

# Kwasi Kwarteng MP In contact

My journal

Summer edition 2011



**T**ime certainly can fly; with winter now a distant memory, the wonderful and unpredictable British summer is upon us. Thinking back though, a lot has happened in this space of time.

Internationally, we witnessed some truly historic events: people rose up in Egypt and beyond, and Osama Bin Laden was finally intercepted. Nationally, the Coalition took steps to tackle the economic deficit and reform public services. And locally, Airtrack was abandoned, Ashford and St Peter's Hospital gained Foundation Trust status, residents mobilised to oppose parking charges and I encountered a range of issues during my weekly advice surgery.

I have tried to engage with issues as they've arisen, which has kept me busy; this newsletter is meant to keep you updated on my activities, offer some opinion and encourage residents to continue contacting me.



Visiting Laleham C of E Primary School, Feb 2011

## IN WESTMINSTER

Since my last newsletter, the Government has started to apply a strategy of reducing the deficit and supporting enterprise to repair our economy. I have voted to support this approach, and while it's still early days, it's working: new figures indicate that over half a million new jobs were created by private enterprise in the last year - a rate that's more than replacing jobs lost elsewhere.

At the same time, recent parliamentary debate has focused on public service reform, which is essential. Initially though, the NHS Bill was criticised; I met doctors in Spelthorne and relayed their concerns to the Secretary of State. The Gov-

ernment's response in June was to make changes, which is obviously good news for democracy; the reforms now have support across the medical profession.

Internationally, events in the Middle East were unexpected. The Coalition reacted militarily in Libya, a decision that was, I think, justified; had Britain not stepped in, Gaddafi would have massacred his own people. Still, I'm of the opinion that we can't stay too long and that stability in the region requires diplomatic engagement with Iran; I have questioned the Secretary of State on this issue.

## The Transport Select Committee

Along with other members of the Committee, I visited Heathrow Airport, which is essential to the local economy. We learned more about its inner workings and the challenges a modern airport faces, with security, logistics and climate change.

It was clear that, while Heathrow is world class, to maintain this position, a plan for the future is needed; most of my parliamentary colleagues agree, and personally, I'm determined to help shape aviation policy. That's why, in March, I hosted an aviation forum with representatives from British Airways and Virgin; we discussed industry capacity, the role of technology to reduce CO2 emissions and the importance of Heathrow to the wider economy, and agreed that, on the whole, not enough has been done to communicate the benefits that aviation brings to Britain.

By writing a book, *Gridlock Nation*, I'm looking into these issues, my aim being to offer solutions to transport problems in Britain and influence debate.

Hosting an aviation forum, Westminster, March 2011



## IN SPELTHORNE

Being in Spelthorne is a part of my role that I enjoy immensely; here are some of the things I have been doing...

### On the beat

In February, on a Friday night, I joined two Special Constables from Surrey Police's Neighbourhood Team, on patrol in Spelthorne. I gained a fascinating insight into their good work, and over the course of three hours, on foot and in a patrol car, we covered most of the Borough.



With SPCs Chris Wills and David Llewellyn, Feb 2011

### Clockhouse Lane

For many years, residents in Ashford have complained about the danger and noise caused by HGVs racing along Clockhouse Lane, a problem that persists because Hounslow Council have refused to agree to a southbound weight restriction.

In recent months, I have met residents and seen the problems for myself; to find a solution, I'm engaging with Hounslow and will support collaboration between neighbours and our County Council because this will be essential in moving forward.



Presenting the man of the match award to Marc Charles-Smith of Staines Town FC, Jan 2011

## Kwasi's Quiz

**The Domesday Book shows that Middlesex was divided into how many hundreds?**

**Who designed the Houses of Parliament?**

**Sir Thomas Cromwell once lived on which Sunbury street?**

**Approximately how many people live in Spelthorne?**

Answers from last edition: Ad Pontes; Melun; 1642; orange & white; 7 weeks

### The Big Society

In January 2011, I attended a community engagement event, held in Knowle Green. The event was organised by Voluntary Action in Spelthorne, an umbrella body for local voluntary groups. On the day, more than 80 people came along!

In a speech, I talked about the "Big Society" as a concept. Then, in a lively question and answer session, debated how the Big Society can be supported locally.



Talking about the Big Society in Spelthorne, Jan 2011  
Photo by *Staines and Ashford News*

### Sunbury Air Cadets

In March, I spent a training evening with Sunbury ATC, at their barracks on Croysdale Avenue, where I watched Cadets take part in shooting, first aid training, drill exercises and band practice.

I was very impressed by the enthusiasm and hard work on display; it certainly belies the adverse remarks sometimes made about today's young people.

I hold regular advice surgeries from my office in Staines. As your MP, I can only assist with those matters for which Parliament or central government is responsible. I may be able to help you with problems relating to:

- \* Central government policies
- \* National Health Service
- \* H M Revenue and Customs (tax issues, child benefit)
- \* Department of Work and Pensions (benefits and pensions)

To arrange an appointment please call 020 7219 4017