

## **View from the House**

During the Summer Adjournment I raised the traffic chaos that has ensued following the closure of the southbound entry slip-road at Junction 9 of the M6. I have never seen any works taking place on or under the slip road. No information was provided about why the slip road is closed. There is confusion about when the slip-road will reopen. Highway England's press release of 20 May 2015 mentioned a 30 November 2015 opening but a bulletin of 15 June 2015 mentioned a 30 July 2015 opening.

At the end of the debate, I was pleased with the response from the Deputy Leader of the House but alarmed when she said that the slip road has been closed to reduce congestion on the M6 and local roads. The closure was agreed after consultation with Walsall MBC and Sandwell MBC. Rather than reducing congestion, the closure has increased congestion. Highways England must reopen the slip road as soon as possible.

People living on Walstead Road, West Bromwich Road and Delves Crescent have also said traffic has increased since the closure of Junction 9. At Walstead Road this is exacerbating the effects of a poorly designed road hump scheme.

Walsall MBC has been awarded £12.6m by the Transport Department over the next five years for road repairs. Some of this funding should be allocated to Bescot Crescent and Wolverhampton Road West and revising the scheme in Walstead Road.

On the Welfare Bill, I voted against the Bill by voting for Her Majesty's Opposition Labour Party's Reasoned Amendment. This Parliamentary device enables MPs to vote against a Bill when there are elements of the Bill which are not opposed. The Government used the political tactic of including provisions in the Bill which Labour strongly supports with provisions that Labour strongly opposes. I support a commitment to three million more apprenticeships, measures to cut council and social housing rents and extra support for troubled families.

But I oppose the abolition of child poverty targets and cuts to support for sick and disabled people who are not fit for work, including those with cancer or Parkinson's disease. Had I voted against the Bill at Second Reading, I would have been voting against these provisions.

Moreover the Bill does not relate to Tax Credits. The Government's Tax Credits proposals will be included in Statutory Instruments in the Autumn and Labour will oppose them.

Finally, good luck to everyone waiting for exam results.

**Valerie Vaz MP**

**24 July 2015**