It has been another busy few weeks, both at home in Exmouth and Exeter East and in Westminster.

September has brought plenty to get stuck into, from bringing local people together to discuss the EXMO_20 proposals and meeting some of the brilliant organisations working across our community, to standing up for Devon's farmers and raising concerns about the future of support for unpaid carers.

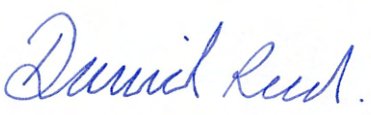
It has also been a significant month for me personally, having been appointed to the Conservative frontbench as Shadow Minister for Defence, Security, and Resilience spanning across the Ministry of Defence and Foreign Office. After 16 years working across the Royal Marines, national security and the defence industry before entering Parliament, it is a real privilege to have the opportunity to bring that experience to the role.

Whatever responsibilities I take on in Westminster, my first responsibility will always be to the people of Exmouth and Exeter East. There is a huge amount happening locally, and I will continue working hard to make sure our community has a strong voice in Parliament.

As ever, thank you to everyone who has taken the time to speak to me, attend one of my events or get in touch with my office over the past few weeks.

With warm regards and best wishes,

David



David Reed MP
Member of Parliament for Exmouth and Exeter East

Recent Highlights

Falklands Cup at Exmouth Town FC

A real honour to attend the Falklands Cup at Exmouth Town FC.

The Falklands Cup is the annual football fixture between the Royal Marines and the Parachute Regiment. Fiercely competitive on the pitch, it is also an occasion built around camaraderie, remembrance and mutual respect between the two sides.

This year's match was especially poignant, as both teams came together to remember two former squad members who have sadly passed away following illness.

I did, of course, try my very best to remain impartial from the sidelines but I was immensely proud to see the Bootnecks secure a convincing 5–0 win!

A huge thank you to Exmouth Town FC for the fantastic hosting and warm welcome, and to everyone who came along to support the teams and RMA – The Royal Marines Charity.

A brilliant evening and a real privilege to be there.

Devon Mayor

Alongside Sir Geoffrey Cox, Sir Mel Stride and Rebecca Smith MP, I have written to Devon County Council, Plymouth City Council and Torbay Council about plans to establish a South West Mayoral Strategic Authority.

I do not oppose a mayoralty in principle. We do, however, need to know how one would work before pressing ahead.

Read the Letter Here

Battle of Britain Parade in Exmouth

It was an honour to take part in the Battle of Britain Parade in Exmouth, marking the 86th anniversary of the Battle of Britain.

The occasion provided an important opportunity to remember the courage and sacrifice of all those who fought, and those who continue to serve, to ensure our country remains free.

It was fantastic to see cadets from across Devon and Somerset come together for the parade and service. As we approach the first ever Cadets Week in October, it was also a timely reminder of the important role our cadet forces continue to play in our communities and in supporting the next generation.

My thanks to everyone involved in organising such a fitting commemoration, and to all those who came along to show their support.

We will remember them.

Visit to Westbank Community Health and Care

It was great to visit Westbank Community Health and Care recently and meet with Sarah Hicks, their Chief Executive.

Westbank provides a huge amount of support to people across Devon, including many people locally. Through services including Devon Carers, they provide advice, assessments, practical support and a vital helpline for unpaid carers, alongside a much wider range of health and community services.

I was also pleased to attend Westbank's Volunteer Celebration, where I had the opportunity to thank some of their fantastic volunteers and speak directly with people who use their services.

It was therefore deeply concerning to hear about the decision by Devon County Council to bring Westbank's Caring Well in Devon contract to an end. The contract currently supports thousands of unpaid carers across Devon, and it is important that their voices are heard as these changes are made.

I have now raised my concerns with the Minister for Social Care and will continue to press for reassurance about the future of support for unpaid carers in Devon.

A huge thank you to Sarah, the Westbank team and all of their volunteers for the work they do every day.

NHS Dentistry Survey

Have your say on NHS dentistry.

I regularly hear from local people who are struggling to access an NHS dentist, with very few practices currently accepting new NHS patients.

I want to hear about your experiences so I can raise these concerns with local health providers and Government Ministers, and continue pushing for better access to NHS dental care locally.

Please take a few minutes to complete my survey and share your views

Complete the Survey Here

EXMO_20 Meeting

Thank you to everyone who came along to my public meeting on EXMO_20.

It was really valuable to hear directly from local people and to give people the opportunity to raise their concerns and questions about the proposals.

Ahead of the meeting, I wrote to the relevant public bodies, infrastructure providers and utility companies to seek clear assurances and information about the potential impact of the development, including on local roads, sewage capacity, healthcare, schools, public transport and other services.

As we receive their responses, I will be publishing them in full on my website so everyone can see exactly what has been said.

The meeting notes, audio recording and the responses received so far are available on the website.

I will continue to work with whoever is necessary, and on a cross-party basis, to make sure we deliver the right outcome for our home. Although councillors had been advised not to attend by the District Council, it was good to see that some chose to come along and listen directly to the concerns and views being raised.

Thank you again to everyone who attended and contributed to the discussion.

Meeting Notes

Budleigh Salterton Literary Festival

It was great to get over to Budleigh Salterton to meet Sue, David and Kate and help celebrate the start of this year's Festival. It is always fantastic to see the town come together for an event that has become such an important part of the local calendar.

Sue is retiring as Chair, and I want to thank her for the enormous amount of time, energy and hard work she has given over the past seven years to help make the Festival such a success. Under her leadership, the Festival has continued to grow and develop, and her dedication and commitment have made a real difference. I am also delighted that Sue will be staying involved as a member of the Festival Committee.

I wish Sue all the very best as she steps down as Chair. It was also a pleasure to meet David as he takes over the role, and I am sure the next chapter of the Festival will be in very safe hands with him.

I also heard more about the Festival's wider work in the community, particularly its outreach with local schools and bringing authors in to meet young people. Reading is so important, and anything that helps inspire the next generation to pick up a book and engage with new ideas is hugely worthwhile.

The Festival is a real asset to Budleigh Salterton and our wider community. A huge thank you to all the volunteers and everyone working behind the scenes who make the whole event possible each year.

In Parliament

Shadow Minister Appointment

It’s a real privilege to have been appointed Shadow Minister for Defence, Security, and Resilience spanning across both the Ministry of Defence and Foreign Office.

I’m grateful to Kemi Badenoch for the opportunity and the trust she has placed in me.

Before being elected in 2024, I spent 16 years in the Royal Marines, national security and the defence industry. I’m looking forward to bringing that experience to the role.

In an increasingly dangerous world, defence and foreign policy must go hand in hand. I’m eager to get stuck in and help lead the development of a strong, coherent Conservative approach to Britain’s security and our role in the world.

Questioning the Minister on the Bluetongue Outbreak

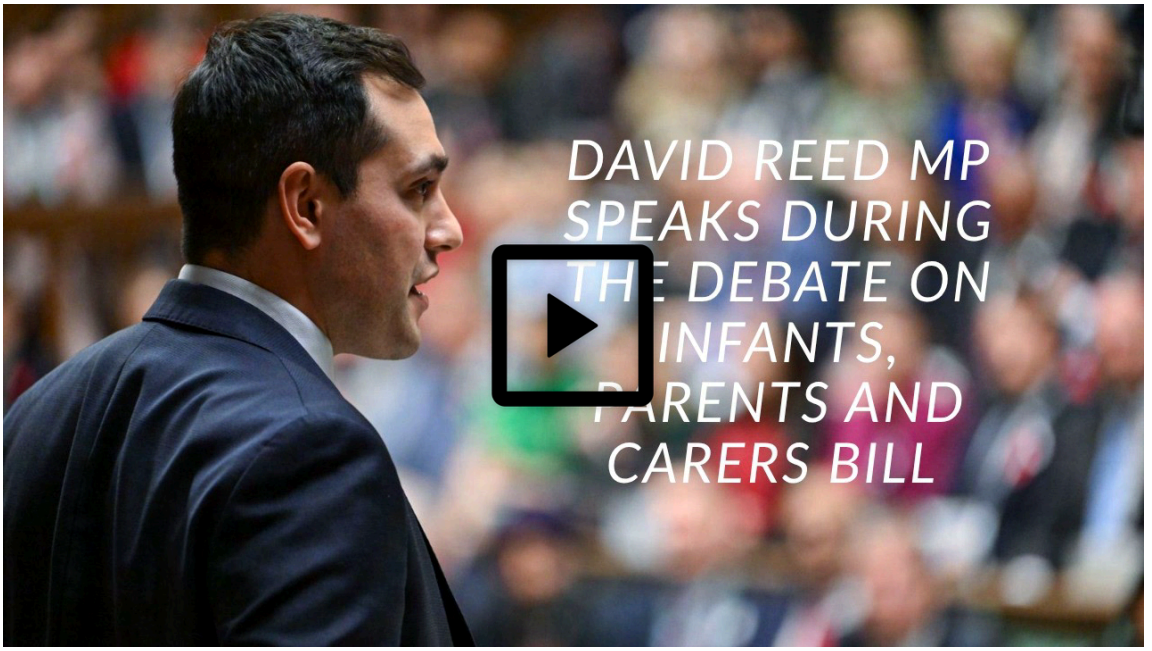
Livestock farmers across Devon are facing the bluetongue outbreak at an already incredibly difficult time.

Drought, unexpected vaccination and fallen stock costs are all adding further pressure, while changes to Agricultural Property Relief and Business Property Relief are creating additional uncertainty for farming families.

In Parliament, I asked the Minister whether the Government recognises that the financial impact of bluetongue cannot be viewed in isolation.

I was pleased that the Minister said he would take my concerns back to the Department. I will continue to make the case for our farmers and ensure the pressures they are facing are heard in Westminster.

Exmouth Bosom Buddies



Jodie Wilkerson and the team at Exmouth Bosom Buddies provide an invaluable service to families across our community, offering free, trusted breastfeeding and early parenting support.

I was proud to highlight Jodie's work in Parliament during the debate on Sir Desmond Swayne MP's Infants, Parents and Carers Bill.

Groups like Bosom Buddies should not have to constantly fight to secure the support they need to continue their vital work. As the Bill progresses, I want the Government to recognise the important role these community services play and ensure they have the support they need to grow, thrive and flourish.

Jodie and her volunteers have supported countless local families, mine included. Their work is exactly the kind of community based support we should

be championing.

National Resilience Plan

Three months ago, I hosted a parliamentary debate on why we must become resilient and better prepared for crises.

I called for a national conversation, and am glad the government have heeded my call.

As the new Shadow Minister for Defence, Security and Resilience, my priority now is making sure that the government get the campaign right. You can read more below.

Read Here

Air Ambulance

I was pleased to join Air Ambulances UK at Downing Street to hand in a petition signed by more than 2,500 people, earlier this month.

The campaign is calling for air ambulances to be able to land directly at hospitals 24/7 in life-threatening emergencies, using safeguarded on-site helipads.

When someone is critically ill or seriously injured, every minute matters. Ensuring crews can land directly at Major Trauma Centres and specialist hospitals can help avoid unnecessary transfers and delays in getting patients the care they need.

I was very pleased to support the campaign and help take this important message directly to Government.

A huge thank you to everyone who signed the petition and to our air ambulance crews across the country for the lifesaving work they do every day.

Forces Pension Society

I was pleased to sponsor and speak at a Forces Pension Society event in Parliament focused on improving awareness of Armed Forces pensions and reducing the number of unclaimed entitlements.

The Ministry of Defence estimates that more than 15,000 pension benefits remain unclaimed, with around 2,000 deferred pensions going unclaimed each year.

Having previously backed the Forces Pension Society's campaign to encourage veterans in Exmouth and Exeter East to check whether they may be entitled to a deferred pension, it was good to continue that work in Westminster.

As a former Royal Marine, I know how important it is that those who serve, and those who have served, receive the support and entitlements they have earned. The Forces Pension Society has produced a simple online flowchart to help veterans check whether they may be eligible to claim. If you think you could be entitled to a deferred pension, you can find out more here: https://forcespensionsociety.org/unclaimedpensions

You can also contact Veterans UK on 0800 085 3600.

Sustainable Farming Initiative (SFI)

The handling of the Sustainable Farming Initiative (SFI26) has caused yet more uncertainty for farmers who need stability to plan for the future.

I have joined over 100 MPs in writing to the Environment Secretary demanding answers following the scheme's closure less than six hours after Window 2 opened.

Our farmers deserve a system that works, fair access to support and certainty about what comes next.

I will continue standing up for farmers in Exmouth and Exeter East and across the UK.

Read the Letter Here

Looking Ahead

As we head into October, there is plenty to look forward to both locally and in Westminster.

I am looking forward to getting out and about across Exmouth and Exeter East, meeting more of the brilliant people and organisations that make our part of the world such a special place.

Next week I am heading to Birmingham for the Conservative Party Conference, and I will update you all on what I have been up to, over the coming weeks.

As always, thank you for your continued support. Please do keep in touch, and I look forward to seeing many of you out and about over the coming weeks.

David Reed MP

Member of Parliament for Exmouth and Exeter East
david.reed.mp@parliament.uk
01395 493213