

MARK FLETCHER MP NEWSLETTER



Early February Newsletter



Dear {{ contact.FIRSTNAME }},

I hope you are well. I am writing to update you on three key issues since my last newsletter earlier this week. First of all, on Monday I spoke in a Parliamentary debate on stalking after the petition on Gracie's Law, which calls for funding for police forces to provide advocates to support stalking victims and help officers investigate cases more thoroughly following the tragic death of Gracie in Duckmanton last year, gained over 100,000 signatures. It was an incredibly emotional and educational experience, but I hope I did justice to the nearly 6000 residents who signed the petition.

On Wednesday, the Secretary of State for Levelling-Up, Housing and Communities announced the Government's flagship Levelling Up White Paper, setting out a plan to transform the UK by spreading opportunity and prosperity to all parts of it. It included a devolution deal for Derbyshire - meaning more money and powers to local leaders. It also designated Derbyshire as a priority area for investment in bus services and education. Bolsover District Council will also receive support from the Government's High Street Task Force to help develop plans for the regeneration of Bolsover in preparation for a - roughly £20 million - bid to the Levelling-Up Fund.

Finally, yesterday the Chancellor announced a package of measures to tackle the cost of living, in particular rising energy prices, which included a £200 upfront discount - repayable over 5 years from April 2023 - on energy bills for every household, £150 council tax discount for households in Bands A-D, and a discretionary grant for the Local Authority to distribute to those on very low incomes. I know some have argued for cutting VAT, but this would disproportionately benefit wealthier households and there is no guarantee that suppliers would pass on the discounts. However, these measures are more generous, more targeted, and faster to deliver.

I hope you find this update informative and please do not hesitate to contact me (using the details provided below) if I can be of any assistance.

Best wishes,

Mark

ENERGY BILLS REBATE



HERE ARE THREE WAYS WE'RE HELPING:



Every household receives an upfront discount on their bills worth £200



£150 council tax discount to households in Bands A to D



Local Authority discretionary fund of nearly £150 million to help lower income households in higher Council Tax bands

Tackling the cost of living

I strongly welcome the Chancellor's support package announced yesterday. The Energy Bills Rebate means a vast majority of people will receive a total discount of £350 on their bills: It has 3 parts:

- 1) A £200 'smoothing' rebate on energy bills for all households, to be paid back over the next five years at £40 per year – starting from April 2023
- 2) A non-repayable £150 cash rebate for homes in Council Tax bands A-D – equivalent to 80 per cent of all households, helping both lower and middle-income families
- 3) Providing local authorities with a discretionary fund of nearly £150m to help lower income households in higher Council Tax bands, and households in bands A-D who are exempt from Council Tax.

This is on top of a minimum wage increase (a boost of over £1,000 per year), Universal Credit taper reduction (an extra £1,000 for 2 million families), fuel duty freeze (helping to keep running costs down), freezing the license fee at £159 (halting a rise to £180), the way to work programme (supporting 500,000 jobseekers into work, and our successful economic plan during the pandemic which means the UK is the fastest growing economy in the G7.



Levelling-Up White Paper

I am pleased to welcome the publication of the Government's Levelling Up White Paper, which sets out our ambitious plans to ensure everyone has the same opportunities across the country.

Derbyshire and Derby have been recognised as national 'Levelling Up' leaders with the government announcing that they had secured a County Deal, and have been awarded 'pathfinder' status, which will bring extra

investment to support economic growth in the area, alongside the transfer of specific powers from central government to a local level in areas like transport, bus services, housing and skills, giving greater autonomy to local leaders over decision making and funding.

The government will fund ambitious plans for bus improvements in areas where this can make the most impact, including across Derbyshire. Something I have been pushing for improvement on since my election in 2019.

I am pleased that the High Street Task Force has committed to working with our local authority and supporting them in delivering positive change across Bolsover High Streets.

[Read the White Paper](#)



Parliamentary debate on stalking

It was an honour to speak, on behalf of thousands of Bolsover residents, in the Westminster Hall debate of the petition for funding of stalking advocates, alongside fellow North Derbyshire MP's, Toby Perkins, Chesterfield, and Lee Rowley, North East Derbyshire. The petition for 'Gracie's Law' follows the tragic death of Gracie Spinks, 23, in Duckmanton in June of last year. This is obviously an issue of which the public care deeply, and which the Government have placed at the heart of the violence against women and girls strategy.

I would like to thank Tonia Antoniazzi MP for leading the debate, Rachel Maclean MP, Minister for Safeguarding, for listening and assuring the hall of the work the Government is undertaking, in this area. The Minister undertook to write to the Deputy Prime Minister to pass on the recommendations that were outlined during the debate.

I am particularly grateful to Jackie Barnett-Wheatcroft for instigating the petition which led to this extremely important debate. Gracie's family were in attendance and it was humbling to meet some of them after the debate.

[Read the full debate](#)



Derbyshire designated Education Investment Area (EIA)

Since being elected in 2019 I have been working hard to raise educational standards and provide post-16 education in the constituency, so I very much welcome the announcement that Derbyshire is to become an Education Investment Area (EIA).

I have been calling for more investment in our schools to help tackle the skills gap, provide far better access to post-16 education, and ensure everyone has access to the education and training they need to fill the jobs we are bringing in to the area.

Raising our expectations and aspirations for children, as well as creating a high-skilled workforce, will end the brain drain that sees too many people leaving communities in order to succeed. These plans will help create a level playing field and boost the economy, both locally and nationally.

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Need My Help

Please do not hesitate to contact me via email at mark.fletcher.mp@parliament.uk, by post at 1 Market Place, Bolsover, S44 6PN, or telephone 01246 932048 to discuss your issue with my caseworker, or to arrange a telephone/video appointment.

Need my help with something? Click the button below to see my full list of contact details.

[Contact Me](#)

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Promoted by R Cook on behalf of M Fletcher, both at 1 Market Place, Bolsover, S44 6PN.

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