



Valerie cuts the ribbon to open Cardan Pointe



I was invited by WHG to cut the ribbon to open Cardan Pointe Housing scheme, for over 55s on the Waterfront. Gary Fulford the Chief Executive of WHG and Cllr Eddie Hughes the Chair of WHG, together with the staff and residents, gathered to celebrate this excellent development of 19 1 bed and 25 2 bed flats. The people I spoke to were



absolutely delighted with their flat and the location. The Waterfront has seen great development since I was first elected in 2010 and is becoming a lively area. This is the first of the schemes, with 2 others in Walsall North and Aldridge Brownhills, which will be opened soon. This provides an excellent integrated health and social care service.

Valerie meets Year 7 at West Walsall E- ACT Academy



I spoke to Year 7 pupils at West Walsall E-ACT Academy on 9 September 2016. Year 7 had started a unit called Citizen Me and their teacher Ms Yousaf suggested I talk about my role as a Member of Parliament. I mentioned that as an MP I have to represent the whole of my Walsall South constituency, irrespective of whether they voted for me or not. I suggested Year 7 have a debate and I will officiate as the Speaker in the debate.

Higher Education and Research Bill Committee



The first two sittings of the Higher Education and Research Bill Committee, of which I am a member, were held on 6 September 2016. I asked the Minister for Universities and Science whether there had been any discussions about how the change in the machinery of government would affect the Bill, given that it



would be split between two Departments. The Minister responded and said that the machinery of Government changes had gone through in July and that the lines of ownership were clear. On 8 September 2016, the Bill Committee had its 3rd and 4th sitting, and I moved the amendment to change the name from the Office for Students to Office for Higher Education. The Bill Committee will continue to scrutinise the Bill during sessions in October 2016.

Darlaston Allotment Society flowers and vegetable show



The Darlaston Allotment Society held its annual show of flowers and vegetables on Saturday 10 September 2016. I was pleased to be able to drop into the show after my surgery at Darlaston Town Hall. It was wonderful to meet Gordon Hughes, one of the judges, Colin and Jack. The society is 102 years old. Magnificent leeks and dahlias were among the



abundant produce. Gordon told me that vegetables should have uniformity, lack of disease and good shape and size. Gordon, Colin and Jack are keen to get schools involved with their work. Visits to the allotment at Darlaston is a good starting point.

Kaleigh's bear campaign



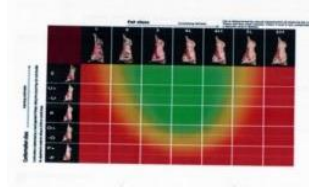
I was glad to meet Kaleigh's bear on 14 September 2016, in support of Kaleigh aged 6 years and diagnosed with DIPG (Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma) – a rare brain tumour mainly affecting children aged between 4- 10. Her family and friends have launched a campaign for greater funding for research into DIPG and childhood brain tumours. Kaleigh has created 7 teddy bears that are 'on tour' seeking to appear in as many photographs as possible to promote their campaign and parliamentary petition.

Valerie meets Holocaust survivor John Hajdu

On 14 September 2016, I was honoured to meet John Hajdu, a survivor of the Holocaust in Hungary. Having lived in the UK since 1957, John's experience of life after the Holocaust and as a refugee tell of the turmoil of post-World War Two Europe. John spoke to a packed room who listened in silence at how he managed to overcome the terrible atrocities. Holocaust Memorial Day takes place on 27 January marking the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest Nazi death camp.



Environmental Food and Rural Affairs Committee



The EFRA Committee met to discuss Beef Grading Prices. The principal aim of the EU beef carcass classification scheme is to ensure a common standard for the description of beef carcasses throughout the EU. The picture shows the classification of carcasses for conformation and fat cover. There are two main ways of grading the beef. One is by the digital process of Video Image Analysis and the other is by an MLG grader, a licensed person. However some farmers are concerned that the digital process does not give them the opportunity to appeal from the result.

Valerie chairs Westminster Hall Debate on Prison Safety

On 15 September 2016, I chaired a Westminster Hall Debate on Prison Safety. Robert Neill MP, Chair of the Justice Committee, moved the debate and the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Justice, Sam Gyimah MP responded. The debate covered self-inflicted deaths, self-harm, homicides and assaults in prison in England and Wales.



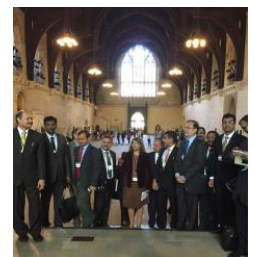
Government postpones Land Registry privatisation

The Government has put on hold its plans to sell off the Land Registry, while Ministers review responses to the Government's consultation. Back in May, at Business of the House questions, I raised this important issue and called for an urgent debate on the Land Registry. The postponement of Government's plan to sell off the land registry is welcomed news for Land Registry staff, campaigners and users of the Land Registry's services. But what is needed now, is for the Government to formally announce that it will scrap this unwanted plan. It is clear that people do not want the land registry to be sold off. A petition against the plans has been signed by 317,930 people.

Civil servants from India visit Parliament



On 23 September 2016, I welcomed a delegation of Indian Civil Servants to Parliament. I spoke on the role of an MP and the functions of Parliament and then gave the delegation a tour of Parliament, including a visit to the House of Commons chamber and through Westminster Hall.



Boundary Commission Review Published

The Government has legislated that the 2018 Review must reduce the number of MPs from 650 to 600. The Boundary Commission for England, an independent and impartial body, has produced a review of the new boundaries to ensure that each constituency has roughly the same number of electors. The Boundary Commission have not been able to include the 2 million extra voters for the EU referendum. The numbers in the unelected House of Lords are increasing while the elected Commons are being reduced by this Tory government.

For Walsall, the Boundary Commission have proposed two new constituencies, Walsall Central and Aldridge, Brownhills and Bloxwich. All the wards for Walsall South are moved into Walsall Central together with the wards of Birchills Leamore, and Blakenall, from the existing Walsall North constituency. Walsall South's Pheasey Park Farm moves into Birmingham Erdington. Walsall North's other wards will be merged into the constituencies: Wednesfield and Willenhall, and Aldridge, Brownhills and Bloxwich.

The consultation on the report will run for 12 weeks between September and December 2016 and the final report will be submitted to Parliament, to be agreed by both houses, by September 2018. If Parliament agrees the changes to boundaries, the new constituencies will take effect at the next scheduled General Election in 2020.

The 38 Bus

- The 38 bus has been terminated, without consultation. I have written to the Director for Transport Services at West Midlands Combined Authority calling for the reinstatement of the service.

Parliamentary Questions

- The former Justice Secretary Chris Grayling MP had previously banned relatives sending packages of books to inmates; at Justice Questions on 6 September, I asked the Secretary of State for Justice: “Will the Secretary of State confirm that there will be no return to the policy of banning books for prisoners?”. Elizabeth Truss MP: “I confirm that books are freely available in prison”.
- Question to the Leader of the House, David Lidington MP: “May we have a debate on the NHS?. NHS Walsall clinical commissioning group, my local CCG, has had to find savings of £22 million. That is going to have a direct effect on Walsall Manor hospital and on social services. They need extra money, rather than to have to make cuts, so may we have that debate?”

Key Votes

- **European Union 10 Minute Rule Motion:** Conservative MP, Charlie Elphicke introduced a Bill on 14 September 2016 bill to implement the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from membership of the European Union. It was defeated: Ayes: 50, Noes: 179.
 - **Vote on the Finance Bill:** On 5 and 6 September, Parliament debated the Finance Bill. HM Opposition Labour Party called for a wide-ranging review of the UK tax gap and reform proposals, including an amendment requiring the Government to publish an annual report on the tax gap, this amendment was rejected. The opposition amendment drawn up by Labour MP Caroline Flint, however, was successful. The amendment states that tax information should include a “country-by-country report”, showing what revenues are earned in which nation. This could force multinational organisations to publicly declare this information.
 - **Recess:** Parliament is currently not sitting during the conference recess and returns on Monday 10 October 2016.
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