



Thanks to everyone who has been in touch. And thanks to my family for being so patient!



My report
back to you.
Martin

Martin Horwood MP





How to get in touch with Martin Horwood



Martin Horwood MP
16 Hewlett Road
Cheltenham GL52 6AA



01242 224889



martin@martinhorwood.net
www.martinhorwood.net



You can also read Martin's latest contributions and questions in Parliament at:

www.theyworkforyou.com

Martin holds regular surgeries at his Hewlett Road office and other locations around town. Feel free to get in touch to book an appointment or look out for your local **Focus newsletter** for more details.



Cheltenham in numbers

110,320

Cheltenham's population according to the 2001

census. Big enough to deserve our own district general hospital we think - but perhaps big enough not to need so much more growth that it overwhelms our town's resources.

0

The number of official plane flights taken by Martin since he was elected. He can't promise it will always be zero but his 'carbon footprint' is very low at the moment!

71,500

The number of electors in Cheltenham parliamentary constituency. Prestbury, Swindon Village, Warden Hill and parts of Wymans Brook, Hatherley and Leckhampton are part of Tewkesbury constituency. But some will be part of Cheltenham next time there's a general election. Confused? You may be...

38

189

73%

The number of debates Martin has spoken in, the number of ministerial questions he's had answers to and his voting record in the last year - the first two ranked as 'well above average' by theyworkforyou.com

2,828

The number of cases Martin and his local office take up for Cheltenham people in a year.

43,000

The estimated total number of emails, letters and phone calls received by the MP's office in Cheltenham and Westminster in one year. We try to reply to genuine Cheltenham correspondence as fast as possible but forgive us if we sometimes get a bit snowed under!

5.3 years

The difference in life expectancy between the healthiest parts of Cheltenham and the least healthy - proof that our affluent image isn't the whole story.

Helping local people



Welcoming Daniel Robinson and family to Westminster



Taking up problems for local residents at Hesters Way Community Centre

Martin and his hardworking team in Cheltenham take up more than two thousand cases a year for local people.

A few hit the headlines before they even cross Martin's desk - like Daniel Robinson's imprisonment in India or the distressing case of James Green who was diagnosed with personality disorder but ended up in prison here. But most are just from Martin knocking on doors around town and holding regular surgeries all year round.

The problems people bring to their MP range from crippling fuel bills to bad experiences with the NHS or the council or even with their neighbours. While we can't work miracles in every case, Martin will always help where he can.

Some of the top issues this year have been:

- Planning applications and decisions
- Family matters
- Tax credits, benefits and allowances
- Housing and homelessness
- Immigration and asylum
- Health services
- School admissions

If you have a problem and you think Martin or his team could help, call his office on 224889 or email martin@martinhorwood.net to make an appointment.

In this report

Standing up for Cheltenham

defending our NHS * learning from the floods * keeping our police force local * saving our green spaces * say no to Parkway! * save our post offices * backing local business *

pages 4,5,6, and 7

Cheltenham's voice in national politics

tackling climate chaos * animal rights and animal wrongs * the smart approach to crime and anti-social behaviour * justice for the world's poor and vulnerable

pages 8 and 9

Helping Cheltenham people

tax credits * family matters * NHS care * trouble abroad * decent homes

page 10

Cheltenham in numbers

inside back page



Challenging the Prime Minister in the House of Commons on NHS cuts in Cheltenham



Helping out at Rowanfield Junior School as part of Kraft's Health 4 Schools campaign



Supporting Commercial Group's ambitious green plans



Backing Battledown Brewery's campaign for local beer in local shops



Gloucestershire's Tri-service centre proved its value during the summer's floods

Backing local business

With a background in local business himself, Martin has always made a point of using his role as an MP to back local firms.

From campaigning to get supermarkets to stock Battledown Brewery local beers to applauding the Commercial Group's ambitious green plans, from open days at Douglas, to Question Time at the Chelsea, from sports days with Vertex to talking fair-trade with Kraft, Martin is building strong links with many individual companies.

But he's been there too to raise questions about flood insurance pay-outs for the local Federation of Small Business and worked with the Chamber of Commerce to oppose the loss of local railway services.

Keeping our police force local

In 2005 the government suggested merging Gloucestershire Constabulary with every other police force between here and the Scilly Isles. Martin joined other Gloucestershire MPs in a cross-party campaign to save a good local police force. Thankfully the government saw sense, not least because of the probable cost of the changes highlighted by our own chief constable.

But the government still want to regionalise fire control - despite the fantastic job done during the floods by all three locally-based services at the Gloucestershire TriService centre. Martin has joined the fight to keep the Tri-Service centre intact.

Tackling climate chaos

In spring 2006 Martin was promoted to the post of shadow environment minister for the Lib Dems nationally, giving him the perfect platform from which to campaign for more action to combat the threat of global warming. A rise of world temperature of more than two degrees caused by greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide could lead to worldwide disruption of food supplies, much more wild weather like this year's floods and fires and hurricanes and a possibly unstoppable collapse of the fragile balance of the world's forests, icecaps and species that could spell complete disaster for humanity too.

Martin has backed plans for a zero carbon Britain by 2050, eliminating almost all our carbon dioxide emissions at national levels through a mix of energy reduction, much more renewable power from clean sources like wind, sun and tidal. He's also backed more action at global, European, local community, business and at a personal level too.

Animal rights & wrongs

As president of Cheltenham's RSPCA branch, Martin has supported action in Parliament to help animals. He's opposed unscientific badger culling, opposed international moves to resume whaling, backed RSPCA's freedom food campaign and the calls for a marine bill to protect wildlife on Britain's coastline.

After some terrifying incidents locally, Martin has backed reform of our dangerous dogs legislation to give more power to local experts like Cheltenham's animal shelter to hold on to dogs they know are a risk to everyone.



Challenging climate change with local green group the One Tonners



Taking a personal lead by installing solar panels on his family's Leckhampton home



Backing calls for the Marine Bill in Parliament



Raising money for the Gloucestershire County Association for the Blind



Fighting for trade justice with anti-poverty campaigners from Cheltenham

The smart approach to crime

Crime and anti-social behaviour make peoples' lives a misery. So Martin jumped at the chance to work on a series of parliamentary measures concerned with policing and criminal justice. He supported the intelligent use of ASBOs and also called for measures such as community justice panels that would give victims a greater say in how criminals were punished.

Martin backed clearer sentencing (so that on the rare occasions when real life sentences are passed, it really means life) and better use of both community and prison sentences instead of adding to a fantastically expensive prison population where people learn too little about how to go straight and too much about crime.

Justice for the world's poor & vulnerable

Martin promised that when he was elected he would actively support measures to help poor and vulnerable people around the world. He has been true to his word, backing the campaign for trade justice - and even lobbying Cheltenham's own Kraft Foods over fair trade. He opposed the dropping of the anti-corruption investigation into BAe Systems' deal with Saudi Arabia which has set such an awful precedent for those campaigning against corruption worldwide. And Martin backed his old employer Oxfam and others campaigning for reductions in the crippling debt burden on some of the poorest countries in the world.

Save our post offices

Martin has lobbied Royal Mail Group and asked questions in Parliament about the closure of Hesters Way post office and the transfer of our main crown Post Office in town to the upstairs of WHSmith. Sadly, still more closures are possible. So Martin has backed plans for a radical overhaul of the way the Post Office and Royal Mail are owned and run to stop the continuing decline, giving more say to Post Office employees and putting more value on the importance to local communities of both local Post Offices and postal staff.



Protesting against the closure of the Post Office in Coronation Square

Better railways

Martin has led the campaign against a new Parkway railway station on green belt land between Cheltenham and Gloucester which was based on taking services away from Cheltenham Spa station. He was backed by everyone from green campaigner Jonathon Porritt to the Cheltenham Chamber of Commerce.

The case against Parkway has been strengthened both by a user survey showing most people didn't want to switch stations and by the news that the plan is blocking vital much-needed investment in Cheltenham Spa because of the doubt it casts over the station's future.

So far, the Department for Transport have turned it down, thanks in part to the great show of opposition from Cheltenham people. Martin is calling for investment in existing stations and railway lines to improve the current service instead.



Kingsmead School's council talks politics with their MP and school governor



Launching the Friends of National Star College



Addressing the crowds at the NHS rally in Montpellier Gardens

Defending our NHS

22 July 2006 was make or break day for Cheltenham's NHS. Martin and 10,000 local people marched against 29 different cuts and closures including the loss of inpatient services at Battledown childrens' ward, the closure of St.Paul's maternity unit, cutbacks in mental health services, and an uncertain future for the rehabilitation services provided by the Delancey hospital.

Battledown: the fight goes on

Battledown children's ward remains open - but despite a brilliant cross-party campaign we did lose inpatient services, meaning extra journeys from Cheltenham to Gloucester for sick children and their families. Martin lobbied furiously against this and will continue to argue for inpatient services to return.

St.Paul's saved!

You can still be born a Cheltonian thanks to the campaign led by Cheltenham Maternity Matters and backed all the way by Martin. But St.Paul's faces downgrading to a midwife-led unit. Martin is still challenging ministers to deliver real choice for local mums.

Mental health still causing concern

It didn't hit the headlines in the same way as the maternity or children's services and many of the cuts went ahead. Community mental health services have been hit and inpatients of working age now have to go to Gloucester (with older patients from Gloucester having to come here). Martin has taken up many individual cases for Cheltenham residents and is keeping a close eye on the impact of the changes.



Collecting another signature on the petition to save the maternity unit at Cheltenham hospital

Learning from the floods

June and July 2007 saw the worst floods in Gloucestershire in living memory.

Martin stayed in close contact with ministers, agencies, emergency services and local people over the floods and subsequent water shortage and is still raising many issues at national level:

- Why were the Mythe water works and Walham electricity sub station so vulnerable?
- Were culverts and rivers properly maintained and will one agency now be given clear responsibility for all flood prevention?
- Why won't Severn Trent pay us all the agreed compensation for loss of water supply?
- Can insurance companies pay out much faster - instead of leaving people out of pocket for months?
- Can Environment Agency schemes be improved so Cheltenham people don't face spiralling insurance bills and falling house prices?
- Will ministers increase flood defence budgets to £1 billion a year in the face of climate chaos?

Saving our green spaces

Martin believes Cheltenham's green spaces and neighbouring countryside is under threat - from hungry developers, regional officialdom and policies based on the idea that only shortage of land for housing is pushing up house prices.

Martin has argued with ministers for other ways to keep house prices under control and in favour of protecting valuable green spaces from Charlton Kings to Leckhampton and from Hatherley to Hesters Way.

He's also signed parliamentary motions and backed local calls for gardens to be better protected from overdevelopment and each case looked at on its merits.



On the march in Cheltenham to protect local health services



With parents, children and staff on Battledown ward



Leading the fight to save Cheltenham's green spaces from overdevelopment