

WHAT WOULD YOU MOST LIKE ME TO ACHIEVE ON YOUR BEHALF AS YOUR MP?

I can better represent your views at Westminster if you let me know what concerns you. If you would like to let me know, I very much look forward to hearing from you.

*Best wishes,
Eleanor Laing*

What would you most like me to achieve nationally?

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What would you most like me to achieve locally?

.....

Name:

Address:

Tel No:

Email:

Please return to:
Eleanor Laing MP, Thatcher House, 4 Meadow Road, Loughton, Essex IG10 4HX
or email: lainge@parliament.uk

The information provided is for the use of Eleanor Laing MP and her office staff only. The data provided will not be passed to a third party or any other organisation.
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Eleanor holds regular surgeries at her office in Loughton.

If there is any matter which you would like to discuss with Eleanor or any problem with which she might be able to help you, please contact her at:

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So many people work very hard to organise wonderful events to celebrate what is going on in our local community and to raise money for many well deserving charities. Eleanor attends as many events as she can – pictured Theydon Bois Open Gardens, Waltham Abbey Civic Service, Epping Forest Cricketers, Oak View School Extravaganza, Epping Town Show, the Bakers' Benevolent Society Family Open Day, Waltham Abbey Fishing Competition, Opening of the Abbeyfield Seaside Garden, North Weald Battle of Britain Commemoration and The Great War Exhibition at Waltham Abbey District Museum.

SO WHAT DOES AN MP DO?

In this update your MP sets out her position on key issues such as the economy, MPs' expenses, sites for gypsies and travellers and the surveillance society – and reports on some of the many events she has attended during the summer.



Taking part in House of Commons debates is a very important part of an MP's work but takes up only a small proportion of their time. That is why you might not see your MP sitting on the green benches when switching on the TV Parliamentary Channel.

Says Eleanor: "First and foremost my job is representing the interests of Epping Forest and the people who live here. This may involve asking questions in the House or raising points in debates. But often it is more effective to write directly to Ministers. Every month I send and receive on behalf of constituents literally hundreds of letters."

Much of the House of Commons business involves working on new legislation, discussing department issues, attending Shadow Ministerial meetings from first thing in the morning until late in the evening outside the main chamber. As Shadow Minister for Justice, Eleanor leads on issues such as electoral reform, data security and protecting personal privacy.

"I have to be on hand for important votes at 10pm on Mondays and Tuesdays. On Wednesdays and Thursdays, formal business is normally over by 7.00 pm, but other meetings are usually slotted in after that," she says.

Another vital part of the role is holding surgeries for constituents at her office in Loughton "The House often sits on a Friday too which can clash with constituency duties: I like to spend Friday, Saturday and Sunday visiting local organisations, attending events and meeting constituents."

She adds: "Being an MP is not just a job, it's a way of life". ■

BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU:

Eleanor's new plans to protect your privacy.



THE ECONOMY:

Don't panic! News on Citizen Advice Bureau.



MPS' PAY:

Eleanor says the system must be changed and quickly.



GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS:

The tide is turning.



"Being an MP is not just a job, it is a way of life : helping local people with their problems is a major part of it."

A STRONG VOICE FOR EPPING FOREST

CAN I HELP YOU?

ELEANOR WORKING WITH LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

Eleanor works closely with many local organisations, one of which is the Citizens Advice Bureau. In these difficult economic times more and more people are turning to them for help.



With Julia Milavanovic at the advice bureau.

Our local CAB gives these top tips for dealing with debt:

- Don't panic – but don't ignore the problem
- Don't take out any more credit
- Tell your creditors you have problems. Pay the most vital bills first
- Ask the CAB for advice – it might help to know what rights you have and what benefits might be available to tide you over.

MPs can't give legal advice but they deal with many of the same issues as the Bureau – and the Bureau often refers certain kinds of cases to the MP.

Run by dedicated volunteers, our local CAB has offices in Loughton, Epping and Waltham Abbey – call 0208 502 0031 or 01992 574989 or 01992 710353 for more information.

"When you have tried to sort out a problem but it seems that nobody is listening, your MP is always there to help."

SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS:

Eleanor keeps in touch with local businesses and can often help them over difficult hurdles, especially in the current recession. She recently attended the 60th Anniversary Celebration of Epping Forest Chamber of Commerce. "The Chamber is a brilliant focal point for businesses, providing not just moral support but a lively environment for the exchange of ideas" she says.



Speaking on vital issues

MPS' PAY:

ELEANOR SAYS THE SYSTEM MUST BE CHANGED AND QUICKLY

Eleanor says: "I understand why people have been so angry about MPs' expenses."

"I wish the system had been changed long ago. It has put many of us in a dreadful position even though we have acted within the rules."

"Parliament put through much needed changes this summer and we are waiting now for two sets of reports. I wish these committees would get on with it. We need real change - right away."

"MPs have always been accountable but it is just as important that we are seen to be accountable. Whatever the new system is, it must be open and transparent."

"MPs now have to work very hard to win back the confidence of the people we represent."

GYPSIES & TRAVELLERS:



Theydon Bois Action Group

THE TIDE IS TURNING

Eleanor has been working with the various local groups campaigning for a fair deal for our area in the apportionment of sites for gypsies and travellers. There was an enormous response to the District Council's consultation and Eleanor has met and corresponded with hundreds of people who have contacted her on this contentious issue. Says Eleanor: "I have never known such strength of feeling on any local issue."

"Local people think – in my view rightly – that we are being unfairly treated. Of course we must provide sites for gypsies and travellers – but why should we be required to provide more sites than other districts?"

"I am determined that the voice of the people of Epping Forest should be heard - and I am encouraged that it seems that the injustice of our position is being recognised."



Inspecting possible gypsy sites



At the Dispatch Box

BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU:

ELEANOR'S NEW PLANS TO PROTECT YOUR PRIVACY

As Shadow Minister for Justice, Eleanor has been developing policies to prevent intrusion into innocent people's lives. Eleanor says: "It is every politician's duty to safeguard the freedom of the individual citizen. More and more information is being gathered on each and every one of us - but enormous databases waste billions of pounds of taxpayers' money."

Eleanor has published a paper, "Reversing the Rise of the Surveillance State" which proposes to:

- Scrap the National Identity Register and ditch the ContactPoint database.
- Review the proposals to monitor adults who take children to school, to sports clubs or the Scouts.
- End the permanent retention of innocent people's DNA on the National DNA database.
- Prevent councils from using anti-terror laws to spy on local citizens; surveillance could only be used where necessary to stop serious crime .
- Subject all new laws to a 'privacy' test, and beef up the role of the Information Commissioner.

Eleanor says: "I am deeply concerned about state intrusion into the lives of my constituents as they go about their everyday business. It cannot be right in this country that we are watched at every turn: driving the car, taking the children to school and even walking the dog. These proposals will protect the privacy of people from the state."



Stand Up To Hatred Europe 1933 - 1945 Darfur 2003 - Holocaust Memorial Day THE HOLOCAUST NATIONAL TRUST

"I believe we have a wider duty to help people who cannot help themselves."

AID TO AFRICA:

ELEANOR VISITS UGANDA



With children in a Ugandan Village

MPs have wider duties too. As vice-chairman of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Malaria, Eleanor visited some of the rural parts of Uganda to see for herself how the Malaria Consortium is trying to combat this terrible disease.

"In Uganda a child dies of Malaria every five minutes. The medicines are there now to stop this tragedy but there just aren't enough doctors or medical centres to reach people in the outlying areas. I believe we, in our prosperous part of the world, have a wider duty to help people who cannot help themselves."