



**Report to Stanway Parish Council Annual Parish Meeting**  
**25<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

I would like to give my thanks to the Parish Council for all your work within the local community and for the constructive engagement you have with me on issues of local concern.

As you will know, I have supported thousands of constituents and helped local businesses and community groups across all parts of the constituency and this engagement is vital to ensure that we work together on behalf of residents locally.

Parish councils are a vital part of our local communities delivering services to residents and businesses and advocating for them. I am pleased to work with them and am providing this update for your information.

**FirstPort**

A number of constituents have contacted me regarding the very understandable concerns with management of estates in Stanway by FirstPort. I was pleased to attend the public meeting alongside Cllr Kevin Bentley in March, which provided an opportunity for residents to put their comments and concerns directly to representatives from FirstPort who were in attendance. I will continue to make representations on behalf of my constituents, and hold these management companies and developers to account.

**Proposed quarrying sites in the Stanway area:**

Essex County Council has recently consulted on 52 potential candidate sites across the County for new quarrying activities as part of their review of their 2014 Minerals Local Plan. 20 of those sites fall within the Witham constituency and the proposals may affect communities in and around Stanway.

There are three sites in particular that will affect the Stanway parish. Sites A61 and A62 are at Heckfordbridge and cover a combined area of over 155 hectares with a potential combined yield of over 13 million tonnes of sand and gravel extraction. Site A95 is for a 12.68 hectare site with a potential yield of 0.83 million tonnes of sand and gravel extraction and would be an extension to the existing Colchester Quarry site.

This part of Essex already has a high number of quarrying sites, especially along the A12 and the A120 corridors, and we all know the impact that these can have. I have been working with local residents and community groups to raise their concerns with the new sites being put forward. These concerns include the impact on the environment, countryside and agricultural land; risks to human health through dust from the sites; and

increased traffic and heavy goods vehicles on our roads. Although the consultation has now closed, the details are still available online at:

<https://www.essex.gov.uk/replacement-essex-minerals-local-plan-review-2025-2040>

<https://www.essex.gov.uk/replacement-essex-minerals-local-plan-review-2025-2040/candidate-sites-assessment/list-candidate>

Responses to the consultation will be considered by the Council and as part of the Local Plan Review process any sites deemed suitable for future quarrying will then need to be considered by an independent inspector who may examine the whole of the Local Plan. In any case, no new quarrying activities can commence without a planning application for that site being approved. However, the fact that so many sites have come forward for consideration is causing widespread concern and I am continuing to raise these and make representations to the Council.

### **Bellhouse Landfill Odours:**

The Parish Council will be aware of concerns over the odours from the Bellhouse Landfill Site. Cllr Keven Bentley, Cllr Jeremy Hagon and I have been in contact with Enovert who manage the site to raise these concerns over the odours and the impacts that they have.

We have been informed of planned works on the site and issues that may have caused some odour incidents. We will keep on pressing Enovert to do all they can to prevent odours and gas leaking from the site and encourage anyone with concerns to get in touch. I have also drawn this to the attention of the Environment Agency.

### **A12:**

I am aware of the concerns and frustration that residents in Stanway have with the road works taking place along the A12. These works are connected to a concrete roads reconstruction scheme taking place between junctions 25 and 26 and details can be found at the weblink below:

<https://nationalhighways.co.uk/our-roads/east/a12-junction-25-marks-tey-to-junction-26-stanway-concrete-roads-reconstruction/>

I have met with National Highways to discuss with them the impact of road works, the disruption that is caused and the local impacts.

As well as the road works and maintenance programme, the A12 Widening Scheme to invest over £1 billion in transforming the A12 between the Boreham Interchange (junction 19) and Marks Tey (junction 25) was approved by the Government earlier this year. There has, however, been a legal challenge submitted to the decision and this may cause a delay in the works progressing. I continue to be in contact with the Government over this matter as it is vital that the road is widened so that safety is improved and delays are reduced.

### **Law & Order**

A core focus of my work whilst serving as Home Secretary was ensuring that the police have the funding and resources they need. I campaigned for an increase in local policing numbers, and we now have 400 new officers in Essex due to the uplift programme.

This means Essex Police has more officers patrolling our streets, and I continue to liaise with the three local district commanders who cover the constituency to raise local issues and concerns.

In March, I also joined District Commander Colin Cox and Inspector Jenna Mirrington-French from Essex Police for a patrol in Stanway alongside the local ward councillors. During our meeting, we discussed a number of issues relating to incidents of anti-social behaviour and driving offences including speeding.

Following the recent recruitment of officers as part of the uplift programme, it is important that we see a greater police presence out and about in our local communities.

### **Supporting Schools**

Our schools are the bedrock to the future success of youngsters across the District and the quality of their education and experiences at school are of vital importance. I continue to work closely with the primary and secondary schools across the constituency to ensure that they are providing a high-quality education to our children.

As part of this, I organise regular events with our schools, such as my Get Witham Reading project, and I raise directly with central Government issues around standards and school funding.

I have continually made representations for new investment for our schools and earlier this year I successfully secured commitments from the Government to put more funding into local schools, including rebuilding projects at schools affected by RAAC. This funding will make a difference to learning and enable those schools to develop plans to modernise their buildings and learning environments. Stanway Fiveways School is set to benefit from this new investment.

### **Planning & Development**

We continue to see significant levels of new development across the constituency, and over the past year, I have continued to campaign with local residents and community groups to oppose unsuitable developments. Too often developments take place which damage the natural environment while not providing the infrastructure and services needed to support population growth.

While we need more local homes for local people, I have always been clear that the best people to decide where new residential and commercial developments should take place – and which sites should be protected from development – are local communities themselves. I continue to work with communities to identify appropriate sites to develop, to campaign for new infrastructure and services, and to protect important landscapes and

habitats.

### **Health & Wellbeing Services**

Over the past year, I have been in regular contact with the NHS over the delivery of health and wellbeing services across the Colchester District and have also raised these matters directly with Government Ministers and in Parliament. I have been consistently clear that due to the sizeable development and growth over recent years in our part of Essex, we need investment to deliver more healthcare services locally.

### **Local Highways**

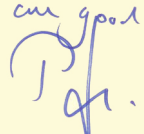
Our local road network has faced the impact of damage caused by the winter weather and in some places needs repairs, resurfacing and maintenance.

In January, I joined representatives from Essex County Council including the cabinet member responsible for highways maintenance, Cllr Tom Cunningham, to highlight some of the specific areas in Stanway that have seen deterioration in the condition of the roads or pavements and were in need of repair.

To assist constituents in raising concerns with the condition of local roads I have set up a page on my website where potholes and road defects can be reported to me and passed on to Essex County Council or National Highways:

<https://www.priti4witham.co.uk/report-a-pothole/>

Yours sincerely,

*with my good wishes*  


**Rt Hon Priti Patel**  
**Member of Parliament for Witham**