

**THE CLACTON CONVERSATION**  
**NEWS ROUND-UP FROM GILES WATLING MP**  
**MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR CLACTON**

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**BREXIT**

As you will probably be aware, the Prime Minister has now secured a new deal with the European Union, and, although not perfect, I consider this to be a deal that is worth supporting. You will also be aware that the House of Commons sat last Saturday, for the first time in decades, and that the Prime Minister's deal was not approved. For your information, here is my statement in advance of the sitting last Saturday:

*"Some 70% of residents in the Clacton constituency voted for Brexit, and 60% voted for me when I promised to deliver on the result of that referendum. Moreover, I was elected on a manifesto that promised to leave with a deal, whilst being prepared to walk away without a deal if acceptable terms could not be secured.*

*"That pledge has guided my decisions ever since and I am delighted that the Prime Minister has now delivered a better deal that removes the undemocratic backstop and ensures that we finally take back control. I will vote for this new deal tomorrow (19th October 2019).*

*"It is time to get Brexit done and move beyond the current malaise. This deal will do that, and I hope that the majority of my colleagues will vote in favour tomorrow."*

It is, of course, incredibly frustrating that, following the votes in Parliament last night, the progress of the Withdrawal Agreement Bill (WAB) has now stalled. This piece of legislation, when passed, will implement and approve the Prime Minister's new deal, and, therefore, offers a way forward. That is why I supported the WAB last night, and I am pleased that it passed Second Reading with a majority of 30 – I even stood by the Whips to count the votes myself! Although that feeling of elation was short lived, and I was shocked that the subsequent vote on the Program Motion, which sets the timetable for debating the Bill, was lost by 14. Consequently, the WAB is unlikely to make further progress and it is now probable that we will not leave on 31st October 2019. That is because of the failure to pass the WAB, thanks to Labour and other opposition parties choosing to vote for more delay, even after the House approved the deal!

In terms of next steps, the European Union are now expected to offer an extension to Article 50. This offer must be accepted by the Prime Minister, as set out in the Benn Act. However, as I have said before, I am not required to support an extension and will not vote for it when the necessary legislation comes before the House – I did not vote to extend in March, and I will not vote to extend now. Following the extension, and if the WAB resumes its progress through the House, I will continue to support it. Importantly, this legislation will also be amendable and, as we consider any amendments to the WAB, I will remain true to the pledges I was elected upon, and the promises I have made to constituents since.

Therefore:

- I will vote to keep the no deal option on the table;
- I will vote against any extension to the Article 50 process;
- I vote against any second referendum amendment that may be attached to the WAB;
- I will vote against a customs union amendment that may be attached to the WAB.

The results of my recent Brexit Survey demonstrate that the majority of constituents want me to vote in this way, so that is what I will do. I have always voted to respect the wishes of residents. And I hope that we will formally begin the process of leaving on the 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019, as this remains the date when we are scheduled to enter the transition period. But I appreciate that there is now a majority in Parliament determined to frustrate our exit on that date. Again, this is disappointing.

Personally, I am proud to have represented my local area in Parliament at this historic time, and this new deal delivers on the wishes of the majority in a way that, I believe, should be welcomed by the most ardent of leavers, and even those who voted to remain. Because, we need to pass this deal and get Brexit done. I hope all colleagues will bear that in mind in the coming days.

It is time to move on from this and focus on delivering an exciting domestic agenda, built on the foundations of a strong economy that will deliver: more police officers, more funding for our schools and hospitals, and truly world-class infrastructure. And, of course, a domestic agenda that no longer overlooks places like the Clacton constituency, as has so often been the case in the past. In fact, I have today made a supplication to the Treasury, ahead of the Budget, to request a significant increase in funding to our coastal communities.

**That is what I will be voting for in the coming days: to respect the result of the referendum and to deliver the outcome that the majority of constituents clearly want. And to do so as soon as possible, so we can move on to consider other equally important issues.**

## [CLACTON CONSTITUENCY NEWS](#)

After what seems like a very long campaign, I am pleased that North East Essex CCG (NEECCG) will agree leadership arrangements for three local GP surgeries by December 2019. The three surgeries in question, Frinton Road Medical Practice in Holland-on-Sea, Epping Close Surgery in Clacton-on-Sea, and Green Elms Medical Centre in Jaywick, are currently run by ACE, but will be replaced by more sustainable long-term leadership arrangements. [Read more here.](#)

Great news that Clacton has been shortlisted to benefit from the £1 billion Future High Streets Fund (FHSF). If successful, Tendring District Council will be eligible for up to £25 million of capital investment to invest in infrastructure, housing and work spaces. [Read more here.](#)

New infrastructure funding has also been allocated to schemes that will benefit the Tendring peninsular. In total this funding amounts to over £600 million and will ensure that the necessary infrastructure is in place as new housing is built. And the projects to be financed include a new link road between the A120 and A133 to ease congestion, and a new station in Chelmsford to reduce overcrowding on the railways. [Read more here.](#)

And in terms of infrastructure, I will be taking over the role of Chair on the Great Easter Mainline Taskforce from Rt Hon Priti Patel MP, who has found other things to be getting on with! A focus of mine will be to improve the rails to our constituency. [Read more here.](#)

UK Parliament week will run from 2nd to 8th November, and aims to engage people, especially young people, from different backgrounds and communities, with the UK Parliament and empower them to get involved. You could set up a local event. [Read more here.](#)

I recently visited Jaywick Sands Revival Club to discuss how he can better support their important work. I am also pleased to announce that I will be organising a 'Jaywick Clean Up' to do my part to help residents, and Tendring District Council are also keen to support those efforts. Let me know if you want to get involved! [Read more here.](#)

A few weeks ago, I joined the celebrations at Tendring4Growth week. Great to meet so many leading lights from our local business community. [Read more here.](#)

Clacton Lions have raised funds for a new defibrillator, which I unveiled recently. [Read more here.](#)

I have also visited the Clacton branch of Cancer Research UK. Their volunteers do great work to raise awareness of cancer. [Read more here.](#)



*With volunteers at Cancer Research UK. Make sure to donate if*

On Friday 27<sup>th</sup> September, I chaired a meeting on 'Climate Change in Clacton', which was a great honour. And it was great that that so many passionate and engaged students from Clacton Coastal Academy and Tendring Technical College were able to attend, along with activists and residents. [Read more here.](#)

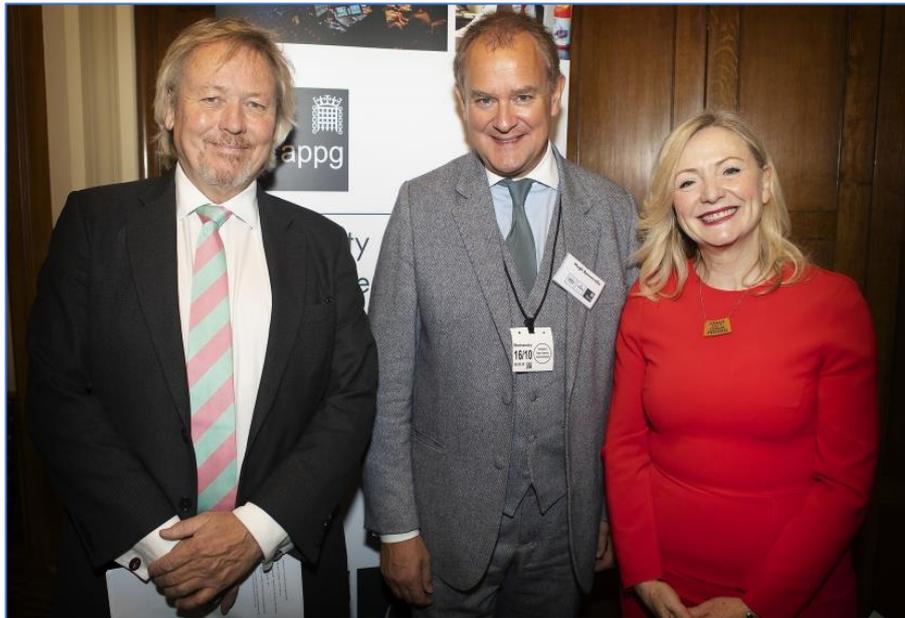
And finally, I met with Roger Hirst, who outlined how the extra police will be deployed in our area. I am pleased that there are now more police officers on the streets than there were when I was elected, which is partly due to the campaign I ran to unlock more funding. [Read more here.](#)

## PARLIAMENTARY NEWS

Following the Queen's Speech last week, I am pleased that the Government has introduced the Prisoners (Disclosure of Information About Victims) Bill, or 'Helen's Law'. The new law will place a legal duty on the Parole Board to consider the cruelty of killers who refuse to give the location of a victim's remains when assessing their release. [Read more here.](#)

The Government has also introduced the landmark Environment Bill, which will tackle the biggest environmental priorities, and which constitutes a historic step change in the way the Government protects and enhances the natural environment. [Read more here.](#)

Last week, I co-hosted the launch of the new APPG for Theatre. This will be a unique opportunity to discuss with MPs, Ministers and industry experts what we can do to help protect and enhance this vitally important creative industry. And, as a former actor, director and producer, that industry is incredibly important to me and can offer real opportunities for constituents. [Read more here.](#)



*With Hugh Bonneville and co-chair Tracy Brabin MP at the launch of the APPG for Theatre.*

At the recent Conservative Party Conference, I met with Guide Dogs to discuss the challenges that blind and partially sighted people face when walking the streets. I know this is an important issue for constituents, many of whom have contacted me to say so recently. [Read more here.](#)

Another important issue for local residents – Wear It Pink for Breast Cancer Now. A campaign I am always delighted to support, as you will see below. [Read more here.](#)

And, in recognition of my support for the Long Live the Local Campaign, I have been named as a Beer and Pub Champion by the British Beer & Pub Association. A great honour indeed! [Read more here.](#)

During his first appearance at the Despatch Box, I asked the Prime Minister about measures being taken to improve rail links to the Clacton constituency. An encouraging answer. [Read more here.](#)

I also asked the new Leader of the House when the Animal Welfare (Sentencing) Bill will return to the House. This is an important piece of legislation that [I fully support](#), as do many of my constituents. [Read more here.](#)

Finally, at the end of July, I visited Israel as part of a delegation. Living without existential threat is a basic human right, and to live in freedom from oppression is vital. I met with all sides - PLO, Arab, Israeli - both Jew and Palestinian. People there just want to live in peace, and it must be done! [Read more here.](#)