

I'm so sorry that Parliamentary business prevents me from being with you tonight. I want to start by thanking the Parish Council for the work they do in Rolvenden. It isn't always an easy job, and I'm so grateful to those who volunteer their time and energy to improve the village they live in.

I've been the Member of Parliament here in the Weald of Kent for 10 months now. It is a privilege to represent our area in the House of Commons, acting and advocating on behalf of all my constituents.

It's been a really busy time in Westminster, and my team and I have been working away responding to constituents who have written in about everything from access to fibre broadband to securing secondary school places, from local flooding to the Assisted Dying Bill and, of course, continued support for our farmers in light of the Government's family farm tax, and businesses as they face increased taxes and red tape. I am working hard with my Shadow Home Office colleagues on the Borders Bill and the call for a national inquiry into grooming gangs. Also the Transport Select Committee, of which I am member, is deep into two inquiries, one on rural buses and the other on roadworks.

Right now, I'm very focused on the transport side of things! As you'll know, getting around our beautiful rural home isn't always easy. All too often our roads and pavements are closed for works, or there are big lorries on inappropriate country lanes, or there's no longer a bus route where we need it. We rely on the roads to get to work, school, the shops, GP appointments, to see friends and family — everything! The state of our roads and our bus services is fundamental to how well we can live our lives.

I want to know exactly how people find the roads and buses — and anything else transport-related — around here to inform my work in Parliament and beyond. I hope that you will have received my survey through the post, asking your thoughts on local transport. You can fill it out and send it back to me, or complete it online. It only takes 5 minutes!

Outside of Parliament, I've loved getting out and about across the Weald of Kent, especially now that the sun is shining. I've visited primary schools, businesses, farms, hospitals, GPs and charities; it's so helpful to hear first-hand about their achievements but also the challenges that people and businesses across our area are facing.

Rolvenden is such a beautiful village and it always feels like a treat to come here, whether it be a meal at The Bull (I recommend the fajitas but I must warn you, the portions are enormous!) or to admire the bluebells at Hole Park.

I hope to continue to meet lots of you when I am out and about. I wish the Parish Council the very best as you make your plans for the next 12 months. If I can help with anything at all, please get in touch with me on katie.lam.mp@parliament.uk