

This is my first newsletter of 2018 and I would like to begin by wishing everyone a happy and healthy new year! It was an incredibly busy end to last year and is shaping up to be more of the same in 2018!

Having recovered fully from being sawn in half(!) at the Cambourne lights switch on event, I was able to join local residents for some of their Christmas celebrations. I always enjoy carol services and this year was no exception. I joined residents in Papworth Everard ("*Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer*" a highlight for me!) for their community carol service and attended the Christmas service at Holy Trinity Church in Elsworth. I was honoured to be asked to read one of the lessons and reflected on the work local community and faith groups do to bring people together not just at Christmas, but throughout the year. Our communities are stronger because of them.

I was also pleased to be asked to record a message for "*Talking News for the Blind*" which is provided to about 200 blind and partially sighted people in Cambridge and surrounding villages. This local charity does vital work to bring information and news to people who may feel isolated otherwise.



Last month, I invited Robert Halfon MP to South Cambs so he could see the excellent work undertaken at Villiers Park in Foxton.

Robert is the Chair of the House of Commons Education Select Committee and understands the role education plays in social mobility.

Villiers Park are a phenomenal education charity who actively seek out the brightest kids from the poorest backgrounds, in the most deprived parts of the UK. They work with them over a number of years, mentoring and supporting them to achieve their potential and a place at a top University or high level apprenticeship. I am keen to help them expand, so if you work for an organisation who may be interested in sponsoring them, please do get in touch with me or them directly at www.villierspark.org.uk

Back in Westminster, the Agriculture Minister George Eustice kindly agreed to meet with some of my South Cambs farmers to discuss what life might be like for them outside the EU. We had a full and frank discussion about what small and large farmers will need to keep this vital industry profitable. We all agreed it was a very worthwhile meeting and took great reassurance from George's understanding of the challenges the industry faces.

A common theme in my newsletters is my ambition to get round every school in South Cambs. First off, I took some pretty tough questions from Great and Little Shelford Primary's School Council! It was also great to be back at Cambourne Village College to hear from students who are members of CAMnesty, the Cambourne Amnesty youth group. The optimism and straightforwardness of young minds gives me a great energy boost. Finally, I visited Vine Inter-Church Primary School in Cambourne to understand the challenges facing a rapidly growing village with a constantly shifting population. The dedication of the staff and head teachers I meet in every school is humbling. It is always evident that every member of staff is completely and utterly committed to the children they teach.



Oakington's latest community facility is now open!

Crossways CommuniTea Café at 1 Longstanton Road, Oakington is a social enterprise with the aim of bringing the community together in a warm and welcoming environment.

It was a pleasure to do the honours and cut the ribbon (I was allowed proper grown up scissors on this occasion!) I hope you will be able to support the café by popping in soon for a cuppa. I can confirm beyond all doubt that they make a cracking brew!

Cambridgeshire's Police and Crime Commissioner is seeking views on their share of your council tax. They are proposing to increase it by £12 per year per household (based on a Band D property) in order to provide more front line police officers. The survey runs until the 29th January and can be found at - www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/W3CD8P3

Since my last newsletter in December, I have held two surgeries - one in Gamlingay and one in Great Shelford. Listening to the views and concerns of constituents and helping them with issues affecting their lives is an important part of my role.

My next surgery will be on 3rd February 11am–1pm at the Hare and Hounds, 60 High Street, Harlton CB23 1ES. All are welcome so I like to run a “no appointment necessary” system, but the last surgery was incredibly busy so I'd recommend you get there early if you can.

Details of all upcoming surgeries can be found on my website - www.heidisouthcambs.co.uk. To contact me, please email heidi.allen.mp@parliament.uk. You can also phone my Westminster office on 020 7219 5091 about national issues or my constituency office on 01223 830037 for local concerns.

See you next month!