

View from the House – 12 May 2014

This week Parliament is prorogued. The Session, 2013-14 comes to an end. The Queen's assent to any remaining Acts passed by both Houses is signified by the Norman French phrase "La Reyne le veult". A rough translation is "the Queen wills it". And back to the Commons the Speaker signifies Parliament is prorogued. The new Session opens with the Queen's Speech on 4 June. During prorogation no business of the House can be conducted. Select Committees cannot hear evidence or produce reports.

I was pleased I was able to raise the plight of the Nigerian schoolgirls abducted by a terrorist organisation. At Business questions I asked the Leader of the House if the Government could provide help. The Minister at the FCO did respond that weekend and the US came on board. I tweeted that I had raised the issue in the Commons to both #BringBackOurGirls. Please add your voice.

The Royal Society of Chemistry and I are on a mission with their first woman President Lesley Yellowlees, to encourage diversity in Science. I hosted an event in the House with Dr Hal Sosabowski, from the University of Brighton and his team who undertook some interesting experiments. Prof Hal explained the science behind glow-sticks, a liquid nitrogen shower and a flaming methane mamba of soap bubbles. There were many willing MPs including the Minister Edward Timpson and Douglas Alexander. The RSC and Prof Hal showed that Science can be interesting and fun.

This theme is being taken up by WISE who are holding an event for girls, parents and teachers on 28 June at Walsall College to encourage girls who are interested in Science and Maths to meet women who have careers in engineering. We have a wonderful tradition in the West Midlands of engineering. Do pass the message on to any girls you know. I have written to all the Schools. More information can be found on www.wisecampaign.org.uk

I was at the Saddlers for their final game. Adam Chambers was Man of that Match and other good young players including Mal Benning, Craig Westcarr top scorer, suggest an exciting new season.

Finally, I received good news that the Royal Institution's historic Albemarle Street home where many ground breaking experiments were carried out, will continue to be the centre of operations for the foreseeable future. A meeting with the minister, support from MPs for my Early Day Motion and the scientific community have all paid off.

Valerie Vaz MP