

Kwasi Kwarteng MP In contact

My journal

Christmas edition 2012



A lot has happened over the last six months. Still very fresh in our memories, London 2012 was the highlight of the summer. I am writing to keep you updated on my recent activities, and to encourage residents to keep in touch.

SPELTHORNE

The Olympics were a great success and showed how sport can unite and inspire people. They created a real buzz in the Borough. This was especially pronounced at some local sporting events. Indeed, the atmosphere at Staines, Shepperton and Sunbury Regattas, which I attended, was extra special.



Opening Barclays' refurbished branch in Ashford High Street, November 2012

As MP for a borough where business is at the heart of life - about 80% of people work in private enterprise here - I am very focused on supporting this. In September, I went to Johnson & Johnson's European Vision Centre in Sunbury, the company's distribution centre for its UK manufactured contact lenses. I met the management team and we talked about the challenges they face.

To keep tabs on the performance of the local economy, I find it helpful to talk to local banks. They have relations with lots of residents and all kinds of local businesses. In October, I visited Lloyds TSB in Staines, and in November, Barclays in Ashford. It was encouraging to learn that local businesses are expanding and that new businesses are being set up. The feeling is that the economy will start to pick up over the next year.

Another issue that I have been keeping a close eye on is policing. In July, I attended the Lower Sunbury Police panel meeting and I had a good chat with residents about the different challenges that our communities are facing.

IN WESTMINSTER

In October, economic growth figures were good and Britain climbed out of recession. Still though, the economic climate remains volatile. My experiences in Spelthorne have convinced me that the Coalition needs to do more to support enterprise, and small businesses in particular - the engine room of our economy - to promote sustainable economic growth.

Britain is 83rd in the world for regulation and 94th for taxation. Every week, local businessmen tell me that this is stifling entrepreneurialism. As the new Head of the Free Enterprise Group in Parliament, I have argued that the Government must deliver more business-friendly reforms and tax cuts to encourage entrepreneurship and incentivise hard work.

We have proposed that businesses with three or fewer employees and less than £75,000 annual turnover should be exempt from employment regulation. I also argued, in a report entitled *Motivating the Middle*, that the higher rate income tax threshold should be raised to £50,000 to reverse the years of people being dragged into paying a higher rate tax.

In September, I co-authored a book, *Britannia Unchained*. This looks at a number of issues: our economy, education system, social mobility and social justice. The book's premise is that Britain can learn from other countries who have implemented successful policies in these areas.



At Johnson & Johnson, September 2012

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to send everyone my best wishes for a peaceful Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year.

Out & about

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

Ashford Sports Club

In July, I visited Ashford Sports Club in Short Lane, Stanwell, where both Ashford Cricket and Hockey Clubs are based. I chatted to members, learned about what goes on behind the scenes and looked around the practice, match and social facilities, which are excellent.



At Ashford Sports Club, July 2012

Shepherds Peace

In November, I attended a ceremony in Stanwell Moor, where a sign to name the footpath running along the northern side of the King George VI Reservoir was unveiled. The path is now named Shepherds Peace to commemorate a time – up until the late 18th century – when pallbearers would carry the bodies of the local dead all the way to the Parish Church of St Mary in Stanwell Village. Afterwards, I was able to talk to lots of residents over tea and lunch, which was a real pleasure.



At the Shepherds Peace naming ceremony, November 2012

Kwasi's Quiz

Who opened The Elmsleigh Centre shopping complex in 1980?

How far apart are the two red lines on the floor of the House of Commons?

In 1897 the Sunbury Clock was erected in celebration of what?

In what year was Heathrow Airport's Terminal 1 opened?

Answers from last edition: 1948; 1285; 1974; The Queen Mary

Thomas Knyvett

In October, I visited Thomas Knyvett College to celebrate their 5 years of working in collaboration with the Howard of Effingham School within The Howard Partnership. It is now one of the most improved comprehensive schools in the country. This year, the College's 5A* to C GCSE pass rate (including English and Maths) rose by 26% on last year to 66%, a remarkable success.



Delivering a speech at Thomas Knyvett to celebrate The Howard Partnership, October 2012

Remembrance Sunday

On November 11, I attended the Remembrance Service and Parade in Shepperton. The morning was faultlessly organised as hundreds of people turned out to pay their respects to the brave servicemen and women who have given their lives to protect our freedom. This was great to see and demonstrated clearly the strength of community spirit in the Borough.

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
- * HM Revenue and Customs (tax issues, child benefit)
- * Department of Work and Pensions (benefits and pensions)

To arrange an appointment please call 020 7219 4017