

Adam Holloway MP

Spring 2006 Newsletter



“MP gets vote for pure commitment” headed up the November article in the *Kent Messenger* after a visit to the House of Commons.

Since being elected I have never worked so hard – it makes covering the news on the frontline in Bosnia and Iraq seem a little sedate.

I most often work a seven-day week with my weekend starting around 6pm on a Sunday. We get around 150 letters a day and it is sometimes a real challenge to keep on track, but with the help of my excellent staff we are now on top of things.

You don't get any induction or advice once you have won a seat and the staff you employ have not worked in the system before. It is a baptism of fire that has its redeeming points. I am here to help people who have genuinely exhausted all other avenues and I look forward to hearing from you.

People in a community make the difference. I have been heartened by so many dedicated people who are involved in helping the disadvantaged in Gravesham. It is only by joining in that all our lives will be improved – whether you become a volunteer, help out at your local school, join the disabled hotline, join Neighbourhood Watch – **PLEASE see the back page.**

**YOU CAN MAKE THE DIFFERENCE
AND BUILD A SAFE AND HAPPY COMMUNITY.**

Adam

GRAVESHAM'S
**BIG
ISSUE**



... it is still crime and anti-social behaviour. In my last newsletter via the *Kent Messenger* newspaper, I demonstrated how I have been lobbying the police in north Kent and talking to victims and residents about this problem.

The only way to get more police is by reporting crime as these statistics are what should make the Home Office allocate more money to police in north Kent.



FIGHTING AGAINST CRIME AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN GRAVESHAM





Adam goes back to school

During the year I have visited many schools getting to know the pupils, parents and children. What has struck me is that when a small group of parents and carers get together to improve facilities, provide after school and pre school clubs then it gets done and makes such a difference – King's Farm Primary School is a fantastic example of this – all credit to Stella Garner, headteacher, who does a brilliant job under difficult social circumstances.



Adam with King's Farm Primary School nursery class and their head of nursery, and deputy head, Paul Jackson



Adam with Year 6 children from Wrotham Road Primary School who were learning to construct a bridge

Sid Russell

A lot of you will know Sidney, my Jack Russell, whom I adopted and helped me make friends with a lot of people in Gravesham.

Sadly, because of Sidney's advanced years, he has had to retire. He is living with my mother and her dogs in Scotland. I will miss Sidney greatly and I know a lot of you will wish him well.



left: Sidney with one of Adam's mother's dogs, Henry

Walk, Talk and Report - that's the role of the Community Wardens

In November, I went out on the beat with Jacqueline Fuller and Mandy Cason, two of Kent County Council's Community Wardens, who described their role as "Walk, Talk and Report".

Gravesham's Community Wardens provide re-assurance to the local community and acts as a facilitator between the three agencies: the police, social services and Kent County Council and acts as a deterrent for anti-social behaviour.



Mandy believes that they reduce the fear of crime in the community, look out for the elderly and encourage youth activities, particularly with the new Judson's Rec facility. Mandy, Warden for Vigo, said, "we are particularly proud of our relationship with the youth of the area, they have a particular rapport".





A night in casualty...



On a Friday evening last October I put on a nurse's uniform and rubber gloves - no, NOT what you might think. I had arranged to spend a night shift - 8.30 pm. to 7.30 a.m - in the Accident and Emergency Department at Darent Valley Hospital. I wanted to see first hand the arrangements for dealing with my constituents in emergency, and to have a look at the pressures facing the NHS staff.

Soon after arriving the red phone rang. The ambulance service was bringing in someone with a very, very severe injury. Over a dozen people - doctors and nurses - headed into the resuscitation room and got ready to deal with this major trauma. I would like to describe more of what I saw after they arrived, but

there is a very slight possibility that the family concerned might read this even though they do not live in Gravesham.

The thing that most struck me throughout the shift was the number of people coming into the A and E with relatively trivial ailments - period pains, a broken finger nail, a bit of a headache, "I am feeling tired".

Of course, part of this is the problem of getting GP out of hours visits - but a very large part is to do with people just not thinking. What the people in the waiting room do not realise is that the A and E staff are worked off their feet anyway - and that those presenting with trivial ailments are merely putting more pressure on them. Pressure that they really don't need when they are in the next room trying to stop the person with a huge injury from dying.

I spent a lot of time clearing up vomit, mop in hand. From around 2 a.m. the drunks involved in fights arrived, as did some of their victims. Blood, broken teeth and sick. The person with the huge injury died - and then the nurses had to take care of the relatives.

It would be good if people with trivial problems stopped clogging up A and E, and if people could grow up and stop beating one another up. The only reason that the system does not collapse under this pressure is the amazing commitment, compassion and professionalism of the staff.

Friday Night, Down and Out



Parrock Street, raising around £3,500 for charity. Brother Roy Kennedy, the manager, said: "It was probably not everyone's idea of a great Friday night out, but this money makes a huge difference to the work we are able to do".

"The hostel houses up to six single homeless men or women. The men are traditionally the most difficult

people to house as local authorities give them the lowest points on the housing list".

Those sleeping in the car park included Mrs Bridie Laughlin, the former Mayoress of Gravesham, Sidney the dog and me. I showed one of the films that I made whilst living homeless for three months in London in the 1990s. We must not forget that there remains a significant problem of homeless single men. Because of some excellent government initiatives you may not see many sleeping rough, but tens of thousands are still out there "sofa surfing" in friends' houses because they have no where else to go.

If you would like to take part in this year's Friday night down and out - or to sponsor this year's participants, please call Brother Roy on **01474 329514**.



Adam Holloway MP

Spring 2006 Newsletter



Advice and contacts for the vulnerable and elderly

Since becoming your MP I have been meeting various groups that help vulnerable people, some of which are detailed here.

Firstly, the Senior Safety Scheme is run by Help the Aged and Kent Council Council, also known as 'Handy Van'. This scheme is a service available to the over 60's to replace locks and bolts and is free if you have less than £25,000 in the bank. Tel: **01255 473999** or www.helptheaged.org.uk

Datalink – a service for people with medical conditions. You are given a capsule marked with a green and white cross that keeps your personal details such as GP, pets, next of kin, etc. and is then placed in the egg compartment of the fridge as this is the last place that will be destroyed in a fire. A sticker is placed on the outside of

the fridge and on the inside of the front door. In case of an emergency the police will look for this sticker. This is free of charge.

Nominated Neighbour – A lot of people are not happy opening their front door to callers. This scheme arranges for a neighbour to accompany callers into your home such as utility companies. You would show your card to the caller who then knocks on your nominated neighbour's door who then accompanies the caller into your home.

For details on both schemes call: Catherine Mulholland, Police Liaison Officer on **01474 565127** or email nhw.northkent@kent.pnn.police.uk



Volunteer Bureau

This organisation is a dynamic volunteer service and could enhance your CV or help you get back to work after a break by learning new skills and helping disadvantaged people. It needs volunteers. You can offer as little time as you would like. PLEASE contact Jenny Lane on **01474 322729**.



Dial NW Kent

Dial is the disabled helpline. Help them by becoming a volunteer to advise disabled people on getting help. You could give advice for things like helping a mother who needs a swimming teacher for her disabled son or point someone in the right direction to get a blue badge for their car. Call Celia Hammond on **01474 537666** or info@dialwk.org.uk



Neighbourhood Watch – To tackle crime you must become involved

Extra police are not enough. You have to play your part to create safer, local communities. You live and work in the area, you know the people who are most vulnerable and you know the specific problems in your area. You can help tackle crime by joining or setting up a Neighbourhood Watch scheme. Get in touch with Catherine Mulholland, Police Liaison Officer on **01474 565127** or email: nhw.northkent@kent.pnn.police.uk

And finally ...

Would you like to help distribute this newsletter as a community service? Perhaps you already deliver Parish magazines or newspapers. If so, get in touch with Janice Small, Constituency Communications: telephone: **01732 885078**.

Please feel very free to contact me:

House of Commons:

020 7219 8402

Gravesend:

01474 332097

Email:

adamholloway@ntlworld.com

By post:

**Adam Holloway MP
House of Commons,
London SW1A 0AA**



FIGHTING AGAINST CRIME AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN GRAVESHAM

