

Dear Constituent,

I want to start this month's newsletter by expressing my sincere thanks and gratitude to members for unanimously reselecting me to stand as your candidate in the next general election. It is a real privilege to be given the trust of members to continue representing labour in the next election. I am absolutely delighted with the result, and I look forward to having the opportunity to continue my work on behalf of the residents of the Jarrow constituency.

Thank you to all 10 Jarrow Constituency Labour Party branches (BLPs) and all 9 affiliated trade unions and organisations for **unanimously reselecting me to stand as the Labour Party candidate at the next General Election.**



Constituency visits:

Campaigning in Hebburn South Ward

It was great to be out and about with Hebburn South Labour candidate Angela Lamonte and Councillor John McCabe this month. I am looking forward to joining other Labour candidates in their campaigning efforts ahead of the local elections in May.



Campaigning in Primrose Ward

I also had a great time door knocking with Primrose Labour candidate Moira Smith around the ward, we had the chance to speak to residents and reintroduce Moira as the candidate. I look forward to further campaigning with Moira across the ward.



Visit to Cleadon Church of England Academy

I thoroughly enjoyed my visit to Cleadon Church of England Academy this month. Thank you to all the teachers, staff and pupils who gave me such a warm welcome, I received some great questions from members of the school council!



Keelman's Way School Visit

I have had such a fantastic time at Keelman's Way School in Hebburn this afternoon. It is a brilliant school with great facilities, and I thoroughly enjoyed meeting so many lovely pupils. I was honoured to attend the School Council meeting as a guest and received some very interesting questions from members of the council. The teachers and staff do such a phenomenal job and deserve huge amounts of credit. I look forward to returning soon!



Gazette columns:

Immunocompromised people and their family's access to LFT

Following on from my letter to the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care last month, I wrote a column on the worries held by over 500,000 immunocompromised people who are still at risk from Covid. The Government must ensure that this group, along with their families, friends, and any unpaid carers also have access to free covid testing to ensure they can live with covid – safely. You can read my column in full [here](#).

National Shipbuilding Strategy

Following on from the Government's announcement of their National Shipbuilding Strategy, for one of my columns in the Shields Gazette I discussed the need for our shipbuilding past to herald in a brighter future, as well as the importance of involving trade unions in the rebuilding of the shipping industry. I look forward to visiting A&P Tyne in the coming weeks. You can read my column in full [here](#).

Campaign Groups

PCSB Bill

Our famous Jarrow Crusaders would have been criminalised if the Police Crime Sentencing and Courts Bill was around in the 1930s. We know the Marchers were heroes, but that is not how the Tories see it. I, and the Labour Party voted against

this draconian Bill but on its third reading the Tories voted it through the Commons. I will endeavour to do all that I can to defend our fundamental rights to protest in the face of this terrible Bill.

RMT Strike Solidarity

RMT Union members worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic to keep London moving for other Key workers. On March 1st, they undertook strike action on the Tube in defence of their pensions and their jobs. They do not deserve to have their pensions raided. They have my full solidarity to #StopTheTubeCuts



Rising cost of rail fares

On the 1st of March, the Tories introduced a brutal 3.8% hike in rail fares, the highest rise in almost a decade. It is clear the Government want the people to pay the price for decisions made in Downing Street whilst private companies profiteer from public services at the expense of taxpayers.

Marie curie press release and supporting the great daffodil appeal

From the expert care given by Marie Curie Nurses, through to the reassuring voices on the support line – its services have never been more in need. But they can only continue to reach those in urgent need of help with the generosity of the public. That is why I supported the Great Daffodil Appeal this march. You can read more about the amazing work Marie Curie do in a press release [here](#).

I was pleased to be able to drop by and support the Marie Curie Great Daffodil Appeal event in Parliament this month to show my support in person.



Ukraine

In Parliament I signed the Ukrainian book of solidarity on behalf of the Jarrow constituency. I want to pass on my thanks to all residents who have donated food, clothing and money to the Ukrainian refugees displaced by this unnecessary war. We should continue to do all we can to offer our support and solidarity to those refugees fleeing violence.



Updates on the DVSA including meeting with the minister and BBC Sunday politics

This month, I took the campaign to save South Shields Driving Test Centre on the Bede industrial estate, to Westminster and I met with Baroness Vere, the Minister with responsibility for the DVSA, to put forward the case for retaining the driving test centre in Jarrow. Directly after my meeting with the Minister, I recorded an interview for BBC Politics North regarding the closure which was aired on the 6th of March alongside excellent contributions from the campaigners. If you would like to watch the segment on the Save South Shields Driving Test Centre Campaign, you can click [here](#).

I have again further contacted Loveday Ryder, Chief Executive of the DVSA and Transport Minister Baroness Vere, who has lead responsibility for the DVSA,

following fresh information that has come to light that the Driving Test Centre facility on the Bede Industrial Estate costs the DVSA a mere £10,325 per annum.

I understand that based on an annual capacity of around 4,500 tests – income generated by learner tests alone is around £29,000 – I am at a complete loss to see how it is not cost-effective and makes no sense whatsoever to close this much-needed facility.

There is a huge amount of public feeling from constituents and the driving instructor community who are very angry and upset about this



planned closure, a feeling which has been echoed by Councillor Tracey Dixon, Leader of South Tyneside Council, my colleague Emma Lewell-Buck MP for South Shields, and local councillors, which is unacceptable, and I reaffirm my position that I strongly oppose any moves to remove any services from the Jarrow site.

The impact of this possible closure will have a devastating impact on South Tyneside and the wider area. It would also increase waiting lists for Driving Instructors as well as waiting lists for Driving Tests which would also financially impact many people in this area. This closure risks skilled Instructors and Examiners leaving the industry which will further exacerbate already long waiting times.

The closure of South Shields Driving Test Centre goes against financial Covid Recovery, COP26, The Levelling Up Agenda (Tyneside is to suffer two Driving Test Centres, the other being Elswick) and the DVSA's own mission statement to reduce the test backlog waiting list.

I have urged the DVSA and the Transport Minister, in light of this fresh information that has come to light, to urgently reconsider the closure of this much-needed facility and service. I will provide an update as soon as I am able to, regarding this hugely important issue.

March 2022
Kate Osborne MP

Below is my letter to the Minister:

KATE OSBORNE MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

25 March 2022
Our Ref: KO2664

Baroness Vere of Norbiton
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
Department for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

Dear Minister

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for meeting with me on Wednesday 2nd March in Westminster to discuss the proposed closure of South Shields Driving Test Centre on the Bede Industrial Estate, Jarrow.

I would be grateful if you could look at the enclosed correspondence I have received from a driving instructor in my constituency who has provided me with a response from the DVSA relating to information requested under the Freedom of Information Act, regarding the South Shields Driving Test Centre on the Bede Industrial Estate, Jarrow. As you can see from the correspondence, the enclosed Freedom of Information request has revealed that the annual lease cost for South Shields Test Centre is £0 and the annual ground lease expiration is December 2119. Furthermore, the annual rates are £3,110.40 and annual utilities are £7,214.44. The test centre facility on the Bede Industrial Estate costs the DVSA a mere £10,325 per annum.

From our meeting in Westminster with a representative of the DVSA earlier this month, we discussed at length the closure, which is proposed to take place from the 10th April. I note from our meeting that I was informed that the reason for the closure was the lease on the building is coming to an end. Would you be able to clarify whether this is a separate lease to the ground lease which expires on 19th December 2119, which was confirmed in the enclosed Freedom of Information request supplied by the DVSA?

As I have already explained, the costs for the current Driving Test Centre in Jarrow stands at a mere £10,324 per year. I understand that based on an annual capacity of around 4,500 tests – income generated by learner tests alone is around £29,000 – I am at a complete loss to see how it is not cost-effective and makes no sense whatsoever to close this much-needed facility. The DVSA are also tasked with providing a service to the driving public and ensuring road safety standards are maintained.

KATE OSBORNE MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

There is a huge amount of public feeling from constituents and the driving instructor community who are very angry and upset about this planned closure, a feeling which has been echoed by Councillor Tracey Dixon, Leader of South Tyneside Council, my colleague Emma Lewell-Buck MP for South Shields, and local councillors, which is wholly unacceptable and I reaffirm my position that I strongly oppose any moves to remove any services from the Jarrow site.

The impact of this possible closure will have a devastating impact on South Tyneside and my constituents. It would also increase waiting lists for Driving Instructors as well as waiting lists for Driving Tests which would also financially impact many of my constituents. This closure risks skilled Instructors and Examiners leaving the industry which will further exacerbate already long waiting times.

As I have set out in my previous correspondence and during our meeting in Westminster, I cannot stress enough how important the Jarrow site is to the local community and has been for decades. Generations of families have passed their driving test there and it would be a devastating loss to South Tyneside and our close-knit local community if this unnecessary and wholly unacceptable closure was allowed to happen.

I would therefore be grateful if you could look into this as a matter of urgency and provide me with a full explanation why the South Shields Test Centre in Jarrow is closing, bearing in mind this information relating to the low costs to run the centre. The closure of South Shields Driving Test Centre goes against financial Covid Recovery, COP26, The Levelling Up Agenda (Tyneside is to suffer two Driving Test Centres, the other being Elswick) and the DVSA's own mission statement to reduce the test backlog waiting list.

The decision to close the Jarrow facility makes no sense and is a wholly nonsensical loss of yet another vital service to our region, which will impact on future generations. I hope this fresh information that has come to light will urge you to reconsider the closure of this much-needed facility and service. I would be grateful for an urgent response relating to the points I have raised. I look forward to your comments.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kate Osborne'.

Kate Osborne MP

Meeting with OK Foundation about defibrillators

The Oliver King Foundation is doing outstanding work around the importance of defibrillators, particularly in schools. It was great to speak with Mark King this month whose son Oliver tragically died from Sudden Arrhythmic Death Syndrome at a school swimming lesson aged 12 in 2012. I was also pleased to speak to Jamie Carragher who is helping to spread awareness of this excellent campaign.

The foundation provide training in defibrillator awareness in first aid. To date they have placed 4,500 defibrillators in schools and organisations across the UK. They have travelled around the country training 70,000 staff in defibrillator awareness. To their knowledge, 47+ lives have been saved as a direct result of the defibrillators they have placed.



RNIB campaign

In March, I attended a joint event arranged by Kellogg's and RNIB raising awareness of accessible packaging using NaviLens technology. This technology on packaging gives blind and partially sighted people equitable and independent access to all the product information when shopping, as information on packaging is often too small making it difficult to read.

NaviLens enables shoppers' smartphones to easily detect a unique on-pack code and access all the labelling information including the allergens, ingredients, and calorific values both in store and at home.

As well as other companies, Kellogg's is adding NaviLens to all of its cereal boxes this year.



Ban Trophy hunting

It was great to meet with Peter Egan and the Campaign to Ban Trophy Hunting this month to discuss trophy hunting – 9 out of 10 people support a total ban and I can assure you I am one of them. The ban should be implemented ASAP. The Shields Gazette this month published a story on my meeting with Egan and the campaign group which you can read below, or in full [here](#).



Meeting with Sarcoma campaigners about importance of early diagnosis

I met with Sarcoma UK to hear about the work they are doing on Sarcoma diagnosis. We must do more to improve the speed at which Sarcoma is being diagnosed and give every person with Sarcoma the best chance of survival.



Right to Food

I joined Ian Byrne MP (Liverpool West Derby) and other MPs in Downing Street this month to deliver an open letter to the Chancellor. We are calling for the Right to Food to be enshrined into UK law so that we can end the scandal of hunger and reliance of foodbanks once and for all.



SOS NHS:

I joined Barry Gardiner MP (Brent North) and SOS NHS campaigners on their Battle Bus which was heading towards Downing Street. We demand emergency funding and a publicly owned and run NHS, as well as pay justice for all healthcare staff.





P&O Ferries

P&O Ferries bosses sacked 800 loyal and hardworking staff with no notice and with a blatant disregard for the law. The CEO tried to justify these sackings and the subsequent replacement with agency workers on less than minimum wage. This absolute thuggery emphasises the need to be a member of a trade union. I am sending my utmost solidarity to the 800 workers and the RMT in their fight against this despicable and immoral attack on workers' rights. We cannot allow big businesses to prioritise profits over people.

In Westminster:

PMQs

On March 2nd, in Prime Ministers Questions, I raised with the Prime Minister the concerns shared by immunocompromised people and charities like the MS Society around the Government's lifting of restrictions, particularly around free testing and isolation. You can watch my PMQ in full [here](#).

International women's day

Our constituency is full of outstanding, brave, and inspirational women, from doctors and nurses in our NHS to volunteers in our food banks, from teachers in our schools to workers in our shops, and in so many other positions both voluntary and paid. Women contribute so much to our communities, and they are often on low pay and in insecure work. On International Women's Day, I reaffirmed my commitment to all the women in my constituency and beyond to continue holding this Government to account on all issues, but none more so than those issues that

so often have a disproportionate impact on women and girls. You can watch my full contribution to the International Women's Day debate [here](#).

To further mark International Women's Day, I visited 'Domestic', an installation by artist Wilma Woolf. The display documents all of the women known to have been killed in the UK at the hands of male violence since 2013. The plates were laid on a black glass table that was so dark it acted as a mirror. This is to reflect that domestic violence can and does affect anyone.



Education Question:

Research by EPI has found that children from the most disadvantaged areas are less likely to be identified with SEND compared with similar children from more affluent areas, with families in poorer areas facing higher thresholds for accessing support. During Education oral questions this month, I asked the Minister why this is the case and what his department is going to do about it. You can watch my question in full [here](#).

Justice for the 555 sub-postmasters:

It was very welcome news this month, that the 'forgotten 555' sub-postmasters will receive compensation after a Government U-turn. Two months after I was elected, I asked the Prime Minister at PMQs to launch a public inquiry into the Post Office Horizon Scandal and he agreed to it in the Chamber. Since then, I have continued to campaign for justice for the 555. In January this year, I drafted a letter, co-signed by 93 other MPs, asking the Government to provide the 555 litigants excluded from the Post Office Horizon Scandal compensation scheme with the full and fair compensation that they not only deserve, but they are entitled to. I have the utmost respect for the campaigners who have tirelessly fought for justice, in particular my constituent Chris Head, who's campaigning efforts have been unrelenting. During an Urgent Question, I paid tribute to Chris, and the 555

campaigners while asking the Minister if the scheme will have independent oversight. You can watch this [here](#).

Justice Questions:

After women spoke out about feeling exposed to physical aggression and sexual harassment when travelling on the regions public transport system, Northumbria Police and Crime commissioner launched a free Safer Transport Northumbria App which takes you through a series of simple steps that allow you to raise safety concerns and report crimes. In Justice Questions this month, I asked the Minister to commit to more funding for our region to tackle violence against women and girls. You can watch the clip of my question including the Ministers response [here](#).

Women and Equalities:

I was delighted to have chaired a Women and Equalities Select Committee session this month, where we questioned Ministers and department officials in relation to our final session on our 'Menopause and the workplace' inquiry. All of the Select Committee sessions are available for catch up on Parliament TV.



EDMs and Letters:

EDM 1017 royal mail workforce reductions

I tabled Early Day Motion (EDM) 1017 concerning Royal Mail's plan to reduce frontline managerial Jobs by 900 posts, which is a reduction that will further harm the postal service in this country. I completely agree with Unite the Union that this move is totally senseless, and I call on the regulator to intervene immediately to

March 2022
Kate Osborne MP

prevent Royal Mail taking a death-by-a-thousand-cuts approach to a cornerstone public service. You can read the motion in full and see all the signatories [here](#).

IVF for LGBT+ Couples politics.co.uk

I wrote a piece for Politics.co.uk this month on equal access to IVF treatments for LGBTQI+ people and the barriers they face. It is wrong that same-sex couples are essentially facing a fertility tax. It is vital that people wanting to start a family have equal access to NHS treatments regardless of their sex and gender. You can read the article in full [here](#).

Letter to the Chancellor about his Spring Statement and the cost of living

Ahead of the Spring Statement, I wrote to the Chancellor to urge him to take the opportunity to announce:



I urge the Chancellor to use the Spring Statement to announce...

A windfall tax on North Sea oil and gas profits.

A VAT cut on household energy bills, coupled with an extension of the Warm Homes Discount Scheme.

Scrap the rise of national insurance contributions.

Fund decent pay rises for public sector workers that takes into account the cost of living.

A substantial rise in the national minimum wage for everyone irrespective of age.

Increase benefits and state pensions by 8%, which takes into account the cost of living.

Kate Osborne MP

Member of Parliament for the Jarrow Constituency



We are living through the worst cost of living crisis that we have seen in generations and the Chancellor's announcements will do absolutely nothing to alleviate this pressure away from people who I represent in the Jarrow constituency. You can read my full statement on the Spring Statement [here](#).

You can read my letter to the Chancellor in full below:



Kate Osborne MP
Member of Parliament for Jarrow
House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA

The Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP
Chancellor of the Exchequer
HM Treasury

14th March 2022

Dear Chancellor,

I am writing to you today regarding the rise in the cost of living for those who live in the Jarrow constituency, and right across the UK.

Over the past few weeks, I have had a number of constituents contact me about rising household costs, concerned about how they are going to manage and worrying about getting into debt.

Energy bills have increased in most cases by nearly double, phone bills have risen with inflation, household shopping is costing people more, petrol, diesel and rail fares have all rocketed, and council tax bills have also increased. Due to this, my constituents are expecting a hefty rise in their outgoings come the new financial year, which will mean that some constituents will be placed into financial hardship and poverty.

For most of my constituents, they are also not expecting a rise in wages or increase in benefits that will cover the increased outgoings they have, and with working people facing a rise in payment of national insurance contributions, the reality is that some of my constituents are actually facing a real-terms pay cut with the little pay increase that they may get from their employer. This is before they have to pay their increased outgoings.

Due to the above, I believe that there will be a real crisis within households come April, should a political intervention from the Government not happen.

I would like to urge you to take the opportunity in the Spring Statement and announce the following:

- A windfall tax on North Sea oil and gas profits
- A VAT cut on household energy bills, coupled with an extension of the Warm Homes Discount Scheme
- Scrap the rise in payment of national insurance contributions
- Fund decent pay rises for public sector workers that takes into account the cost of living
- A rise in the national minimum wage to at least £10 per hour, for everyone irrespective of age.
- Increase benefits and state pensions by 8%, which takes into account the rise in the cost of living.



Kate Osborne MP
Member of Parliament for Jarrow
House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA

If intervention from the Government does not happen, many people, including constituents of mine, will be forced to access food banks, into debt, and into poverty.

Please do the right thing in the Spring Statement and stand by my constituents and the people of the UK who have already sacrificed so much in the last few years.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kate Osborne'.

Kate Osborne MP
Member of Parliament for the Jarrow constituency

Advice Surgeries:

Make sure to check my social media channels to find out when my upcoming surgeries are! As always if you need any assistance from me or my team, please contact me at kate.osborne.mp@parliament.uk or call 0191 466 1509 and I will do everything I can to help.

Visit my website or social media to keep up to date with my work throughout the month.

Facebook: [@kateosbornejarrow](#)

Twitter: [@kateosbornemp](#)

Website: www.kate-osborne.co.uk

Warmest wishes,

Kate Osborne MP

Member of Parliament for the Jarrow constituency