

Sojan Joseph MP

Ashford, Hawkinge, and the Villages



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

This month, the Government launched the Women’s Health Strategy for England.

For too long, women across the country have faced medical misogyny - frequently having appointments or treatment delayed due to some healthcare professionals treating their symptoms as an inconvenience or an overreaction.

There have been cases of women waiting a decade to be diagnosed for endometriosis and nearly half a million women are on hospital gynaecology waiting lists. This is a completely unacceptable standard of service.

I believe that it is crucial to close the gap in gender health inequality. I have held events to raise awareness of menopause and maternal mental health concerns, so I was especially pleased to see the Government taking steps to address this issue by investing in education, raising awareness, and measures to cut waiting times for women’s health conditions.

I look forward to continuing to work with Ministers from the Health Department to introduce further measures to help improve women’s health.



Celebrating the launch of the Women’s Health Strategy for England with colleagues on College Green



With Tony Vaughan MP and Polly Billington MP, speaking to the Health Secretary, Wes Streeting MP, about his plans for East Kent Hospitals.



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
- Questions about Government policy
- School issues

Please make an appointment!

Surgery Sign-Up:
<https://www.sojanjosephmp.com/surgeries/>

East Kent Hospitals have been included in the Government’s Intensive Recovery Programme. This will help fast-track the crucial improvements needed to cut waiting times, improve the hospital leadership, and issues around funding allocation.

Since I was elected to Parliament, I have frequently pressed the Department of Health and Social Care for intervention - and this has become more urgent with the cases of corridor care and overcrowding at the William Harvey.

The Health Secretary also spent time meeting East Kent MPs to speak about his plans for East Kent, which I appreciated.



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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.

I would like to thank all of the parents and teachers who attended my recent roundtable ahead of the upcoming reforms to the special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) system. Hearing your insights and being able to feedback to Ministers at the Department for Education was incredibly useful and I truly appreciate everyone who attended and contributed.

I am pleased that Kent County Council has been given over £12 million to help fund SEND provision across the county to set up new Experts at Hand services. This will ensure that children in mainstream education will get the help they need. This builds on the recent £28m investment in Kent’s SEND provision, as well as funding to write off 90% of KCC’s historic SEND debt.



Holding a roundtable for parents with lived experience of the SEND system

Beaver Green Primary School and the John Wallis Church of England have both been awarded funding for new schools-based nurseries! This will help parents with their work/life balance and cut their child-care costs for parents. It is great that all these children will now have access to free pre-school education, giving them a real boost in their early years.

I’m also pleased to report that six Best Start Family Hubs will be opening up across Ashford – offering advice and services for young families such as infant support, stay-and-play sessions, and parenting advice.

The Government has also allocated £3 million to revamp East Kent College’s facilities, including Ashford College, which I am sure will be a real boost for students and staff.



Speaking with teachers at the John Wallis Church of England Academy about their new schools-based nursery



Meeting Beaver Green Primary School’s Headteacher with Cllr Brendan Chilton and Cllr Lyn Suddards



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Final session of the Representation of the People’s Bill Committee

This month also saw the Representation of the People’s Bill finish its Committee Stage, which I was proud to serve on.

Being able to scrutinise such a significant piece of legislation – which will extend voting rights to 16 and 17-year-olds, strengthen our democracy by clamping down on dodgy donors and foreign interference in elections, was a fantastic thing to be part of.

Seeing the franchise extended for the first time in decades and giving more young people the opportunity to fully engage in the democratic process is incredibly exciting, so I cannot wait to see this Bill pass through its remaining stages and into law.

As I am sure some of you have noticed, I have changed the colour scheme of the newsletter to ‘House of Commons’ Green from purple and white.

I want to ensure that my newsletter is accessible to everyone, whilst remaining vibrant. If you do have any suggestions regarding how it can be improved please do get in touch.

