

# Sojan Joseph MP

Ashford, Hawkinge, and the Villages



Thank you for signing up to my monthly newsletter. I will be using this to keep you informed about my work in the constituency and Westminster.

Over the last month we have seen wages and pensions increase for thousands of people up and down the country, as well as all across our constituency.

The Government's commitment to the Triple-Lock on pensions saw state pensions rise by 4.6% - £470 per year for millions of people from the week of the 10<sup>th</sup> April.

Being able to pass legislation which will put more money in the pockets of working people and pensioners - such as the Employment Rights Bill - is going to be a key part of the Government's Plan for Change. I felt incredibly fortunate to have been able to walk through the voting lobbies in the House of Commons and be a part of passing these Bills into law.



Joining the Deputy PM, Angela Rayner, to talk about the Government's plans to Make Work Pay



With the Rail Minister, Lord Hendy, and Helena Dollimore MP to discuss the future of European travel in Kent.

We have also had more promising news regarding European travel. On top of the recent news that the Office of Rail and Road have given Virgin's potential bid the 'green light', there has been new interest from operators, FS Italiane Group and Gemini.

Much like Virgin, these operators are in their early stages. I believe there is potentially a reason to feel optimistic. The Government is backing our efforts and I will continue to engage with any companies or operators who may bring European travel back to Ashford International.



**SOJAN JOSEPH**

Member of Parliament for Ashford, Hawkinge, and the Villages

## Get in touch!

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I will be holding more surgeries across the constituency - I have had discussions with constituents regarding the following:

- Local healthcare
- Pensions, benefits, or welfare concerns
- Council disputes
- Political Policy

Please make an appointment!

## Surgery Sign-Up:

<https://www.sojanjosephmp.com/surgeries/>



Cllr Chris Johnson and I at one of my Surgeries in Hawkinge



**May 2025**

Every month, I will update you on the progress I am making on your behalf in Ashford, Hawkinge, and the Villages – and in Westminster too.

On Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> April, MPs were called back into Westminster for a special vote to save British Steel as the Scunthorpe Steelworks was threatened with closure.

Although Scunthorpe is a long way from us here in East Kent, ensuring the future of our steel industry is of significant national importance to protect jobs, industry, supply chains, and security at home and abroad.



In Westminster Hall with my Labour colleagues on the day of the vote to save British Steel

Finally, 8<sup>th</sup> May marked 80 years since the end of the Second World War in Europe. It allowed us to reflect on our freedoms we enjoy today and give thanks to the generation who gave so much during the War.

VE Day is also a reminder of why we must always protect the rights of our fellow citizens. This especially applies to public officials, such as MPs and local councillors who are fortunate enough to have been given a public platform – we must use it to ensure the most vulnerable in society have their freedoms protected.

I also had the honour of giving a speech in the House of Commons Victory in Europe and Victory over Japan: 80th Anniversary debate. Paying tribute to the communities in our constituency who sacrificed so much during the War and the military who served in our region, notably the airman from RAF Hawkinge, was a personal highlight of my time as an MP so far.

You can read the speech in full on my website.



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To begin VE Day week, I visited Hawkinge Cemetery to pay my respects to the 96 British Military Personnel buried there.

I then attended a Raising of the Flag and Reading of the Proclamation Event at Ashford Civic Centre on the morning of VE Day and ended the day's events with a Lighting of the VE Day Beacon at Hawkinge Community Centre



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