



James Duddridge MP



IN TOUCH

June 2007

WITH JAMES

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Flood prevention must be top priority

Local MP James Duddridge writes:

A RECENT report has warned there could be a huge increase in the number of homes in Southend that are at serious risk of flooding over the course of this century.

Our local communities have a vivid living memory of the big storm of 1953, which killed nine people in Foulness, Great Wakering and Southend, and caused untold damage to homes and other properties. None of us wants to witness something like that again in our own lifetime, or that of our children.

The Association of British Insurers has produced evidence which predicts what will happen if a storm of a similar size hits our coastline again. The likelihood of this happening is quite low, but of course the risk is there, and in fact, becomes ever greater as our climate changes.

As sea levels are predicted to rise more and more, it's vital to ensure that flood defences on the coastline are kept strong and fit for purpose. I think we accept that living near the sea can sometimes involve some risk, but the huge increase in the number of homes that could be at risk in the future is unacceptable.

One way of keeping the risk down is to ensure that flood defences in our area are kept up to the job of protecting our homes. The Environment Agency has been working hard on its flood management plan for Great Wakering. They recently consulted the local community about the options for updating the sea walls that we currently have, and even held an information day in the village hall, where local people could come along and talk to the experts about the plans, and about what it means for their own homes. They have now decided on the best method of strengthening the defences and will continue to keep local people informed of progress.

Another way of reducing the risk from flooding is to keep development down. With 160,000 new houses

planned for the Thames Gateway area things are not looking good. However, a recent document published by the Thames Gateway Partnership has provided a useful tool for developers to understand the land in Southend, and therefore plan for flood risk accordingly.



I recently called for a debate in the House of Commons about the risks that coastal areas like ours face from flooding. I'm also Vice-Chairman of the cross-party Flood Protection Group. I intend to keep raising the profile of the challenges of flood prevention.

Flooding is a major concern for all of us, but it's a manageable one. As long as we take the right steps to mitigate the risks, we won't have to face disasters in Southend like the hideous Hurricane Katrina floods that we saw played out on our TV screens in 2005. But we have to make sure that the right steps are taken now.

Sign up to Flood Warning Direct



The Environment Agency has a free service that gives people advance warning of flooding in their area by telephone, mobile, fax or pager. Local people can call a dedicated 24-hour number to register for the warnings: the 'Floodline' is on 0845 988 1188.

www.environment-agency.gov.uk/floodline

James writes a Valentines message to Southend at the new British Heart Foundation shop



James celebrates with Young Firefighters at their Passing Out Parade at Southend Fire Station



James opens the new GP surgery at Northumberland Avenue

If you want to find out more about James visit... www.jamesduddridge.com



Top row (Left to Right): Elliott Highmore, Age 6, Thorpe Greenways Infant School, James Duddridge MP, Jodie Ellison, Age 7, Hamstel Infant School, Hope Horncastle, Age 8, St Helen's RC Primary School

Bottom row (Left to Right): Maddie Shields, Year 2, St George's School, Peter Wilkes, Age 7, Friars Primary and Nursery School (overall winner), Chevanique Thomas, Age 10, Porters Grange School

James meets his Christmas card competition winners

LOCAL MP James Duddridge was very pleased to meet the six children from schools around his constituency who helped design his Christmas card last year - and will be looking for new winners when he launches his 2007 Christmas Card Competition.

For last year's competition James wrote to all of the primary schools in his constituency, inviting pupils to draw a design for his card - and he was delighted to receive 101 entries from eight schools all across Southend and Rochford. He hopes to get just as strong a response this year.

The winner for 2006 was 7-year old Peter Wilkes, from Friars Primary and Nursery School, who created a collage of Father Christmas sitting on a deckchair looking out over Southend Pier. Peter's design was on the front of James' card, with the pictures designed by the five runners-up featured on the back.

James said, "Last year's competition was a huge success and it was amazing to see how much effort all the children put into their pictures. It was a shame I couldn't put all of the entries onto my Christmas card, as the quality was so high across the board, but I hope each of the children liked the certificates I sent them to say well done.

"I saw the card displayed in local shops and even in high-level offices in London, so the winners' artwork is becoming famous!

"I will definitely be doing a similar competition this year, so local children can get their thinking caps on now!"

If you or your school wants to take part in James' Christmas Card Competition 2007, drop him an email at james@jamesduddridge.com and he'll let

you know when it's underway.



www.jamesduddridge.com

Tackling bike theft with Cycle Watch

JAMES Duddridge, MP for Rochford and Southend East, recently went along to a free cycle tagging session at Southend Central Library in a bid to help fight bike thefts in Southend.

The scheme, run by Southend Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, aims to reduce bike theft in the town by fitting an electronic tag with a unique serial number into the frame of a bicycle. The registered owner's details are then held on a national database, and a digital photograph is taken of the bike, which is printed off and supplied to the owner as a unique 'cycle passport'.

Impressed with his new bike security, James said, "This scheme is a great idea and I'd encourage anyone who uses a bike around Southend to get it tagged. It's important not to let the minority who try and steal our bikes get away with putting us off cycling around our town."

For more information on how to get your bike tagged call Southend Neighbourhood Watch on 01702 464199 or visit www.southendcommunity.org.uk



Oyster extension should go further, says MP



James seeks Oyster extension to Southend stations

JAMES Duddridge, MP for Rochford and Southend East, has welcomed news from train operator c2c that it will be adopting the use of Oyster cards at some of its stations.

However, James would like to see Oyster cards used at all stations throughout c2c's London to Shoeburyness line, not just stations within Zones 1-6. James is therefore calling on c2c to investigate the introduction of Oyster across the board, and implement it as soon as possible.

Commenting on the situation James said, "Rolling out the use of Oyster cards would bring a host of benefits to all of us who use c2c trains on a regular basis, and I strongly encourage c2c to look into it. It would make the daily commute a lot more convenient, and would also make it much easier to hop on and off the trains for shorter journeys."

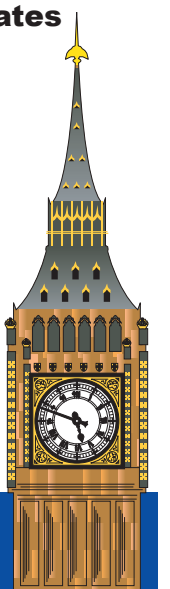
He added, "Of course we wouldn't want Transport for London to take over pricing, and would want local prices to reflect the local marketplace rather than the needs of London. However, Southend has a lot to gain from getting plugged into the Oyster system."

Lessons in democracy

JAMES is always keen to get young people involved in politics, and whenever he has the opportunity, he encourages students to engage in debates or tell him their views.

He recently co-hosted an after-school event along with the Southend Youth Council, Southend West MP David Amess and Councillor Tony Cox, Southend Council's Youth Champion. This provided an informal setting where young people could meet local politicians, to question them on the issues of the day or just simply find out more about how they can be involved in the democratic process.

James said, "I'm always impressed at how well-informed our local students are whenever I go along to a school assembly or show groups around the House of Commons. Even if you're not old enough to vote for your local representatives, your opinions are just as important and you should feel free to contact me or your local councillors to let us know what you think."



If you are a teacher who would like to arrange a visit to the House of Commons, please write to:

**James Duddridge MP
Strand House
Suite 1
742 Southchurch Rd.
Southend SS1 2PS**

Backing local tourism



James promotes Southend during British Tourism Week, by going along to Adventure Island with owner Philip Miller

www.adventureisland.co.uk

Local hotels under threat from new tax

IN his interim report for the Government on local taxes, Sir Michael Lyons raised the prospect of a new local tax on hotels, hostels and bed & breakfasts.

Given the importance of tourism to our local economy, James was very concerned about the proposals, which would have potentially added £100 to the cost of a family holiday, and therefore contacted local businesses that would be affected by a 'bed tax' to see what they thought.

He surveyed local hotels, guesthouses and B&Bs, and the results were worrying. Over eight in ten owners surveyed thought a 'Bed Tax' of 10% per night would be very damaging to their business, and half thought they would have to reduce staff numbers or close altogether.

JAMES DUDDRIDGE MP
SURVEY FOR HOTELS, GUEST HOUSES AND B&B PROVIDERS ON BED TAX
 The Government has asked Sir Michael Lyons to report on local authority housing options. He is required to be consulting the views of local business owners on the introduction of a Bed Tax on hotels and B&B accommodation.

1) In principle, what impact do you estimate a 10% per night Bed Tax would have on your business?
 YES NO PROBABLY DON'T KNOW IF YES, how many? _____

2) Do you think the Government should consult with the industry before introducing any new Bed Tax?
 YES NO PROBABLY DON'T KNOW IF YES, how many? _____

3) How many beds do you have available for overnight accommodation?
 YES NO DON'T KNOW

4) What approximate occupancy rate do you have in:
 1-4 5-10 11-20 21-30

5) How do you estimate the number of overnight stays?
 VISITING BUSINESS OTHER

6) Average duration of visitor stays:
 OVERNIGHT 2 nights 3 nights 4-6 nights 1 week OVER ONE WEEK

7) Please indicate:
 AVERAGE SPEND PER VISITOR: THE UK OVERSEAS

8) How many people are employed in the business?
 Part-time Full-time TOTAL

9) Any queries such as this is necessary please. Please use the space to raise any specific issues or make a comment.

Name: _____
 Organisation: _____
 Address: _____
 Postcode: _____
 Telephone: _____
 Email: _____

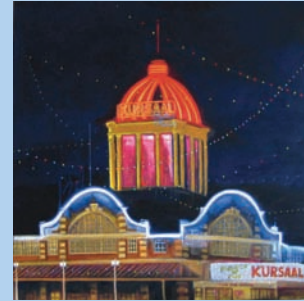
James Duddridge MP
 House of Commons
 London SW1A 0AA
 Reply by 15th Feb 2011

James opens the 'Sad, Mad and Glad' exhibition by local artist Katey J at Ciao Coffee Shop.

James is a keen fan of Katey J's work and he has her paintings of the seafront up in his office in Southend and at the House of Commons. James was on hand to help launch Katey's new abstract exhibition in aid of the Southend District Mental Health Association, an independent local charity dedicated to supporting people with mental illness.



To find out more about Katey J and her work, visit www.kateyj.com



James backs bond boost

JAMES Duddridge MP is backing a simple way for people to support local charity Havens Hospices.

The Bond 1000 Campaign is aiming to sign up 1,000 new members to the Havens Bond - a weekly draw with cash prizes of up to £1,000. It costs just £1 a week to enter and people can choose to pay by cash, cheque or just sign up by standing order.

If 1,000 new members are recruited, it will mean a guaranteed annual income of £52,000 for the hospices - enough to pay for a nurse at Fair Havens and Little Havens for a whole year.

Havens Hospices incorporates Fair Havens Hospice and Little Havens Children's Hospice. Fair Havens cares for adults in the communities of Southend, Rochford and Castle Point while Little Havens looks after life-limited children and their families from all over Essex.

In October last year, James took part in the Southend 10k Classic Road Race in support of Havens Hospices. Referring to this he said,

"Signing up to the Bond is certainly a much easier way to support Havens Hospices than running 10 kilometres - the Road Race was great fun but involved far more training!"



James is shown supporting the Havens Bond

To join or to find out more information local people can call the Bond Hotline on 01702 33 99 77 or visit:

www.havenshospices.org.uk

Support for boys in blue

ROCHFORD and Southend East MP James Duddridge was delighted to join other Essex MPs in presenting a framed pledge to Essex Police, in a show of solidarity with the force.

The pledge is a reminder of the support the MPs have given Essex Police in the past and will continue to give in the future. It has been framed and will be hung at the Police Headquarters in Chelmsford.

James and the other MPs originally signed the pledge in December 2005, when the Government first announced plans to merge police forces across the country. In a campaign led by Rayleigh MP Mark Francois, the Essex MPs voiced their concerns about the plans.

The Police themselves ran a county-wide public consultation that showed strong opposition to a merger, which meant Members of Parliament, the Police Force and the local public were united against the plans. There was much relief when the merger plans were scrapped by the Government.

After the presentation James said, "This is a good time to take stock of our successful campaign to save Essex Police Force."



"It was good news for our county when we discovered that the plans for a merger had collapsed, but we also need to look ahead and continue to support our Police in the future."

James and his fellow Essex MPs are shown presenting the original pledge to Essex Police



Dear Reader,

As your local Member of Parliament, I thought you'd be interested to see some of the things I've been doing in Southend over the past few months.

One of the biggest long-term issues facing us here in Southend is the risk of flooding in the future, especially as the climate changes in the coming years. I've been doing a lot of work with the Council and other involved organisations to ensure that we're effectively protected.

I am also continuing to help a high volume of individual constituents who need help or advice, and have again met a lot of school children to help them learn about our democratic process.

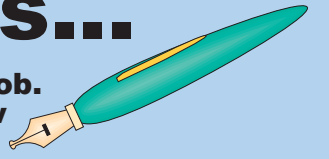
There's always plenty going on and you can keep up to date with what I'm doing on a regular basis by visiting my website at www.jamesduddridge.com

As ever, please get in touch if I can be of any assistance to you.

Yours,

Thank you James...

MPs don't expect to be thanked for doing their job. However, it is nice when they are. Printed below are quotes from a selection of letters from residents received by James since his last report.



"I would just like to say thank you very much for all your help and time over the past couple of months. Without your help, I don't know what I would have done. Thank you very much."

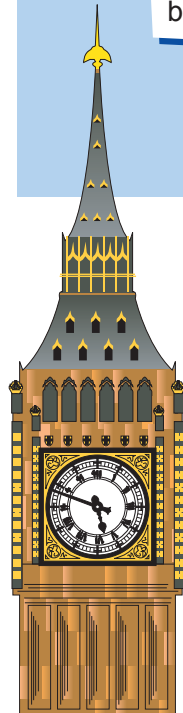
C.N.,
Shoeburyness

"Once again, thank you for assisting in my case and putting an end to what had begun to be an ongoing saga."

C.F.,
Southend-on-Sea

V.M.,
Rochford

"We really appreciate having such positive support. Thank you once again from all the family."



Motions James has signed...

MPs can sign motions in Parliament to demonstrate their concern about - or support for - a particular issue. Here are some of the campaigns that James has signed up to in recent months:

- EVERY DISABLED CHILD MATTERS CAMPAIGN
- ANIMAL WELFARE
- ACTION FOR DARFUR
- BED TAX
- MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS NURSES
- LOST OCCUPATIONAL PENSIONS

I'm interested any feedback you may have on this newsletter. Have you found it useful? Let me know by emailing me on:

james@jamesduddridge.com

Thank you

USEFUL CONTACTS



- | | | |
|---|-----------|--|
| Southend-on-Sea Borough Council | ☎ 215 000 | - www.southend.gov.uk |
| Rochford District Council | ☎ 546 366 | - www.rochford.gov.uk |
| Local Police (non-emergency) | ☎ 431 212 | - www.essex.police.uk |
| Citizens Advice Bureau | ☎ 610 610 | - www.southendcab.org.uk |
| Connexions (advice for young people) | ☎ 464 315 | - www.estconnexions.co.uk |

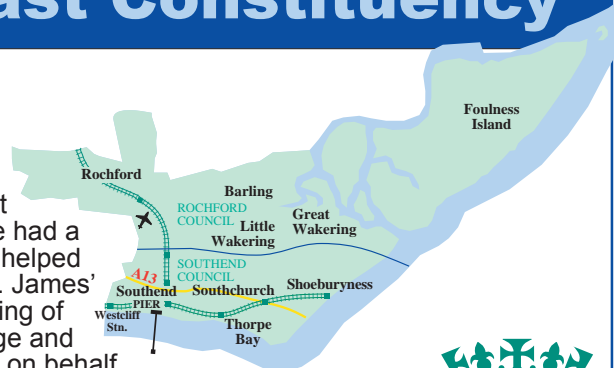
The Rochford & Southend East Constituency



Your local Member of Parliament James Duddridge MP

James Duddridge was elected as the Member of Parliament for Rochford and Southend East in May 2005. Before this he had a successful business career as a Company Director and also helped set up a successful market and opinion research firm in 2000. James' experience in the workplace has given him practical understanding of the challenges facing working people. James enjoys a challenge and is relishing his new role of taking up many diverse issues on behalf of his constituents and fighting for improvements in the locality.

James lives in Southend with his wife Katy and their son Tom, who was born in May 2006 - and their two cats, Boris and Barney. He enjoys cycling, and supports Southend United and Southampton Football clubs.



Surgeries
If you think that a group or organisation would benefit from a visit from James Duddridge then do get in touch. He would be pleased to hear from you. Surgeries are held weekly. To make an appointment, please call 01702 616135.

Contact details

✉ James Duddridge MP
Strand House
Suite 1
742 Southchurch Road
Southend SS1 2PS

@ james@jamesduddridge.com

☎ 01702 616135

www.jamesduddridge.com

CUT OUT & KEEP