



# Pauline Latham OBE MP

## Working hard for Mid Derbyshire Christmas 2014

Dear Constituent,

The lead-up to Christmas is always a busy time. Every year, I visit businesses and schools in Mid Derbyshire to wish constituents well for the festive period. As the legislative year comes to a close, business in the Commons also becomes more hectic.

November saw the end of Paul Cummins’ ‘Bloodswept Lands and Seas of Red’ exhibition at the Tower of London. I accompanied Paul, a Beefeater and volunteers who helped make the poppies and set up the exhibition to No.11 to meet the Chancellor. George Osborne very kindly agreed to waive the VAT on the sale of the poppies, which has raised even more money for the service charities concerned. Whilst there, George Osborne, on behalf of the Government negotiated to buy parts of the exhibition; namely ‘the Wave’ and ‘the Weeping Window’ to take on tour around the country. I think this is a great idea, and will allow more people to see this fantastic tribute to our servicemen.

This month, a petition was created to keep the drug Abraxane on the Cancer Drugs Fund. Abraxane can extend the lives of pancreatic cancer patients by two months, and there are very few other treatments available for the disease. I lent my support to the petition, and delivered it to the Prime Minister.

The big news this month relates to Derbyshire business. In early December, I hosted a food and drink fair in the Commons. It was a great opportunity for the county’s producers to showcase the fantastic food and drinks local to Derbyshire. There was good news for Belper over the last few weeks because the town won Great British High Street of the Year competition run by the Department for Communities and Local Government, the best from over 130 entries. The reception was held in Parliament in early December, and I attended to offer my congratulations to the town’s representatives.

I had the opportunity to spend a significant amount of time in the constituency since my last newsletter. I was invited to attend a Patient Participation Group meeting at the Whitemoor Medical Centre in Belper. It was interesting to hear the patient’s experiences of local health services, and the centre’s doctors made some interesting suggestions that I have passed on to the Secretary of State for Health.

Earlier this month, I visited Morley Primary School to speak to the children about my role as an MP. I was also treated to a showing of the school’s nativity play, and was asked to judge the best Christmas jumper competition. Children at Christmas love taking part in a Nativity play and singing all the carols for the festive season.

November saw the 25th birthday of the Little Eaton printing firm, Mercia Image and I went down to celebrate with them. This anniversary is an extraordinary feat, given the volatile nature of the printing industry. On my visit, I was pleased to see that business was booming, and that Mercia were having to take on more staff to meet demand. They printed my Christmas card this year and made an excellent job of it.

I wish you all a very happy Christmas and a very healthy and prosperous New Year. I hope to have more exciting news to report in the New Year!

Yours sincerely,

Pauline Latham

### Derbyshire Food Fair

On 3rd December, I along with Derbyshire’s other MPs hosted a Food and Drink Fair in the House of Commons.

13 producers from across Derbyshire flocked to the Commons. The event was aimed at showcasing the best of Derbyshire produce, from pyclets (even some gluten free ones) to real ale.

The rooms in which the Fair was held were very busy for most of the day, and it was great to be able to offer some of Derbyshire’s best producers the opportunity to show their wares as well as networking with others.

Notable guests included the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, the Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP, and the Secretary of State for Transport, the Rt Hon Patrick McLoughlin MP.

People from two businesses from my constituency attended the event. Fresh Basil, a deli in Belper brought all sorts of local delights with them, whilst the Bluebell Dairy had a range of frozen treats. I especially enjoyed their sloe gin sorbet!



The Culture Secretary, Sajid Javid meets the staff of Fresh Basil



### Belper wins Great British High Street of the Year

In November, the Department for Culture, Media and Sports chose Belper as the overall winner of this year’s Great British High Street of the Year Award. It also won first place in the Best Market Town category.

On 11th December, representatives from Belper came to the Commons to collect the town’s award, and I went to meet them. The atmosphere at the awards was electric and it was great to see that Belper had beaten off some formidable competition. No-one could wipe the smile off the face of the Belper representatives.

A week later in Communities and Local Government questions, I asked what the Government was doing to help high streets. It was clear that the Minister who arranged the awards, Penny Mordaunt MP was impressed with Belper, and she called the town a ‘benchmark for best practice.’

I am very proud of the retail culture in Belper, and this is largely down to the huge range of fantastic independent shops, selling fresh, local produce. What helped to persuade the judges was that the community were such a large part of the project, with local Ambassadors talking to visitors about what Belper has to offer. We haven’t heard the last from Belper because there are many new plans for the future!



Office of Mrs Pauline Latham OBE MP

The Old Station, Station Road, Spondon, Derby, DE21 7NE

t 01332 676 679

e Pauline.latham.mp@parliament.uk

### Presentation of Abraxane Petition

As an MP, I am often contacted by constituents who are having trouble accessing certain cancer drugs. These are often the most heart-rending, but rewarding cases that I deal with.

Pancreatic cancer has amongst the worst outcomes of all the cancers, and there are very few treatment options available to patients. When I heard that Abraxane could be removed from the Cancer Drugs Fund’s approved drugs list, I knew that the future was looking bleaker for pancreatic cancer patients, and I decided to take action.

I joined with other MPs to deliver a petition to No.10 Downing Street, which called for the National Institute for Clinical Excellence to keep Abraxane on the Cancer Drugs Fund. I am hopeful that the petition will be successful, and that it will improve the lives of pancreatic cancer sufferers.



### Paul Cummins and Poppy Volunteers meet the Chancellor

Last month saw the end of Paul Cummins’ ‘Bloodswept Lands and Seas of Red’ exhibition. Paul, the Beefeater who was involved with the organisation of the display and a few of the volunteers who worked on the installation were invited to meet the Chancellor at No.11 Downing Street. I also attended.

At the meeting, the Chancellor very kindly agreed to waive the VAT on the sale of the poppies, raising another £1.1 million for the service charities the proceeds of the sale were to support.

Whilst at Number 11 George Osborne negotiated to buy the poppies from the ‘Weeping Window’ and ‘the Wave’ sections of the work and would be taking them around the country.

The exhibition was a wonderful tribute to those that fell in the Great War, and I am pleased that more people across the country will have the opportunity to see it.



### Visit to Whitemoor Medical Centre

Earlier this month, I visited the Whitemoor Medical Centre in Belper to sit in on one of their Patient Participation Group sessions.

It was interesting to hear the concerns of patients and doctors about GP services, and it was actually very encouraging to hear some of their experiences.

The Centre’s doctors suggested creating a national procurement body to buy the Health Service’s most used products in bulk, which would save the NHS millions every year.

I volunteered to write to the Secretary of State for Health about some of the questions and concerns those at the meeting raised, and hope to hear from him soon.



### Visit to Morley Primary School

In early December, I visited Morley Primary School.

The road outside the school is extremely busy and although the speed limit is 30 miles per hour, cars approaching are coming from a 40 speed limit and are not slowing down sufficiently. I signed a petition, which included many signatures from teachers, parents and local people to have the 30 speed limit sign moved further away so that cars had enough time to slow down as they approached the School. Maybe there should be a 20 mph when pupils are going to and from the school to slow traffic even further.

I later met with the children, who asked me about my role as an MP. As is usually the case when I visit schools, I was very impressed with the maturity of the questions being asked.

The visit also had a Christmassy twist, and I had the opportunity to watch their nativity play. Later, I was asked to judge the ‘best Christmas jumper’ competition. It was great to see the effort some of the children had gone to, and it certainly spread some Christmas cheer!



### Visit to Mercia Image

This month saw Mercia Image celebrate its 25th anniversary. This is a fantastic feat, as the printing industry is notoriously volatile. Its success is due in no small part to its owner, Amanda Strong’s hard work and commitment.

I paid them a visit in November to celebrate their big day. I had a very informative tour of the company’s premises in Little Eaton. We then had cake and I got to meet the team.

I was very pleased to hear that business was going so well at Mercia Image. In fact, Amanda has had to take on extra staff to cope with the increase in demand. I was delighted that they were able to print my Christmas card this year!



Delivered at no extra cost to the taxpayer