

# News from Your Local MP

**16 August 2010**

## **Welcome!**

Here's the latest edition of my regular newsletter. If you would prefer not to receive it in future, please respond to this email and I'll remove you from my mailing list.

## **New Homes in Knowle West**

Last Saturday, I joined local residents at a celebration event in Knowle West to mark the completion of a new housing development. More than 80 new homes have been built at Toynbee Road and Samuel Barnett Close thanks to £8.8 million investment from Redland Housing Association, including £3.1 Million from the Homes & Community Agency. The much-needed properties were made available to local residents through a mix of affordable rents and shared ownership schemes.

I was delighted to support this local event, and have the opportunity to look round the homes and meet some of the families who are living in the new properties. Affordable housing developments like this play an important part in the regeneration of Knowle West and will help to ensure a sustainable future for the area.

## **A Tour of the New Skills Academy**

The City of Bristol College opened their doors to offer a sneak preview of Hengrove Park's new Skills Academy. Having taken the keys to the £30 million facility in June, staff have been busily preparing for the arrival of the first students in September.

I was very pleased to look round, along with Lord Mayor Colin Smith and local Councillors Helen Holland, Sean Beynon and Derek Pickup, and enjoyed a tour of the Academy's kitchens, workshops, salons and classrooms. The Skills Academy will provide invaluable opportunities for Bristol South residents. For too long, our part of the city has lagged behind in education and training opportunities. Now, thanks to funding secured by the last Government, we've got this brilliant new facility in the heart of our community.

## **Proposed Changes to Tenancies**

David Cameron's unguarded comments about housing reveal the truth behind the Government's housing proposals. The Prime Minister told a member of the public that the Government was looking at moving away from secure tenancies to fixed term deals where tenants could be forced out of their homes. Residents in Bristol South will be worried but sadly not surprised by the Prime Minister's comments. During the election campaign, I spoke to many council tenants who were concerned that their homes might be at risk. When Labour MPs, including myself, warned tenants about the risk to secure tenancies, we were accused of 'scare-mongering.' If secure tenancies for new tenants go, how long will it be before the Government tries to force current tenants out of their homes or hike up rents to unaffordable levels?

## **Visiting HMS Flying Fox**

Thursday evening is training night for Naval Reserve recruits at HMS Flying Fox in Ashton. I was delighted to join them last week to hear about their very important role. There are around 100 reservists at the unit, all of whom will potentially be eligible for deployment overseas following the completion of their basic training. It was great to chat with the recruits, and to thank them for their very important work on all of our behalves. As well as their important role within the Navy, reservists at HMS Flying Fox have completed a wide range of challenges, raising considerable sums of money for charity.

## **Bristol's Playday**

Last week I went along to Bristol's annual Playday at College Green. I always try to get along to this fantastic event, and this year there were hundreds of children enjoying a wide range of activities. Giving children a chance to play is very important in terms of their development but most importantly, Playday is a great – and free – day out for children during the long summer holidays. There's a wealth of information on what's available for children during the holidays at <http://www.goplacestoplay.org.uk/>.

## **Any Questions?**

If you have any queries about these issues, or have a question you would like to ask about anything else, please do not hesitate to get in touch. Just email [primarolod@parliament.uk](mailto:primarolod@parliament.uk), phone 0117 909 0063 or write to me at PO Box 1002, Bristol, BS99 1WH.