

Mel Stride MP

2021 Reporting Back - www.melstridemp.com



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House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA
mel.stride.mp@parliament.uk

Dear Constituent,

I hope you and your family have stayed safe and well during an extraordinarily challenging year. This newsletter covers just a fraction of my work locally and in Westminster in 2021, such as:

PUBLIC SERVICES: I have continued to support our community hospitals and our schools, and after a decade of personal campaigning and £40million of Government investment in our constituency, the new rail service between Okehampton and Exeter via Crediton begins!

BUSINESS SUPPORT: As Chair of the Treasury Select Committee I fought successfully for help for local businesses and the self-employed, securing key concessions from the Government that have protected vital jobs. I have continued to champion our post offices and local pubs – the last remaining local amenities for many communities in Central Devon.

ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE: I recently attended COP26, and in parliament I have published a major report on how international banking and finance can be re-engineered to facilitate the path to net zero.

Mel Stride, Member of Parliament for Central Devon

P.S. As ever, I receive a huge amount of correspondence from constituents. If I can assist you in any way please get in touch by emailing mel.stride.mp@parliament.uk. For urgent enquiries ring 0207 219 7037.

Healthcare

After the Royal Devon & Exeter Hospital moved some services out of **Moretonhampstead** Hospital, Mel organised a key ministerial meeting this summer over the hospital's future, securing a ministerial assurance that the hospital will be retained as a key part of our local healthcare delivery. He is also working to retain GP surgery provision in **Pathfinder Village**.

Mel pictured with League of Friends Chair Sarah Parker-Khan in **Ashburton** discussing new outpatient services coming to Ashburton & Buckfastleigh Health & Wellbeing Centre.



Climate Change



Mel attended COP26 in Glasgow and has chaired a major parliamentary inquiry into how to decarbonise the economy and promote green finance. Mel's report as Chair of the Treasury Select Committee can be found at www.melstridemp.com/netzero.

Rail & Roads

For over a decade Mel helped to lead the campaign for the new **Okehampton** to Exeter rail service which was opened this November. He met with Network Rail and GWR representatives in Okehampton in May (below) to check the service was on schedule and has since focused on securing funding for a new station on the eastern edge of town.



Mel has taken up various road safety issues in his constituency during 2021, including in **Silverton** and **Lapford**.

Animal Welfare



In October Mel visited the RSPCA Little Valley animal shelter, between **Whitstone** and **Ide**, to learn more about their vital work. He is supporting national legislation that will further raise animal welfare standards.

Business

Mel has helped local businesses access support schemes and has been a prominent voice in Parliament for greater consideration of the impact of Covid-19 restrictions on businesses. Mel is pictured at a leading wedding venue in the **Teign Valley** discussing the limit of 30 guests being lifted and at Stage Engage near **Longdown** talking about how the events industry is bouncing back from Covid-19.



Education

Mel has visited several local primary schools this year (when Covid-19 restrictions have allowed) to discuss catch up support, award art prizes and talk to pupils about Parliament and the environment. His visits have included **Christow, Hatherleigh, Bovey Tracey** and Landscore (**Crediton**).



Policing & Crime

Mel has lobbied the Government for amendments to the Online Safety Bill to tackle online fraud committed through paid-for adverts placed with big tech companies. He has also launched a major Treasury Select Committee inquiry into economic crime with a special focus on money-laundering.

Earlier this year Mel teamed up with our Police and Crime Commissioner Alison Hernandez to warn local residents about Covid-19 scams, including fake NHS vaccine texts seeking money.

Mel continues to support greater national investment in policing - 229 more officers have been recruited in Devon & Cornwall since 2019.

Cycle Links

Mel has worked hard with local campaigners to extend the Wrey Valley Trail from **Moretonhampstead** to **Chagford**. Known locally as the Greenway Project, it will reduce carbon emissions, improve safety for cyclists and walkers and boost local tourism.

In June Mel visited **Hatherleigh** to lend his support for a safer cycle link to **Meeth** and for a Changing Places Toilet at Made-Well to make cycling and walking more disabled-accessible.



Post Offices

Central Devon has the third highest number of post offices of any constituency in the country and one of Mel's top priorities as an MP has been to keep them open (and where possible, increase their opening hours). He has visited several this year to catch up with staff and has been supporting **Ashburton** Post Office (below) with their ambitious extension plans.



Farming

Having previously led legislation which introduced fines of up to £100million for supermarkets that deal unfairly with our farmers, Mel has continued to stand up for local farmers, lobbying DEFRA ministers during 2021 over issues including the Groupage Export Facilitation Scheme, the Sustainable Farming Incentive Scheme and funding for young farmers.

Mel has also raised specific concerns about labour shortages which affect food distribution supply chains (watch Mel's speech in the Commons at www.melstridemp.com/budgetnov21). To help farmers and other rural businesses he has continued to press for faster rural broadband speeds.

Pubs

Mel has continued to push for greater support for our pubs and was delighted when the Chancellor announced a 3p cut in beer duty in his autumn budget.

He assisted the **Stoke Canon** Inn with a successful fundraising bid for a new space for community groups to meet and is pictured below in **Tedburn St Mary**.



Culture & Heritage

Mel has supported local charities and voluntary organisations throughout the year, including those who do valuable work preserving our local heritage such as the South Devon Railway in **Buckfastleigh** (pictured).



In September Mel introduced his own personal legislation in the House of Commons to support British museums by providing greater legal protection for cultural artefacts. For more visit www.melstridemp.com/culture.