Tessa's October Update

Hello everyone,

It has been a busy month. One really joyful occasion was a gathering of hundreds of local Squirrels, Beavers, Rainbows and Cubs at Puxton Park, celebrating their organisations' special birthdays.



It was great to attend the Dairy Show at the Bath & West Showground, and speak in the NFU marquee about food security, labelling and the many challenges facing our farmers.

On a more solemn note, I joined the Samaritans' Dawn Walk from Weston Super Mare's Grand Pier to Uphill, where we watched the sun rise. The Dawn Walk is a very special event, and the Samaritans an amazing organisation with brilliant volunteers. I know there are a number of local volunteers: thank you for all you do.



My colleague Daisy Cooper MP, Lib Dem Deputy Leader and Treasury Spokesperson, came and spoke about Government decisions affecting rural businesses, especially hospitality, leisure and tourism, answering lots of questions posed by local business leaders in the audience.

In Westminster, it was a pleasure to be present as our Bishop of Bath & Wells, Michael Beasley, joined the

House of Lords. I also attended the Somerset Eel Recovery Project exhibition in Parliament, which I hope can be introduced to local schools so young people learn how important this species is.

I asked Ministers many questions about :
* undertaking a review into what went wrong with Defra's Sustainable Farming Incentive scheme, so the same mistakes don't happen in 2027;
* military planning for withdrawing RAF support for Saudi Arabia;
* reducing bills by decoupling electricity prices from the wholesale gas price;
* sky-high Business Rates charged to hospitality, leisure and tourism businesses;
* the lack of access to NHS dentists in the South West;
* adding the test for Metachromatic Leukodystrophy (MLD) to the newborn baby heel prick test at a cost of 17 pence;
* the Child Maintenance Service unjustly writing off arrears - ignoring the Ombudsman's rulings;
* the Church of England's mandatory duty to report child sexual abuse;
* stopping fire engineers - paid by building owners - signing off dangerous cladding as 'safe'.

I've spoken in debates on:
* the potential merits of recognising the production and serving of cask ale as an Intangible Cultural Heritage;
* the performance of the Royal Mail in some parts of Somerset;
* protecting access to helipads at hospitals in planning legislation to stop inappropriate development affecting flight paths;
* compensation for Equitable Life Policyholders.
* questioning 'no comment' interviews, the use of suspended sentences and automatic licence revocation in cases where drivers cause death by dangerous or careless driving;
* during Baby Loss Awareness Week, making sure parents' concerns during labour and birth are taken seriously.

If you'd like any more information, or details of what else I do on your behalf, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Thank you.

Tessa