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Welcoming  
Families from  
Ukraine

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Improving  
NHS  
Patient Care



# Brentwood and Ongar Matters

2023 News from Alex Burghart MP

## FIVE POINT PLAN FOR FUTURE PROSPERITY

### Alex Backs PM's Plan

As your local MP, I am proud to be supporting the Prime Minister's clear five-point plan to build the foundations for a better, more secure, and more prosperous future.



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- 1 HALVING INFLATION**  
Halving inflation this year to ease the cost of living
- 2 ECONOMY GROWING**  
Creating better paid job opportunities across the country
- 3 DEBT FALLING**  
Reducing national debt to secure the future of public services
- 4 WAITING LISTS**  
Cutting NHS waiting lists, speeding up care for patients
- 5 SMALL BOATS**  
Passing laws to stop small boats, swiftly removing illegal arrivals

**PRIME MINISTER  
RISHI SUNAK**



The Covid-19 pandemic and the Russian invasion of Ukraine have presented two of the biggest challenges in recent history and made a huge impact on the cost of living and on public services. Under the Prime Minister, the Government is taking action to strengthen the economy, the NHS and our borders.

The Prime Minister has made five key promises for 2023.

The Government will: halve inflation to ease the cost of living; ensure national debt falls so we have more money to improve public services and reduce tax; grow the economy by supporting entrepreneurs and investing in science and new technology; and stop small boats in the Channel. These are the actions the country needs – and I will be working hard on your behalf to make them happen. ■

## Support for Ukrainian Refugees

The Russian invasion of Ukraine in February last year saw many local people sign up to the Government's Homes for Ukraine scheme – working with our local councils to offer sanctuary to those fleeing the war.

My staff and I worked with the Home Office to ensure visas were issued as fast as possible to those travelling from Ukraine to the UK.

I was incredibly impressed by the way in which my constituents advocated on behalf of people they had never met, to assist their passage to the UK and to welcome them into their homes. This year I have been talking to some of them to hear how the process has worked for them and to learn what improvements can be made.

One sponsor I met went above and beyond when she became the birthing partner for her guest, who had travelled from Ukraine in the early stages of pregnancy and then delivered a beautiful baby girl in Essex just before Christmas.

I want to thank everyone who has taken in a family in need and those who have made Homes for Ukraine a success, particularly the staff at Epping Forest District, Brentwood Borough and Essex County Councils. ■

Local charities rallied to help those left in Ukraine



Meeting one of the youngest Ukrainian refugees, born in the UK after her mother and brother fled the bombing in Ukraine



## Improving Our High Streets and Town Centres

There's good news on progress in my campaign to stop massive lorries using Ongar as a cut through.

Travelling at speed, huge HGVs are a threat to pedestrians and historic buildings – particularly around Ongar's narrow pinch point. After years of evidence gathering and with the support of local businessman and councillor, Jaymey McIvor, formal approaches have been made to Google and Waze by Cllr Lee Scott, the Essex County Council Cabinet Member for Highways, to remove Ongar High Street from HGV satnav systems. This action should swiftly reduce the number of over-sized trucks having such an adverse impact on our historic High Street.

I have also been pleased to give my support to plans drawn up by Brentwood Borough and Epping Forest District Councils to bring new investment into our local High Streets through the Government's

UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Brentwood's Conservative team is pressing ahead with proposals to bring a high-end cinema to the Baytree Centre – and I know many families, just like mine, will be thrilled to be able to see the latest films locally.

The way we work has changed since Covid and I've been very impressed how local businesses (like the Spread Eagle in Brentwood, pictured), are making the most of new trade from those now working from home and able to socialise locally again. Here's to a better year for business, post pandemic. ■



Huge lorries should become a thing of the past on Ongar's historic High Street



Pulling a pint in the newly refurbished Spread Eagle Pub in Brentwood

## Protecting Brentwood and Ongar's Countryside

There is understandable anger at the unauthorised development that has taken place on some parts of our beautiful countryside.

It is entirely unacceptable that some people should build on our green belt without permission and I have been working closely with Brentwood Borough Council, Epping Forest District Council and the parishes to ensure that action is taken to stop and reverse this.

Brentwood Borough Council have been fighting a lengthy court battle to see that justice is done – but the process has shown me that the current law makes it far too difficult and expensive for local authorities to intervene. This is why I've taken the concerns of residents in Warley and Navestock to the attention of the Secretary of State and Ministers in the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, Michael Gove. I am reassured the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill will strengthen planning enforcement and that fines for certain planning breaches will be increased. But I shall be monitoring things closely to see if further changes to the law are needed. ■



Meeting the Secretary of State for Levelling up, Housing and Communities, the Rt. Hon. Michael Gove MP, to discuss the huge cost to local councils in tackling unauthorised development in the green belt

## Procuring New Opportunities for Jobs and Business

In October I was honoured when the Prime Minister asked me to become the Parliamentary Secretary in the Cabinet Office.

The Cabinet Office is one of the centres of Government which brings together other departments and central government functions.

One of my major tasks has been to take the Government's Procurement Bill through the Commons. Now we are outside the EU it is possible for us to improve the previously cumbersome procurement rules to ensure that the £300bn we spend on procurement is spent better for taxpayers, public authorities, and British business. Crucially, as part of this work, we're making it easier for small and medium sized businesses to bid for public sector contracts – creating new opportunities for local suppliers to get work without being squeezed out by large firms. ■



At the Cabinet Office, preparing for a Procurement Bill debate

## Reducing Crime and Strengthening Essex Police

Thanks to huge investment by the Government and strong leadership by local Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, Roger Hirst, Essex Police is now the biggest and strongest it has even been in its 182-year history.

As I discussed recently with local police, this commitment is already making a difference with incidents of burglary down by 49 per cent, anti-social behaviour down by 55 per cent and theft by 3 per cent since 2016. This is an excellent start – and I will continue to work with Roger to make sure we get even more officers in our community and on our streets. ■



Tackling rural crime in the villages around Brentwood and Ongar



Discussing the impact of investment in policing with Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, Roger Hirst

## Backing Residents Against the Pylons



Joining fellow Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk MPs to meet Energy Security and Net Zero Minister, the Rt. Hon. Graham Stuart MP

Almost a hundred Ingatestone residents attended a meeting I organised recently to discuss National Grid's plans to build a chain of colossal pylons from Norfolk to Tilbury, cutting through countryside around Ingatestone, Hutton and Dunton.

As I said to all those who attended, I am strongly opposed to the plans and have been sure to let Ministers know the strength of the feeling in the community. My thanks to Noelle Hones and Cllr Lesley Wagland for their support in the campaign.

I'm delighted to be able to say that following a campaign by myself and my colleagues an independent review is going to be undertaken by the Electricity System Operator to consider alternative offshore routes for electricity transmission in East Anglia. I am very pleased that, at last, people living on the route will see a comprehensive cost benefit analysis of offshore versus onshore options. Whilst this is no guarantee that plans for onshore pylons will be cancelled, it is an important step – I am urging ESO to involve my constituents in the process as much as possible. ■



More than a hundred people attended my meeting in Ingatestone about the pylon proposals. [Photo: Ian Davidson]

## Cutting NHS Waiting Times

Following Covid and one of the biggest ever winter surges in the NHS, the Prime Minister and the Health Secretary are taking decisive action to cut waiting times.

They are investing £200m to make more care home beds available to enable those who are no longer in need of hospital treatment to be discharged.

Locally, I have heard how Brentwood Community Hospital has been doing amazing work with its frailty unit for older people which has eased pressure on our large acute hospitals in Romford, Basildon and Chelmsford.

I met East of England Ambulance Service Trust's Chief Executive, Tom Abell, to discuss ambulance response times and was pleased to hear how response times for the most serious incidents in south west Essex improved during January 2023.

Many constituents have told me access to GP appointments is an ongoing concern. Ongar Health Centre is making improvements by reorganising its reception rotas and recruiting two more GPs. Similar actions are being taken in GP practices across the constituency to ensure patients have access to the advice and treatments they need. But if you feel you are receiving a poor service, please do get in touch.

It was also a pleasure to visit the wonderful Essex and Herts Air Ambulance team at their new base at North Weald Airfield. The helicopter pilots, medics and equipment there are second to none – we are very fortunate to have them serving the local area. ■

Discussing ambulance response times with East of England Ambulance Service Trust CEO, Tom Abell



Meeting Ongar Health Centre's team to hear about improvements to booking appointments



Visiting the Essex and Herts Air Ambulance at its North Weald Airfield Base

## 21st Century Library Coming To Shenfield

It's excellent news that work is well underway on the development on the library site in the centre of Shenfield.

The new building, developed through Essex County Council's housing development company, Essex Homes, is a great use of the space, with nine high-quality apartments helping to fund the construction of a modern library fit for the 21st century.

As an enthusiastic reader, and a keen user of local library services with my family, I am very much looking forward to the new library opening for business. ■



## Backing Business and Skills

The Prime Minister's pledges to grow the economy to create better-paid jobs and opportunities will have a direct impact on local employers and employees.

Locally I have been talking to childcare providers about what they need to be able to provide parents in work with affordable childcare. Getting this right is vital for all sorts of businesses.

My visit to see Lesley Seville, who runs Scribbles Day Nursery in North Weald and her staff, was very helpful in showing me some of the pressures the profession is under and since then I have been talking to ministers in the Department for Education about changes we can make to improve recruitment and retention of those working in childcare. ■



With Lesley Seville and Danielle Martin at Scribbles Day Nursery in North Weald.

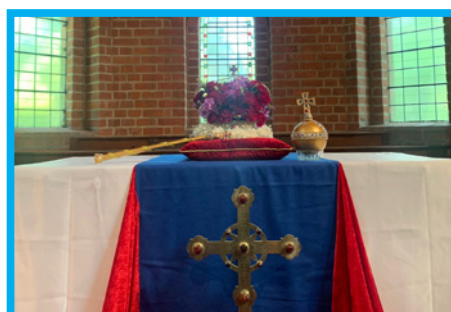
# Celebrating the Best of Brentwood and Ongar



Unveiling the Airfields of Britain Conservation Trust Memorial at the site of Chipping Ongar (Willingale) Airfield



The wonderful Abridge Supper Club



Celebrating the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee in Kelvedon Hatch

Local villages of Brentwood and Ongar have, as ever, done themselves proud in the last year, and my visits to many well attended celebrations and festivities have reinforced my pride in the way in which people come together to celebrate local and national events.

With last year's Platinum Jubilee parties and then the solemnity of Her Late

Majesty The Queen's funeral still a clear memory, the Coronation of King Charles III was a wonderful opportunity for churches and community groups to come together for services and celebrations of this historic event.

The Abridge Supper Club continues to be a highlight in my diary, although we have lost two well-loved members, John Filby and Cllr Brian Rolfe, whose hard work for the community will always be missed.

I was honoured too to be invited by the Willingale Parish Council to unveil a new memorial marking the site of the WWII Chipping Ongar (Willingale) Airfield, with a USAF 'Honor Guard' from RAF Mildenhall in attendance. It was a magnificent tribute to all those who served there during the Second World War and will enable the airfield to be recognised and remembered for many years to come. ■

How to contact **Alex Burghart MP**

House of Commons  
London SW1A 0AA

0207 219 1613

alexburghart.org.uk

brentwoodandongar@parliament.uk

@alexburghart

fb.com/Alex.Burghart

Follow our Campaign Team:

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From left to right: Deputy Chairman Louise Rowlands, Dr Alex Burghart MP, Anna Firth MP, Association Chairman Cllr Keith Barber and President Katie Channon

## Conservatives Working for Brentwood and Ongar

From BOCA Chairman, Keith Barber  
Brentwood and Ongar Conservative Association (BOCA) is a friendly group of Conservative supporters from all parts of the constituency.

We are recognised as one of the most successful local Associations in the country and we campaign enthusiastically at both Local and General Elections. Members also run social events and organise fund-raising activities.

The former Home Secretary, the Rt. Hon. Priti Patel MP, Lord Eric Pickles and the Rt Hon Jacob Rees-Mogg MP have all visited us to speak at our dinner events. Most recently, Anna Firth, the Member of Parliament for Southend West, joined us to speak about her election to Parliament following the tragic death of her predecessor, Sir David Amess MP, and her community safety campaign to restrict the sale of dangerous knives.

As a member, you can play an active role in the Party, from attending Conservative Party Conference and taking part in local campaign groups, to choosing the candidates who'll stand in local and parliamentary elections and voting in leadership elections.

If you would like to join us then the easiest way to do so is online at [www.conservatives.com/join](http://www.conservatives.com/join) or complete the application form below. ■

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### GET INVOLVED BUILD A BRIGHTER FUTURE

PLEASE RETURN TO: Brentwood and Ongar Conservative Association, 19 Crown Street, Brentwood CM14 4BA or photograph and email to [office@boca.org.uk](mailto:office@boca.org.uk)

- Join the local Party    Attend social events    Vote by post    Deliver leaflets    Display a poster    Stand for Council

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