

Report from Peter Heaton-Jones MP (Conservative, North Devon)

I was delighted to be re-elected as North Devon's MP at the General Election last June. My home is just a few miles from Knowstone, so I take a particular interest in issues local to the Parish. I very much look forward to opening Knowstone Fair on 16th June.

North Devon Link Road

Last week, we received the excellent news that our bid for funding from the government for major improvements to the North Devon Link Road has been successful. The Department for Transport will contribute £83 million, with Devon County Council providing a further £10 million.

This is the biggest government investment in North Devon for many years and will provide a significant economic boost to the region, as well as making the road safer.

The first tranche of work will be between South Molton and Barnstaple. It will provide overtaking lanes on about 70% of the route, compared to less than 10% now. There will also be major improvements to junctions. The work should start in 2020.

I'm delighted that after much lobbying, and hard work from Devon's Highways Team, we've achieved this outstanding result.

Potholes

The state of our rural roads is a cause for concern. The freezing and thawing this winter (and spring!) has made it worse than usual.

The government has given Devon County Council an extra £8.5 million recently to help deal with potholes. But the resources have to be focused on the busier routes; frankly, it's a huge challenge to fix every pothole on every back lane.

I am working with the County Council to ensure we get our fair share in North Devon.

What's important is that people report potholes through the County Council's website.

Don't assume they know about it already or that somebody else has reported it.

Farming

I have had numerous meetings with the NFU and farmers more generally in the past year. Brexit is clearly causing uncertainty. The government has committed to holding farm subsidies at their current levels until at least 2022. We await the outcome of the Brexit negotiations to see what might happen after that.

I have lobbied on behalf of North Devon farmers with the Secretary of State, Michael Gove. At my request he is due to visit the area in June, but exact details have yet to be confirmed.

Keeping in touch

This is only a very brief summary of some of the main issues. I produce a newsletter every fortnight, and you can subscribe via my website: www.peterheatonjones.org.uk

I hold regular surgeries; the nearest to Knowstone are in South Molton every 8 weeks or so. Surgeries are by appointment only, but the vast majority of cases can be handled without having to wait for a face-to-face meeting. Please contact my office and I will be delighted to assist. Email: peter.heatonjones.mp@parliament.uk, or call 01271 327990.

Peter Heaton-Jones

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