MP Parish Report – November 2026

Remembrance

It was a huge honour to lay a wreath at the war memorial in Lewes on Remembrance Sunday.

What made this year's ceremony particularly special was that the wreath was not a traditional one, but a beautiful creation made by pupils from Priory School. Members of the Year 7 Art Club put tremendous effort into producing a meaningful tribute to those who made the ultimate sacrifice in service of our country.

It was a privilege to lay their work in remembrance of those who gave so much for our freedom. As well as being a thoughtful and sustainable alternative, it demonstrated the importance of passing on the values of remembrance to future generations. If you have the opportunity to visit the war memorial, I would encourage you to take a moment to see the wreath and the pupils' excellent work.

I was also pleased to attend remembrance services in Willingdon, Seaford for the Commonwealth Soldiers Service, and Polegate on 11 November.

Local Government Reorganisation

The Government has recently provided a further update on local government reorganisation across Sussex.

Ministers have indicated they remain “minded to” proceed with plans to transfer East Saltdean, Telscombe and Peacehaven into Brighton & Hove as part of the new local government settlement.

While I remain disappointed that these communities are still set to move into Brighton & Hove, I welcome the fact that proposals to include parts of the Lewes constituency within the city were ultimately rejected. Many residents expressed strong views about maintaining their local identity and community ties, and I am grateful to everyone who took the time to engage with the process.

I will continue to monitor developments closely and represent the interests of local residents as these changes progress.

Drought and Water Supply

I recently met with Government ministers to discuss the severe drought conditions that have affected parts of our constituency, as well as the concerningly low water levels seen at Ardingly Reservoir in recent weeks.

There has been some welcome news. Recent rainfall has helped replenish water supplies and restore reservoir levels following a prolonged period of exceptionally dry weather.

However, there is no room for complacency. Water resilience remains a significant challenge across the South East, and we must ensure that both Government and water companies are planning effectively for the future.

I have previously raised the need to make water companies statutory consultees in the planning process, to ensure that where houses are built appropriate consideration is given to the water supplies that will be needed. I will continue pressing for action to safeguard local water supplies and improve resilience against future droughts.

I would also encourage residents who are eligible, to sign up to your water and energy supplier's Priority Services Register. The scheme is free and provides additional support during service interruptions and emergencies, particularly for older residents and those with medical needs.

The Budget and the South East

Following the Chancellor's Budget, I raised concerns that communities across Sussex continue to miss out on the investment they need.

The Government has spoken of delivering economic growth across every postcode, yet the South East often appears to be overlooked when major infrastructure decisions are made. Outside London, our region continues to face significant challenges securing the transport investment required to support local communities and businesses.

Nowhere is this more evident than along the A259. This vital coastal route serves Seaford, Newhaven and the wider area, yet congestion remains a serious issue. More than 19,000 vehicles use South Way in Newhaven every day, placing considerable pressure on local roads, residents and businesses.

Previous studies identified a range of improvements, including important safety works at Bishopstone Road. Although East Sussex County Council submitted a business case to the Government, progress has stalled.

I have urged ministers to commit the necessary funding to improve the A259 and have also called on the new administration at East Sussex County Council to prioritise measures that improve safety and reduce congestion. Our coastal communities have waited long enough for the investment they deserve.

While some of the Budget's proposed changes to business rates are welcome, I do not believe they go nearly far enough to address the challenges faced by businesses across the South East.

Many businesses in our area operate from locations where property values are already high. Consequently, modest adjustments to rateable values will not provide the level of support many firms need.

Businesses require certainty and a long-term strategy for growth. That means tackling the structural challenges facing the economy, supporting investment, encouraging innovation and providing confidence for firms to create jobs and expand.

I also believe that rebuilding our economic relationship with Europe must form part of that strategy. Reducing unnecessary trade barriers and improving access to European markets would help many local businesses grow, invest and prosper.

As always, if there is an issue affecting you or your community, please do not hesitate to get in touch.