



David Lepper MP

A report to residents of Brighton Pavilion constituency from your MP

*Dear Residents*

This is my Annual Report to you for 2007-2008, highlighting just some of my work in Parliament and in Brighton as your MP since my last Report in September 2007.

You can find out more about what I am doing as your MP throughout the year in the press releases section on my website [www.epolitix.com/david-lepper](http://www.epolitix.com/david-lepper)

Or, of course, you can always make contact by writing to me at John Saunders House, 179 Preston Road, Brighton BN1 6AG - or by ringing my office on 551532.

Yours sincerely,

*David Lepper*

### Important phone numbers

**Tax Credit Helpline**  
**0845 300 3900**

**Pension Service**  
**0800 991 234**

**National Minimum Wage Helpline**  
**0845 600 0678**

**Winter Fuel Helpline**  
**0845 915 15 15**

**Crimestoppers**  
**0800 555 111**

**Sussex Police non emergency**  
**0845 6070 999**

**Brighton and Hove City Council**  
**290000**

## Happy Birthday NHS

On July 2nd I joined representatives of health service organizations and unions in Westminster for a 60th birthday celebration for the NHS.

- Locally this year marks the first birthday of our new £36 million Royal Alexandra Children's unit at the Royal Sussex County Hospital. In October 2007 I was there for the official opening by Princess Alexandra.
- Later this year the new diagnostic and screening unit in Preston Road should be open following the campaign backed by all 3 City MPs to keep breast care services local.
- Visiting Hollingbury ASDA last autumn it was a privilege to meet staff working as volunteers with the NHS as Community Responders (pictured below), They provide emergency care with defibrillators and oxygen in the local area in the vital minutes before the ambulance arrives. As the South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Trust annual report says they can help to ensure the best chance of survival.



## Thameslink on track

The Thameslink Programme backed by the government, Network Rail and the train operating companies should make journeys to and from London easier. Work has already begun at some stations along the route In July

I became a founder member of a new cross party group of MPs set up to monitor Thameslink's progress and help to ensure that rail users' views and comments are heard clearly by the companies.

# Campaigning for our environment

I am on Parliament's Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Select Committee and the environment is high on my agenda. The Climate Change Bill, the first of its kind in the world, sets out a strategy to tackle climate change, and our committee made proposals to government for improving it still further. In November I met local climate change campaigners at the Royal Pavilion.



I also supported local calls for laws to protect our marine wildlife and environment. I backed a seafront campaign by RSPB (whose regional office is in Brighton) and in October 2007 I met Lynette Leeson, Janyis Watson and Laura Bristow from Sussex Wildlife Trust in Westminster.



I welcome the recent publication of a draft Marine Bill on which consultation is taking place

# Housing

- There are many long established housing co-operatives in Brighton. I chaired a Westminster meeting in June with housing minister Iain Wright on how housing co-ops can help provide more affordable housing. At it I welcomed the setting up of a new Commission on strengthening housing co-ops.
- As chair of a cross party group on Foyers which provide housing linked to training and education for young people, I welcomed the

Government's decision in November to review the "16 Hour" Housing Benefit rule. It hits many 19 year olds in further education – including some at our local Foyer in Pelham Street.

- In Parliament I had campaigned for the 2002 Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act. It has helped many of the City's 25,000 leaseholders improve the management of their blocks and to take over freeholds. But I recently met local solicitors and leaseholders to assess how the law is working locally and whether further changes are needed.

# A tribute to Veterans

I was pleased to help the Mayor present Veterans Badges to over 30 local ex-servicemen and women in June. On the same day I attended the dedication of the new memorial in the Old Steine to those who have died in conflicts and peace-keeping missions since 1945.

# Tackling TB

T B still kills thousands of people each year and Target TB and TB Alert – 2 of the important organisations in the international fight against TB – are both based in Brighton. In May I hosted an exhibition in the House of Commons for both organisations to explain more about their work to MPs and visitors.

# Stop AIDS

In Parliament Square on World AIDS Day in December 2007 I joined students from the Brighton-based Sussex Medical School campaigning for universal access to treatment by 2010. I also spoke at the launch of an exhibition outside the Jubilee Library highlighting the vital work around the world of the International HIV AIDS Alliance also based in Brighton.



# Working in V for the People Brighton Party

Here I highlight some of my Parliamentary work not dealt with elsewhere.



- I welcomed the new laws banning possession of violent internet pornographic images in the 2008 Criminal Justice and Immigration Bill passed by Parliament in May. I had called for these laws in support of Liz Longhurst's campaign following the murder of her daughter Jane, a respected Brighton teacher.



MP Martin Salter and me at Westminster with Liz Longhurst when Home Office Minister Vernon Coaker presented her with a copy of the new Act

- I have asked ministers to close a licensing law loophole so that local councils like ours have more power to turn down applications for lap-dancing clubs.

# Westminster Role of Billion

- With complaints continuing from shoppers and traders about the activities of some “chuggers” – face to face street fundraisers – in the City Centre, I met representatives of our Business Forum and the Business Improvement District. I also raised the issue in Westminster with the new Fundraising Standards Board, set up following the passing of the Charities Act to improve standards in fundraising.
- Ministers agreed to my call to monitor the effects of the new Legal Aid scheme on family law and immigration cases. Some local solicitors are worried that the changes could disadvantage some people.
- I presented petitions in Parliament against the closure of local post offices. Now I am calling for a commitment by the City Council to help ensure any redevelopment of London Road includes a post office.
- After a meeting with the Brighton-Tubas Friendship Group, including visitors from Tubas in the Jordan Valley, I asked Parliamentary Questions about the destruction of Palestinian homes in Israeli occupied territories. I have also condemned suicide bombings against Israelis.
- Other issues I have raised in Parliament include children and asthma, concessionary bus fares, cyber-bullying, the work of the Food Standards Agency, the role of Childrens’ Centres in helping youngsters with speech and language difficulties, the rights of transgender people, Turkey’s relationship with Cyprus, the persecution of Baha’is and other religious minorities and of gay and lesbian people in Iran.

# Focus on Education

**As a former teacher I know education isn’t only about what happens in the classrooms of our excellent local schools and colleges.**

- I presented books to our Jubilee Library in support of the “Big Wild Read” scheme to encourage younger readers, and joined in the pre-school group activities at Hollingbury Library during Bookstart Week in September 2007.



- At Dorothy Stringer High School’s Cameroon and West African evening in March I heard from students about their visit to Kenya and the schools’ links in France and the Jordan Valley. The Department for International Development is supporting projects like these. Later I met DfID minister Shahid Malik to discuss ways of improving that support across government.
- In July I helped open Carlton Hill Primary School’s new fitness trail on its school field and the new gate to provide a safer way for the children between the school and Turner Park.



**Headteacher Louise Willard, Nancy Pollard of the Turner Partnership – which supported both projects, and me**

- In March a film by youngsters from Balfour Juniors was shown at the First Light Movie Awards in London where I had the chance to meet the young film-makers.
- 11 Million Takeover Day in December 2007 aimed to encourage young people to get involved in their community. Patcham High student Aiyshah Bushara joined me on MP visits to local Big Lottery Funded projects – Brighton Housing Trust, Mosaic – the black and mixed parentage family group – and Carousel, the performing arts group for people with learning difficulties. Aiyshah is involved with the local Youth Council, the Youth Parliament and local arts and community groups. In January she and her mother Tracy Elkins – for whom Aiyshah is the main carer – joined me at a 10 Downing Street reception with the Prime Minister for young people who have made a special community contribution.



- Language schools are important in our local and national economy. As chair of the cross party group on English Language Teaching and as local MP, I was pleased to be invited to the official opening in January of the Brighton Study Centre which has 900 + students. It’s an important part of the regeneration of the New England Quarter.



# Caring for people with dementia



As a member of the Alzheimer's Society and trustee of ARDIS, a local charity supporting people with dementia and their carers, I know how concerned families are about the quality of residential care for relatives. I joined actor and Alzheimer's campaigner Tony Robinson in the House of Commons in February to publicise the Alzheimer's Society's new guide to choosing a care home.

# Fairtrade

Brighton and Hove has been a Fairtrade City since 2004 promising to promote Fairtrade principles and products. In February's Fairtrade Fortnight this year I signed up to The Co-operative's Fairtrade pledge at an event in Westminster.



## Can I help you?

Each month I hold two advice sessions for Brighton Pavilion residents at:

- **Brighthelm Church and Community Centre, North Road**
- **Old Boat Community Centre, Carden Park, Carden Hill**

If you want to come along, please ring my office on **551532** to check dates and times.

And throughout most of the year I also call on residents in a different street each week. Watch out for information through your letter box about when I will next be in your area.

Let me know if there are any local issues with which you think I can help as your MP. Return this form and I will contact you.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

The issue which concerns me is: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please return to: David Lepper MP, FREEPOST BR 901, Brighton BN1 4ZZ

