



Steve Brine's WINCHESTER POST

A positive publication produced at no cost to the taxpayer by your energetic local Conservative MP and team. It is delivered by volunteers across Winchester, the Itchen Valley, Alresford, Kings Worthy and surrounding villages.

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Westminster Report; including legal highs, school visits and PMQs

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Working for rail passengers and a very special local cookery book on offer

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Steve's popular street surgeries and ever tried to pick up a parcel in Winnall?



New school places – Local MP Steve Brine joined parents and staff at The Westgate School just before Christmas as Winchester moved a step closer to getting the new primary school places it needs for September 2014.

Steve joined Cllr Roy Perry of Hampshire County Council to open the brand new Rotherly Day Nursery which is part of major works taking place on the city centre site that will provide an additional 420 primary places and create Hampshire's first 'all-through' school.

More: www.stevebrine.com/schoolplaces



February floods – While some parts of our area were left untouched by recent floods, many were not so fortunate and it has been an extremely difficult time.

Steve Brine says; "For me, especially on the first awful weekend after the flood waters hit, my team and I were working every hour helping residents, with advice and connections to some of the agencies that can help, visiting affected areas to help problem solve or heaving sand-bags."

More: www.stevebrine.com/flooding

Steve Brine MP

Health Check Survey 2014

MP undertaking major survey of opinions about local NHS

Steve Brine launched a major survey about the local NHS to mark the start of 2014.

The MP for Winchester produced his Health Check Survey which covers general health policy, hospital as well as primary care and asks for views about the future of hospital services in our area. It is being delivered to every home in Steve's constituency.

Steve told The Winchester Post; "The survey is already producing impressive returns. As you

know, I am a passionate supporter of the NHS but we should be honest in saying it is far from perfect, locally as well as nationally, and I think we will need to change things sooner or later to make it a world-class public service for the long-term that delivers better outcomes when we fall ill.

"The clinicians have come forward with plans for major change so we must hear their rationale and have the opportunity to be fully informed as the future of stroke, emergency and especially

maternity services are discussed. Despite spending more time trying to understand the huge complexities of modern acute medicine than anything else in recent years it is still the subject which worries me most and I know many people share my anxiety so please have your say."

To take the survey and see details of an **open meeting** Steve will chair in Winchester on **Thursday 27th March**, visit www.stevebrine.com/prioritynhs

A **Green Winchester** publication, printed on paper from sustainable forests

NEWS

from the House
IN BRIEF

DIRECT DEBIT RIP-OFF

A new campaign is gathering momentum against energy companies who charge customers high admin fees for NOT paying their bills by direct debit.

Backing colleague Robert Halfon MP who started the campaign, Steve Brine said: "The poorest and most vulnerable customers can be ripped off by energy companies when it comes to paying for essential services such as gas and electric. I am supporting Rob's campaign because I do think it is unreasonable to penalize people who don't, for many different reasons, pay by direct debit."

HIGHLIGHTING SMALL ENERGY SUPPLIERS

Local MP Steve Brine backed small suppliers, including Winchester's very own Utilita, as he warned they would be hit hard by an energy price 'freeze' in a recent Parliamentary debate.

Steve, who recently visited Utilita, run by Bill Bullen, said: "The impact on smaller energy suppliers will be much harder felt and the level of competition in the market will drop. That is in no-one's interest but the big six suppliers."

Writing in The Times newspaper, Mr Bullen pointed out the negative implications for future investment, the cost of capital and higher commodity prices should any temporary price freeze be implemented by a future Labour Government.



PRISONER VOTING

A special joint committee of Parliament has been charged with scrutinising the Government's draft Bill on prisoners' voting rights and local MP Steve Brine was a member.

When the committee report was published, the Committee was split, with the majority recommending that prisoners serving custodial sentences of 12 months or less, plus all prisoners in the last 6 months before release, should be able to vote in local, general and European elections.

Our MP was among those on the committee in voting AGAINST these proposals. He said: "Personally, I think we should uphold the current ban and the House of Commons has every right to do so. Parliament needs to consider the extent to which we are content to permit the European Court of Human Rights to encroach into domestic policy areas that appear far removed from the original intention of the European Convention on Human Rights."

RADIO 4'S WESTMINSTER HOUR

Steve Brine often appears on national media, whether it is speaking out about local issues such as our dreadful floods, or on other matters of national policy.

He regularly appears on Radio 4's Westminster Hour and BBC's Daily Politics show. You can follow Steve via Twitter to ensure you stay updated @sbrine.

Westminster Report

As we enter the final full year of this Parliament, Steve Brine continues to work hard as our Member of Parliament at Westminster.

Steve is also now working within Government – at the Department for Work & Pensions – where he is PPS to the Minister for Disabled People and is part of Iain Duncan Smith's team reforming our welfare system so it remains a safety net when needed, helps lift people out of welfare dependency and is fair to taxpayers.



More: www.stevebrine.com/westminster

In recent months Steve has spoken in the House of Commons about the February floods, the early years of child development, the lethal danger of legal highs and renewed efforts to raise awareness of ovarian cancer. He has also voted to support a ban on smoking in cars carrying children.

Steve remains a member of the influential Justice Select Committee, chaired by veteran Lib Dem MP, Sir Alan Beith. The Committee is currently undertaking a major inquiry looking at crime reduction policy.

WEEKE WHIZZ TO THE HOUSE!



Local schools continue to visit the Houses of Parliament and enjoy their day out.

Recent visitors included a group of Year 6 pupils who used the visit to inspire their school magazine called Weeke Whizz and (inset) Itchen Abbas Primary School who came late last year.



VISITING WESTMINSTER

Steve Brine regularly hosts constituents in the Houses of Parliament, and getting in touch with him to arrange a tour couldn't be easier.

Simply call **01962 791110** or email steve.brine.mp@parliament.uk
Steve also puts his PMQ ticket allocations into a free and fair ballot, and for the very energetic, there are also tours of Big Ben available.



More: www.stevebrine.com/visitingwestminster



Legal Highs are not cool (and often not legal) says local MP

Steve Brine has given his strong backing to news that the UK is to opt out of planned European Commission rules on legal highs.

Steve has long campaigned against legal highs, and as a parent of two small children, welcomes news that the government has decided not to join the scheme, due to the fact it would hamper British attempts to ban new drugs coming onto the UK market. Currently, the government is conducting a

review into new psychoactive substances, while looking at a range of options, including possibly legislation, to deal with the dangers many of these substances present even more speedily and effectively.

Steve said: "This is a smart move in my view. One key part of our strategy to tackle this menace is the ability to move fast and ban new dangerous products before they can do harm. Sadly, European rules in this area do exactly the opposite so we have to sidestep the bureaucracy and protect people. Far from diminishing our ability to fight psychoactive substances this enhances it."

THE BILL ISN'T DEAD, IT'S JUST SLEEPING

A Conservative Bill to put into law that an in/out EU referendum must be held in 2017 was scuppered in the House of Lords recently by Opposition Peers who do not wish to give us a say on our membership.

Steve Brine, who has long campaigned for the referendum, said: "It was so frustrating to see a collection of Liberal Democrats and Labour Peers conspire to defeat the Bill and I am sure my constituents will draw their own conclusions as to why. However, it is now clearer than ever that it is only the Conservatives in the House of Commons who will guarantee that referendum, and if David Cameron is Prime Minister following the General Election, we will have just that."

SUPPORTING COMMUTERS

Regular commuter Steve Brine continues to stick close to our train service

In November he held a lively public meeting with the South West Trains Managing Director and the following month he hosted Rail Minister, Stephen Hammond, to view the various works taking place at Winchester station and follow up on some key issues raised at the public meeting.

Mr Hammond was able to see for himself the work being done to introduce a new decked car park at the station and the footbridge being constructed as part of the 'Access for all' scheme. He was also able to join discussions Mr Brine is having with South West Trains around late night safety for travellers, including the access road leading to Andover Road, which was highlighted as a key safety concern.

Steve says; "There is significant investment taking place in Winchester right now so it was important to have the Minister visit and check on progress. It was really useful also to brief him on my recent meeting with South West Trains and local rail users and for him to hear what looks like good news on our work to improve late night safety, especially for women, in and around the station."



Steve discussing our issues with the Rail Minister and; (inset) his recent AskSWT public meeting in Winchester

NEWS IN BRIEF



A33 JUNCTION CAMPAIGN

Steve Brine brought the Transport Secretary, Patrick McLoughlin MP, to the high profile accident black spot at the Cart & Horses A33 junction recently.

Steve told The Winchester Post: "I want to see this junction made safer and I will continue to work with anyone to improve safety at the spot. Despite recent literature put out in the area which regrettably turns this incredibly serious issue into a political football, we are edging towards some initial improvements and that's the important thing. Of course money is a consideration but we need to keep Hampshire County Council focused and I look forward to seeing some tangible results of our campaign shortly."

MP SPEAKS AT BATTERY CLUB

Steve (and his dog Popcorn) were delighted to join birthday celebrations for a seniors club in Oliver's Battery late last year. The Battery Club asked Steve along to hear more about his work across Winchester and also learn more about life in the House of Commons.

If your group, club or society would like to invite Steve to your event, simply call **01962 791110** or email steve.brine.mp@parliament.uk

MICHELDEVER ENERGY RECOVERY CENTRE

Steve Brine joined councillors and residents in objecting to a proposed energy recovery centre on land alongside the railway station at Micheldever Station.

The MP has continued to represent constituents on the subject and support the Micheldever Action Group and Micheldever Parish Council in their campaign to object.



Steve has also worked closely with local City Councillor, Stephen Godfrey (pictured), who has been tireless in his efforts to help residents.

Steve said: "On balance I think this is a proposal we should reject and I was delighted to see the initial decision, from Winchester City Council, unanimously rejecting it. I hope Hampshire will now follow their lead and kill this idea off once and for all."

More: www.stevebrine.com/energyrecoverycentre

CHEMO COOKERY CLUB



Steve dropped into a cookery club with a difference recently as he visited a local couple leading the fight against cancer.

Chemo Cookery Club is a book of recipes, written by Micheldever based cook Penny Ericson, after her husband Simon Hawkins was diagnosed with cancer in 2009. It contains over 150 delicious recipes specifically written for people undergoing chemotherapy.

Penny (pictured at her kitchen table) said: "I searched for books that took a joyful view of food and that also took into consideration the special circumstances of patients with things like 'rubber-mouth' and 'metal-mouth', and *The Chemo Cookery Club* book is the result."

You can buy the original *Chemo Cookery Club* hardback book but Steve has **50 copies of Penny's *Around the Kitchen Table* to give away** to the first 50 readers who get in touch via **01962 791110** or steve.brine.mp@parliament.uk

WINOL

Steve Brine met with students and staff at the University of Winchester in February after he was asked to spend an afternoon guest-editing their online news service.

Run by journalism students, WINOL (which stands for Winchester OnLine) reports on local news from across the district, and gives students fantastic hands-on training in the broadcast media world, from interviewing and presenting to production, before they enter their future careers.

Steve Brine said: "This was so much fun and has been one of the most rewarding things I've done; I really hope I was able to help the students even just a little. We have some really talented journalists here this year, some of whom will no doubt end up interrogating us politicians before too long!"



More at www.winol.co.uk

ENVIRONMENT MINISTER DROPS BY ...AND SAMPLES LOCAL BREW

Steve Brine recently brought yet another Cabinet Minister to Winchester to meet some prominent local farmers in the heart of rural Hampshire.

Owen Paterson, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, spent an hour with Steve and the group in Easton, and discussion focused around subsidies and the Common Agricultural policy.

In addition, they talked about beak trimming, the impact of the badger cull and milk prices.



Steve said: "I was delighted to be able to convene this informal but still very focused discussion over a pint in Easton. I know that speaking to both Owen and the chaps afterwards, the occasion was very useful and all parties took something strong away with them."

■ Attending the chat were arable farmer Michael Gray, dairy farmer Tim Knapman, Hampshire NFU Chair Julian Gibbons, his predecessor Chris Cook and Tom Amery from The Watercross Company.

Even more
NEWS
IN BRIEF

PMQS BALLOT

As our local MP, Steve Brine has three pairs of tickets to attend PMQs per year.

Since he was elected Steve has decided to hold a free and fair ballot open to all local residents. This year, the dates are Wednesday 19th March, Wednesday 25th June and Wednesday 26th November.

Contact Steve if you would like to enter via www.stevebrine.com/pmqs

PITT MANOR DEVELOPMENT

Local MP Steve Brine has held another high-level meeting with councillors, officers, campaigners and developers to thrash out further details about the Pitt Manor site.

Steve said; "This group met back in August and this was an important chance to get everyone together again and go through issues such as drainage, the park and ride site and a lot of detail about the accompanying works that will take place at the junction of Stanmore Lane and Kilham Lane."

The meeting, which was also attended by Governors from St Peter's School, considered how the changes need to work seamlessly with their school travel plans and current building works.

More: www.stevebrine.com/pittmanor

A303 IMPROVEMENTS

Many Winchester residents, especially those with small children, head down to the West Country each Summer and that means hitting the congested A303.

Steve Brine and his young family go to Devon in August each year and have welcomed news that the road is finally set to receive some improvements thanks to the Government.

A number of councils along the road have recently met with the Department for Transport which has outlined details of likely improvements and confirmed that they will be presenting a strong business case and recommendations to Ministers later this year.



Steve's regular Hampshire Chronicle column

'Steve Brine, getting in the paper... and getting things done!'

STREET SURGERY POPULAR AS EVER



Helen Osborne is the Prospective City Councillor in the St Barnabas area of Winchester (which includes Weeke, Teg Down and Stoney Lane) and she recently invited Steve Brine to join her and Cllr Eileen Berry for their monthly street surgery near Waitrose (left). Steve also held a 'village' surgery in Itchen Abbas early in the New Year (right) with Cllr Kim Gottlieb and they were joined by the local PCSO.



NEW HOMES ...AND EMPTY HOMES

Conservative-run Winchester City Council is pressing ahead with its' New Homes Programme which is building new council houses in the city for the first time in over 20 years.

Cllr Stephen Godfrey from the WCC Cabinet told The Winchester Post; "This doesn't just happen, it was a positive decision from your Conservative council to help meet our affordable housing needs and it is something previous councils never attempted. If you value this kind of investment in Winchester you need to vote for it come the next local elections in May."



Meanwhile Winchester MP Steve Brine has been highlighting the issue of empty homes which, while not in plentiful supply in our area, still very much exist. The Government has recently created The National Empty Homes Loans Fund which enables people to borrow the funds necessary to get empty homes back into use.

More: www.emptyhomes.com



TWYFORD PLAYGROUP

Swift action from Winchester MP Steve Brine has helped a flood-hit playgroup, which had been facing a long period of closure.

Following extensive flooding in the village of Twyford, including at the parish hall, the Twyford Playgroup was forced to close, and initial fears were that a quick relocation to the Pavilion at Hunters Park may not have been possible due to cumbersome Ofsted procedures.

Steve says; "I was told applications to re-register can take up to 26 weeks which was just unacceptable so I enlisted the personal help of Education Secretary Michael Gove and we cut through a fog of British bureaucracy to help local parents get back to work."

More: www.stevebrine.com/whereyoulive

PPP-PICK UP A PARCEL – IF YOU CAN!



MP Steve Brine is currently working with county councillor Fiona Mather to tackle long-standing problems at the Royal Mail collection centre in Winnall.

Currently, cars are forced to park along the road, which has a very busy junction onto Easton Lane, making a once easy pick up for a signed-for item of mail often impossible.

The pair are working with local representatives and the Royal Mail to explore ways to alleviate the problem.

Does this strike a chord with you?

Let Steve and Fiona have your thoughts steve.brine.mp@parliament.uk

Ways to contact your local MP

ONLINE ACCESS

EMAIL steve.brine.mp@parliament.uk

PHONE 01962 791110 or 020 7219 7189

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