



# James Duddridge MP

# IN TOUCH

## WITH JAMES



Spring 2008

This newsletter is delivered by local volunteers



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# New baby, new job

**LOCAL MP James Duddridge received a bundle of good news this January with the birth of his second son, Henry.**

James and his wife, Katy, were delighted when Henry was born fit and healthy at Southend Hospital on 21st January, weighing in at 8lb 6oz.

James and Katy's first son, 20-month-old Tom, was delighted with the arrival of his younger brother a few days later at their Thorpe Bay home - and so were the family's two cats, Boris and Barney!

James said, "I think it goes without saying that Katy and I are delighted with Henry and Tom is excited to

be a big brother."

Talking about his experiences in Southend with a young family, James continued, "One of the benefits of living in the heart of the constituency is that you don't just hear about local services, you actually use them and understand them in depth. During my last quarterly review meeting with the Chief Executive of Southend Hospital I joked that we might be using the maternity unit ourselves - and although we had hoped to have a home birth as we did

for our first son, in the end my joke turned out to be somewhat of a prediction."

James' good news didn't end with this exciting addition to the family. While at home taking care of mother and baby James received a phone call informing him that David Cameron had asked him to take up the front-bench position of Opposition Whip.

The Government and Opposition Whips' Offices in the House of Commons manage the business that takes place in the Commons as well as managing their respective parties' MPs.

James said of his promotion, "I am very happy to join the frontbenches in the House of Commons and I'm enjoying getting my teeth stuck into my new role."

However, James has stressed that he will be continuing as ever to represent the people of Southend and Rochford at all opportunities:

"I have been working hard for local people since I was elected back in 2005 and that isn't going to change. Indeed, I've been getting even more of an understanding of the issues facing the area since my children have been born."

**If you have a problem that you want James' help with, then please do get in touch with him about it - see the back page for how to contact him.**



**Opening the new Summerville Children's Centre in Westcliff**

**Celebrating 750 years of Rochford Market with son Tom and the Chairman of Rochford District Council**



**A helicopter ride in Afghanistan during a visit to learn more about the UK's programme on the ground**

**Supporting Havens Hospice along with staff and Southend West MP David Amess**



## Women have had right to vote for 90 years...

**THIS** spring marks the 90th anniversary of women voting, following the passing of the Representation of the People Act in 1918.

The Act, which granted women the right to vote and be elected to Parliament, was passed almost exactly 90 years ago in February 1918. However, it only made it possible for women over 30 to vote - whereas men could vote at 21. It was another 10 years until a subsequent law was passed which granted women exactly the same voting rights as men.

Speaking to commemorate the anniversary, James said, "I'm sure a lot of people find it strange to think that it's only 90 years since women have been able to vote in this country - it doesn't sound like a very long time. I think it shows how far we've come as a society."

However, James thinks the occasion is a timely reminder that none of us should take our right to vote for granted.

He continued, "Hopefully this anniversary will remind both men and women of their legal right to have their say and their corresponding responsibility to turn out at the ballot box."

## Are you registered to vote in local and national elections?

Remember, local Council elections are on 1st May and a General Election could be called at any time, so it's important that you keep your registration details up-to-date to ensure that you can have your say.

To find out if you are registered, and to complete the necessary form, contact the Electoral Registration Officer at Southend-on-Sea Borough Council on **01702 215 116**.

If you live in Rochford, call Rochford District Council's Elections Line on **01702 318 187**.

You can register at any time, but if you want to vote in the local elections on 1st May you must register by **16th April, 2008**.



**Keep up-to-date with news about what James is up to on your behalf - visit:**

[www.jamesduddridge.com](http://www.jamesduddridge.com)

# Essex Post Offices under threat

**THE** whole of the Post Office network is being downsized, and Essex hasn't escaped the possibility that branches in our county might have to close down.

Some branches in other parts of the county have already been announced as being under threat - and the announcement about which of Southend's branches might have to close will be made in May.

James wants Southend's Post Offices to stay as they are because they provide invaluable services for residents, and he has

been campaigning to secure their futures.

James said, "The Post Offices in Southend and the surrounding area provide vital services that we've got to fight to retain. The branches provide a lifeline to local residents, especially older people."

"To say that our post offices would be sorely missed if they closed would be an under-



statement - for many people they're a necessity, not a luxury. How exactly are residents without a car or a computer meant to draw their pension or pay their TV licence when their local post office is no longer open?"

### Winning students pictured with James, left to right:

- **Toby Hurst**, Age 9, Temple Sutton Primary School
- **Kirsty Rogers**, Age 7, Hinguar Primary School
- **Ellissa Bain**, Age 8, St Mary's CofE Primary School
- **Molly Govus**, Year 3, Hamstel Junior School
- **Mercedes Chaplin**, Year 6, St Helen's RC Primary School
- (Overall winner) **Sandra Adeyinka**, Age 10, Porters Grange School



## Congratulations to Christmas card competition winners

**THIS** year's annual competition to design James Duddridge MP's Christmas Card was a great success. Local schoolchildren were challenged to create masterpieces along the theme 'Christmas in Southend' - and they didn't disappoint, as nearly 200 children from eight different schools took part.

The winner's podium was occupied by 10-year-old Sandra Adeyinka from Porters Grange School, who created a collage showing Father Christmas with an elf on the big wheel, above a sign saying 'Southend Rocks'.

Sandra's artwork featured on the front of James' card for Christmas in 2007, which he sent to around 1,000 people in Southend, Rochford and beyond. The back of the card showed designs by the five runners-up.

James presented all of the finalists with their certificates at a special ceremony at the House of Commons.

"Once again the standard of entries for the competition were really high. It's great to see how creative the young people in Southend can be."

"I had a really nice day with the winners when they came to the House of Commons for the presentation. They were all so excited to come and see Parliament and learn about some of its history, as well as how laws are made and what MPs do."

"Congratulations to Sandra and the runners-up for their special work. Watch out for my 2008 competition later this year!"



**Sandra Adeyinka's winning entry**

# Cliffs repair campaign continues

**LOCAL MP James Duddridge has written to the Minister asking for substantial support to fix the cliff slippage sites in central Southend.**

James' continued campaign follows good news about sites to the west of the town, where the Department for Transport has agreed to spend £1 million supporting the Council on repair work.

James is now continuing to

press for a solution to the slips in the centre of town - which could cost around £40 million to repair.

**SUPPORT**

James said, "I'm still asking that the Government provide support to repair the slip at the

bandstand, a situation that's been allowed to go on for far too long. The Council are committed to solving it, but without help from central Government they simply couldn't afford to.

"I feel very strongly about this issue - so much so that I raised it in my very first speech to Parliament back in June 2005 and have repeatedly spoken to the Minister orally and in writing."

# James steps up calls for a fair funding deal



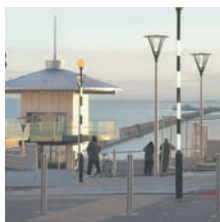
**JAMES Duddridge, MP for Rochford and Southend East, has been campaigning for a fair deal for Southend residents to ensure that the local Council gets the money it needs to provide services in the area.**

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council receives its funding for services from central Government based on how many people live in Southend. But the calculations are based on the 2001 census, which miscalculated the local population by 20,000 people - meaning that the council receives less money than it needs.

James has teamed up with Southend West MP David Amess to press for a solution to the shortfall. They have had meetings with the Minister but Southend's allocation is still based on the underestimated population size.

James said, "We're continuing to press for a fair deal for Southend - it's madness that the Council gets funded according to such incorrect figures. I'm optimistic that we can get this resolved, but I hope it's sooner rather than later."

James and David have decided to run a petition to demonstrate the strength of feeling locally about the under-funding. As James said, "I think this petition will show how important it is that we get the census figures right. It might sound trivial, but it's actually really important as it has direct consequences for our town."



## How YOU can help - sign here for a fair deal for Southend

### Local Authority Funding (Southend)

To the House of Commons.

The Petition of the residents of Southend,

Declares that they deserve a fair funding deal for their local council so that it can provide the services to which they are entitled. And further declares that **the funding received by Southend-on-Sea Borough Council is too low because it is based on an incorrect calculation in the 2001 census.**

**The Petitioners therefore request that the House of Commons urges the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to do everything in her power to secure a fair deal for Southend,** by ensuring that the allocation of funds to Southend-on-Sea Borough Council is calculated according to the true size of the local population.

And the Petitioners remain, etc.

Name(s):  
.....  
.....

PLEASE USE BLOCK CAPITALS

Address:  
.....  
.....  
.....  
..... Postcode: .....

Email: .....

**When complete, please return to:**  
James Duddridge MP,  
Strand House,  
742 Southchurch Road,  
Southend SS1 2PS

**Data Protection Act** - The answers to this survey will be recorded for the sole use of James Duddridge MP. The information you have provided will not be made available to any other person/organisation.

Promoted on his own behalf by James Duddridge MP of Strand House, 742 Southchurch Road, Southend SS1 2PS and paid for from his Communications Allowance. Printed by The Windrush Press, Windrush House, Avenue Two, Station Lane, Witney, Oxfordshire OX28 4XW



**ARE you a small business with concerns about doing business online? Do you think the Government understands the needs of local businesses? Do you have some suggestions for how to encourage local business?**

James conducts a survey at the turn of every financial year to find out what local businesspeople think about the economic environment. If you want to have your say, visit

**www.mpbusinesssurvey.com** and let James know your thoughts.

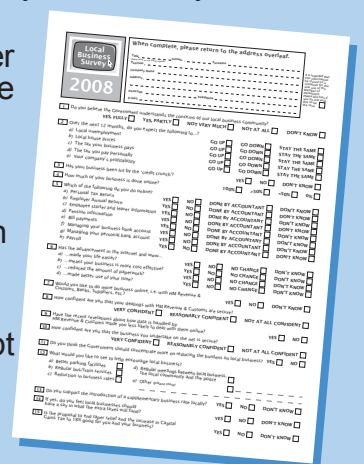
This year's survey includes general questions about your business's concerns and how you run your business, but as we do more and more of our work online there are a number of questions relating to the internet and the security implications that result.

Some highlights from last year's survey:

**69%** of respondents either support or already undertake job-sharing for employees;

**59%** have a policy on recycling for resources such as paper;

**35%** believe that the 'debt epidemic' covered in the media had affected an employee.



## Southend Credit Union

**THE team at Southend Credit Union welcomed James when he went along to learn more about the services they provide at their premises on York Road.**

The community-owned bank, which opened in 2006 and is fully recognised by the Financial Services Authority, is the first of its kind in Southend, offering residents loans at low rates and savings facilities.

As a local resident himself, and having been a banker before he became an MP, James was very impressed with the services available for the community and thanked the team for their hard work. Anyone interested in becoming a member can find out more at [www.southendcreditunion.co.uk](http://www.southendcreditunion.co.uk)



# USEFUL CONTACTS

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

## The Rochford & Southend East Constituency

CUT OUT & KEEP



### 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 two young sons, Tom and Henry as well as their two cats, Boris and Barney. He enjoys cycling and supports Southend United Football Club.



### 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  
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Southend SS1 2PS

[james@jamesduddridge.com](mailto:james@jamesduddridge.com)

01702 616135

[www.jamesduddridge.com](http://www.jamesduddridge.com)



Dear Reader,

2008 is now well underway, and what a great year it's already proving to be.

I've had a great time talking with students about how I go about representing them and their families, helping local residents plant up some spring flowers to brighten their area up, and celebrating a huge 750 years since Rochford Market first began.

I've also been working, as ever, on some serious matters that are really important for our town. I'm campaigning to get the census figures right for Southend, to save the Post Office branches which could be under threat and to secure support for the cliff slip problems in the centre of town.

But, of course, this newsletter can only provide a snapshot of what I've been up to on your behalf. You can always keep up-to-date by visiting my website at [www.jamesduddridge.com](http://www.jamesduddridge.com) and please do feel free to contact me for any reason - see below for how to get in touch.

Yours,

**James Duddridge MP**

## What others say about James...

"Thank you for your help negotiating my tax problem. It is much appreciated."

**D.L.,  
Shoeburyness**

"I am most grateful for your kindness in providing updated information. With my thanks, and very best wishes for a successful 2008."

**J.G., Westcliff-on-Sea**

"I would just like to thank you for all your support you gave us over the last 4 years with our fight for justice on our lost pensions. The stress and hard work with fighting for what was rightfully ours looks to be finally over."

**B.T., Great Wakering**

"We are writing to thank you, most sincerely, for your intervention on our behalf. Eventually, I feel sure due to your efforts and continued interest in our concerns, and engineer called and fixed the problem."

**J.M.,  
Rochford**

"Thanks once again for your help and support in the matter, it means so much to me."

**J.D., Southend**

## Get the 'In Touch' in Audio or Braille

**EVERY household in the Rochford and Southend East Parliamentary constituency should be receiving a copy of 'In Touch With James' this month.**

If you would find it useful to receive an audio or Braille version - for yourself or for a friend or relative - then please do let him know.

You can contact James' office on 01702 616 135 or [james@jamesduddridge.com](mailto:james@jamesduddridge.com) to request a copy.