week, I receive many emails from constituents concerned with animal welfare and the live export of animals. Many of you may remember the Government announced its intention to ban the export of livestock for slaughter in 2021. Since then, no animal has been exported from the UK to be slaughtered abroad, but the Government is now making this permanent with the Animal Welfare (Livestock Exports) Bill.

As a Government whip for DEFRA, I was on the frontbench during the Bill's final stages in the House of Commons this month. The Bill will ensure that animals are slaughtered domestically, in UK slaughterhouses with high animal welfare standards and prevent stressful journeys to potentially lower welfare slaughterhouse conditions. These new rules will still allow live animal exports in other circumstances, for example for breeding and competitions, provided they are transported in line with legal requirements aimed at protecting their welfare.

The Bill will now go through its necessary stages in the House of Lords before becoming law and honouring our commitment to protecting animal and livestock welfare.



Out and about

I've been out and about around Rushcliffe this month talking to residents to hear your views about life in Rushcliffe.

Myself and local councillor Hari Om held a supermarket surgery in Asda in West Bridgford to talk to shoppers and see how I could help them with any issues they may have. There are a number of things MPs can help with, including issues with public services such as the NHS, Child Maintenance Service, UK Visas and Immigration, and the DWP. These are just a few, if you have a problem you think I may be able to help with, please do not hesitate to email me on ruth.edwards.mp@parliament.uk



I was also out in Ruddington with local councillor Matt Barney and your local Conservative team to ask residents to complete my Rushcliffe Residents Survey to learn more about their priorities for our community.



In Edwalton, I was joined by local Cllr. Hetvi Parekh and a great team of volunteers to talk to residents about what they want for their community.



It was great to be with Debra and the team at Claridon Travel in Keyworth this month. The Advantage Travel Partnership is the UK's largest independent travel agency group and has some 750 branches across the UK, including Claridon Travel here in Rushcliffe.



In Parliament this month...

I was part of a DL ([Delegated Legislation](#)) Committee where we passed new regulations to ban anyone without a specialist licence from keeping primates as pets. This will prevent primates from being kept in domestic settings where the welfare standards they need can't be met.



I welcomed Geoff Baker, the Chair of Keyworth Sports Association, Keyworth Cricket Club and South Notts Cricket League to parliament.

Geoff was invited to 10 Downing Street to thank him for his hard

work and to celebrate bringing communities together. It was great to welcome him to Westminster for the evening. Sadly, votes in Parliament meant I wasn't able to attend the reception itself but I was pleased to see him afterwards and to offer my thanks for all the work he does. He is a great example of the brilliant people who are involved in grassroots sport in Rushcliffe. Thank you Geoff and everyone who gives their time so generously.



This month, I met with Dave, who is involved in a particularly unique project connected to #Rushcliffe. This project is the restoration of Spitfire AA810! Spitfire AA810 flew deep into enemy territory, mostly unarmed and devoid of protection of any sort, to photograph the movements of enemy supplies, men, ships and planes to gain vital intelligence.

John William Southmayd Fowler from Normanton-on-the-Wolds flew this Spitfire and was known to have served in the Photographic Recon Unit, flying Spitfires, when he went missing in action on the 9th November 1940, aged just 27 years old.



Earlier this month, I attended a drop-in event with the All Party Parliamentary Group on Deep Geothermal, to learn about their efforts to promote renewable and sustainable energy. I was also able to learn more about the group's new report on the potential for deep geothermal in the UK. As part of this report, our area was identified as one of the best in the UK for our potential to deliver deep geothermal projects. Representatives from the Rushcliffe-based British Geological Survey were also in attendance and gave us more details on how the report recognised the areas with the most potential.



Hosted by Lloyds Banking Group and iNHouse Communications, I attended the Women's Lobby January Reception. The Lobby intends to promote gender equality in politics and leadership roles by providing advice and contacts to help progress in a traditionally male-dominated industry. MPs were asked to bring along a female candidate to the event and I invited Natasha Saunders who I worked with to change the law to help support survivors of domestic abuse and make it illegal to share intimate images of someone without their consent.



A note from Clemmie...

Clemmie would like to say a massive thank you to everyone who sent their best wishes after the successful birth of her 8-strong litter!
You can keep up with her pupdates on my instagram at
[@ruthedwardsrushcliffe](#)



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