

Selaine Saxby MP for North Devon

Annual Report to Knowstone Parish

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to report back to the Parish Council on what have been an eventful few years since my election in December 2019.

At the outset, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you and indeed all of our parish councils who, when covid and lockdown struck, showed the way for their respective communities and provided the local support, help and friendship to the many vulnerable people within their communities.

In Westminster

I do encourage everyone to sign up to my regular newsletter where I give a monthly update or indeed follow me on Facebook or Twitter. I post every day and with so much going on it is almost impossible to cover everything here in this update.

A global pandemic, a war in Ukraine and cost of living pressures, despite media attempts, have not been overshadowed by cake, beer and other goings on. It is disappointing for the many of us who want to concentrate on the serious matters in hand that we are not helped by the actions or genuine mistakes of a few and the knock-on effects of a loss in confidence in all politicians to rise to the challenge. This is not about any one incident or person, but we really need to get on with the jobs we were elected to do. In the last year we have passed some landmark legislation on the environment and to protect our citizens and our borders. We did this while dealing with war and pandemic and leaving the EU.

Locally

The A361 improvements are well under way and while there are many people asking what levelling up support North Devon is getting, we should not forget that the single biggest road scheme on the peninsula is happening here. We will also soon be seeing plans for the huge investment in North Devon District Hospital and even before that, opening soon, a new investment to help clear the Covid backlog has delivered the new Jubilee Ward which will help to tackle the backlog of elective orthopaedic services. We are investing in the transport and health infrastructure of North Devon, but these investments do take time.

I have spent a lot of time talking about housing, broadband and rural affairs. I am now the senior Private Parliamentary Secretary (PPS) at the Department of Environment and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) working directly with the Secretary of State and his ministerial team. I use this opportunity, and every opportunity I get, to shout about North Devon and ensure that policy coming from Westminster works for rural and coastal areas. I have hosted debates and met with housing and broadband ministers so often that I am now often given the heads up on many Government announcements in these areas, even before the media! It is good to be persistent.

I look forward to coming out to see more people over the summer and visit many more of our communities and if there are any events coming up in or around Knowstone please do contact my office to see if I am available to come along. If there are any other issues anyone in the community would like to raise, please do email me on selaine.saxby.mp@parliament.uk or call my Barnstaple office on 01271 327990