

# The nature of this site

Some of you have written in suggesting I post less on this site in order to have more time to moderate. Some of you have written in with your own views on what this site is or should be. Maybe it would help you if I told you what I think this site is.

This site is not a conventional MP website. Such sites are paid for by the taxpayer and present the MPs work in a favourable light. They are not allowed to be party political. This site is paid for by me and ranges beyond my work as an MP, though it does cover the ways I am seeking to influence the national debate in the interests of my constituents, and has local pages for constituents.

This site is not a Conservative party site. It does not reproduce the party line as this is readily available on official party sites. If I disagree with the party line or am trying to amend it I will say so here. The pieces are often about things where there is no party lines, or are about controversies raging prior to the formation of a party or government line. It is of course a site written by someone who does support the Conservative party and takes the whip.

This is not a Brexit website, though all the time press and Parliament are preoccupied by the Brexit process this site will provide commentary on that.

This is not a business website. It refuses adverts or sponsorship and does not promote any individual company interest.

The idea of the site is to provide insight, commentary and a contribution to the national debate, laced with pieces about topics I am interested in that may be of interest to others. I have, for example, run pieces about historical events and anniversaries, about cultural events, pieces about continental politics, and insights into the global economy.

I am still happy to post the views of others who want to extend the debate or add their own facts and perceptions. I will, however, simply delete pieces which may offend others, are potentially libellous or repetitiously unpleasant. Two people who try to contribute have all their pieces binned as their descriptors could give offence. I am going to bin more submissions from the one or two who disagree with anything I write and seek to undermine any positive idea or action. I also do sometimes bin long and potentially worthwhile submissions if they come from someone who has already published more than I have written that day on my site and has laced the comment with references that need checking. If the workload gets too high on busy days I will post fewer incoming messages but will not stop my own postings as I need to keep people informed.

I do not knowingly post false allegations about anyone, including about myself. Those who have tried to post false allegations about me will be able to find the true position in what I have written here.

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## The EU needs a new migration policy

The recent refusal of the new Italian government to accept a boat carrying many migrants has thrown into sharp contrast varying attitudes on the continent to this vexed issue. Mrs Merkel who used to speak for Germany and the EU still thinks the EU should welcome in all who want to come. The newly constrained Mrs Merkel trying to keep together a coalition of opposites on this as so much else after her bad defeat in the election is having to compromise and toughen her position. Her one time allies, the CSU, are in open disagreement from inside government.

The Italian government and the German AfD Opposition, along with the CSU, challenge the idea behind the EU humanitarian policy of picking up anyone from the Med who is seeking to come to the EU and delivering them safely to Italy or Greece. Doesn't this, they ask, just encourage more nasty get rich quick people smugglers to take their money and embark migrants on unsafe boats in the knowledge they will soon be picked up by EU naval vessels? Why are economic migrants brought to the EU if they do not have permits rather than be returned to the last safe country they left? On the other side Mrs Merkel points out that the EU is a group of decent nations who come to the humanitarian aid of those in peril on the sea, however this has come about. Indeed at the peak of the recent migration Mrs Merkel went further and saw the migrants as a plus for a strong German economy in need of extra labour.

The large number of migrants places demands on housing, infrastructure and public services. Electors in Eastern Europe, Germany, Italy and elsewhere are voting in larger numbers for restrictions on migrant numbers. The EU has allowed countries to build big walls and border fences to arrest the flows, and has helped finance a very long Turkish border defence now there is free movement between Turkey and the EU. Mr Salvini in Italy and the CSU in Germany are now in a position to demand change. Meanwhile the UK can get on with designing a new border system which is generous to asylum seekers, helpful to business needing skilled people, but capable of delivering the controlled migration Mrs May has always promised us.

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## The Wokingham Northern distributor road

I attended the Council consultation about this road today, held at Cantley House Hotel. For all interested there is an on line version on Wokingham Borough's website (Search NWDR) and printed versions available from the

Borough offices.

I stressed the need for more road capacity soon to deal with the chronic congestion problems, as well as the need to look after safety and control noise close to homes.

I pointed out that the Council is in discussion with the government about a strategic local road network with my encouragement. They have identified the A329 as well as the A329 M and the A 3290 as potential strategic highways eligible to apply for more government money for expansion and improvement.

I suggested they should decide if they wish to make the new Winnersh bypass and the Northern Distributor Road the new principle through road or if the A329 is to retain this status, as this will impact on the nature and design of the road. It seems likely cyclists for example will often prefer the A329 as it is the shorter through route with slower vehicle traffic than the new road.

There needs to be careful consideration to the separation of pedestrians and cyclists from vehicles to reduce accidents, and maximum road width to allow for large vehicles. Junctions should be roundabouts, not light sets. The flood defences need to be good as the route chosen goes through areas prone to flooding. The engineering needs to ensure there are no adverse knock on effects of flooding to nearby properties.

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## Quality and efficiency are allies, not enemies

There is still plenty of work to do to raise efficiency and quality in various public services. Some in the public sector seem to think efficiency means cuts, and cuts means lower quality. That is not the way to do it. Doing things efficiently should mean doing them better.

If you get something right first time you avoid the costs of changing and remedying, or the even bigger costs of having to apologise and compensate if the good or service has gone out in bad shape. If you harness more machine and computing power to a good programme design you can improve accuracy and quality whilst speeding up the process and cutting its cost. Modern digital technology offers huge scope to both raise quality and cut costs if done well. It also offers new ways to mess things up and to make life more difficult for the consumer.

Let's take the case of NHS supplies. A good system would cut down stockholding of drugs and specialised food products in the system, reducing waste from poor holding and handling, and from items going out of date. More just in time deliveries to hospitals, surgeries and users would reduce the

amount of medicine or specialist food that is tipped away as unwanted when a patient recovers. Some hospitals still do not have computer controlled drug dispensing, with suitable controls over what is administered, when and in what quantities. Doing it through a drugs trolley with staff members reading the notes and then fidnign the medicine leaves more scope for error than a system based on a patients computer record and computerised handling of the required drugs. I have talked before about the return and reuse of hardware like wheelchairs, crutches and other aids.

There is the direction and use of manpower. Public service personnel are crucial to successful public services. Their dedication and professional skill are the essence of much of it. Not only do they need proper computer and machine back up to do their jobs, but they also need intelligent direction of effort by management who see where they are needed and can make their best input. Some managers do this well, but there needs to be a constant effort to ensure personnel are well deployed. I have seen cases where two health visitors have turned up to an elderly person facing a problem, only to discover neither of them could resolve the query. Home visits are important but are expensive, so it is crucial the preparation for them directs the right manpower to the right home to sort the issue.

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## The benefits of Brexit

The Prime Minister tells us the government is committed to Brexit and wishes to deliver the benefits it can bring. That is good news.

I look forward to early news from the government on the following.

First, I want to know how all the money saved is going to be spent, and a sense of urgency in getting us out of financial commitments as soon as possible. I have set out my own suggestions for increased spending on health, social care and other priorities. Spending that money at home gives a 0.6% GDP boost and saves us a lot of money on our balance of payments deficit.

Second, I want to see our new fishing policy as we become an independent coastal state. We need a policy that is kinder to our fish and our fishermen, and which lands more the fish caught in the UK for UK consumption.

Third, I want to see a new migration and borders policy which is fair between EU and non EU migrants, and assists the government in hitting its targets for levels of migration.

Fourth, I want to see the Trade Department roll over the current EU trade agreements with other countries into UK agreements and make good progress on negotiating good agreements with more of the 90% of the non EU world that does not have a trade agreement with the EU. I want the UK to offer reduced tariffs and barriers to developing countries in return for more market access

for ourselves.

Fifth I want to see tax cuts in areas where we cannot cut taxes at the moment, including the abolition of VAT on green products and domestic fuel.

Sixth I want to hear what our global agenda will be as we regain our vote and voice on a number of important international bodies.