



# REPORTING BACK 2021

GEORGE FREEMAN  
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR MID NORFOLK



Being an active local Constituency MP in Mid Norfolk means working to help find solutions to some of our biggest local problems, helping 000's of vulnerable constituents get the help they need, supporting great local causes & voicing the concerns of our area in Parliament & Government.

It also means being accountable. To YOU. This is my annual Report to all constituents on some of the work I've done this year.

With best wishes for what I hope will be a Happy Christmas,

George

# GEORGE WORKING HERE IN MID NORFOLK

As a committed local Constituency MP I have always relished the chance to make a difference here locally, as well as to represent our area in Parliament & Government. Our area faces many challenges which I continue to work on trying to solve with local community groups, civic leaders, councillors & behind-the-scenes pressure on Government & public sector agencies. Making a difference locally continues to be my number one priority as your MP. Here are some of the projects I've worked on this year:

## TACKLING NORFOLK'S FLOODING PROBLEMS

Flooding has long been a concern for many in our part of Norfolk - and the heavy rainfall of December 23rd-24th 2020, and again in the early part of 2021, resulted in a record number of call-outs for Anglian Water, the Environment Agency and Norfolk County Council alike, exacerbating these long held frustrations and fears.

That's why I decided to band together with local councillors in some of the most affected communities, and bring together community groups and officials of NCC, Anglian Water and the Environment to form a Mid Norfolk Flood Partnership - an open forum in which specific flooding issues, historic wider issues and how the system for responding to and mitigating flooding events needs improving can all be discussed.

We were delighted when the Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance first recommendations included most of the 14 points that we had ourselves suggested in our letter to Lord Dannatt. The NSFA's news that they would tackle 'tranches' of the worst affected communities was also greatly welcomed - with the first tranche set to include 16 towns and villages hit especially hard earlier this year (of which 6 are located in Mid Norfolk).

This comes as a tremendous relief - and Lord Dannatt's assurances that second, third, fourth... tranches will follow is positive news indeed.

[Read more](#)



## SUPPORTING THE LOCAL HOSPITALITY SECTOR

Covid hit our hospitality hard, with many businesses facing difficult decisions and unprecedented challenges.

That's why I was keen to do all I could to support them, lobbying the Chancellor and HM Treasury for additional Covid support and responding to thousands of emails from local pubs, cafes, restaurants - always raising their views with Ministers and officials to strengthen the voice of this key local sector.

As a constituency MP and now a BEIS Minister once again, rest assured, I will continue to do all I can in the weeks and months ahead to support this sector, as well as Business more generally, as we look to move through Covid to much better times.



## SUPPORTING HEALTH AND CARE SERVICES

As a former health minister and someone who worked with health based companies that support the NHS prior to becoming an MP, I know first-hand how incredible our NHS and social care services are. The last eighteen months have only heightened my deep respect for their staff, who I know we all love and cherish.

I have kept in close contact with our local hospitals and many working in GP services and in care. As we look to move on from Covid, I have visited local dental practices to find out more about the difficulties my constituents often have in getting seen; met with GPs to hear about the challenges they face on the frontline; kept in close communication with the head of the N&N; spoken with leaders in our local care sector; and followed closely the information and advice Norfolk's Public Health team share with us MPs every couple of weeks.

Rest assured, I will continue to speak up for our health and care sectors in 2022.

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# VISITING LOCAL CARE HOMES

The pandemic has often been a necessary, but very isolating time for staff and residents at our almost fifty care homes in Mid Norfolk. Thanks to their sacrifice Norfolk did a brilliant job in curbing the spread of Covid-19 in our care homes.

In addition to keeping in touch with many of our care home leaders, I also attended a tree planting ceremony held by Thorp House Care Home in Griston to commemorate those lost, along with all those who played their part to protect our elderly relatives.

As restrictions ease, I look forward to visiting our care homes again - and I have visits to Thorp House and others already lined up for early 2022.

[Read more](#)



# SUPPORTING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY SCHOOLS

How we take care of, and educate, some of our most vulnerable people is a measure of us as a society. EVERYONE has the right to a good education.

I have always been a vocal supporter of SEND education here in Mid Norfolk - helping to get the campaign for the relocation of Chapel Road School in Attleborough to a new state-of-the-art facility in Old Buckenham over the line and regularly visiting them at Christmas, as well as lobbying for increased SEND funding for our rural schools.

For the past couple of years, I have been working with Jane Hayman and her wonderful team at Fred Nicholson School as they look to find a proper, long term solution for their fast declining school buildings. I remain firmly committed to supporting them with that work in 2022.



# TACKLING DOMESTIC ABUSE

Two women every week are killed by a current or former partner. 1 in every 3 women will experience domestic abuse in their life. Norfolk saw a 40% increase in domestic violence in the pandemic.

These are truly shocking statistics than really do need addressing urgently.

Recently, I convened a roundtable with the key local leaders, the local Daisy Programme and other domestic abuse charities and support groups to look at how we can make a difference locally, as well as lobby the Government. I look forward to continuing this work next year.

[Read more](#)



# SUPPORTING LOCAL SPORTS CLUBS

Sports Clubs are a key part of many communities, contributing to the health of our people and giving us all something to rally around and support. Sadly however, many have struggled in recent years and particularly since Covid.

I do all I can to support such clubs and, recently, I visited Watton Sports Centre to meet with the fantastic team behind the Hockey Club.

Their astropitch is rapidly deteriorating and in desperate need of repair. I am delighted to be supporting their efforts to try and secure much needed funding improvements and to raise the Club's profile.

If YOU are a local sports club that needs my help, please do get in touch.

[Read more](#)



## REGULAR SCHOOL VISITS TO TALK TO STAFF, PARENTS AND CHILDREN

Our children are the future of our great country and county, and that's why I regularly visit Mid Norfolk schools to speak to staff, parents and most importantly pupils!

This year I've had the pleasure of visiting the likes of [Attleborough Primary](#), [Necton Primary](#) and [Morley Primary](#) (amongst others) to speak to some of our youngsters about the issues that most concern them - from climate change and the environment to job opportunities, exams and mental health.

I have also supported our local councillors as they look to deal with lack of parking and speeding outside of schools (such as outside of [Robert Kett](#) in Wymondham) and, in [Carbrooke](#), I am working with councillors once again to see what we can do about the absence of a suitable bus service and the current, unsafe walking route that has worried parents and teachers for too long.



## DRIVING FORWARD A NET ZERO PATHFINDER

Norfolk is set to be on the forefront of the Green Energy Revolution, but how do we help SMEs and households make Net Zero a reality?

That is the question that I have been posing to the Norfolk Enterprise Festival's "Magnificent 7" group - a team of leading entrepreneurs in the seven fastest growing sectors of Norfolk (and Suffolk)'s economy.

Massive infrastructure like an integrated Offshore Wind network, Freeport East and the Sizewell C improvements are all crucial, but we must all deliver much smaller, tangible successes at the grassroots too.

I look forward to working with the Mag 7, the LEP and partners to see what a Net Zero Pathfinder in the East might look like, and how we can make it a reality.

[Read more](#)



# HARNESSING THE HYDROGEN REVOLUTION IN THE EAST

Did you know that transport emissions are the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in the East of England? 42% of all greenhouse gases here come from transport!

The decarbonisation of our transport network is so important as we embark on the Road to Net Zero, and I am delighted to be working with [Transport East](#) and others as we rise to that challenge.

Hydrogen has a vital role to play - in time fuelling our more localised train routes, haulage, agricultural vehicles, ships and more - and I welcomed the news that a world leading Hydroliser will be built as part of the [Freeport East](#) proposals I supported.

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## UPGRADING NOR-CAM RAIL

In order to develop our local economy and promote local businesses and opportunities for us all, we also need upgraded rail links that can be accessed by [everyone](#).

I have long called for the Norwich-Cambridge line to be transformed into an 'Innovation Express', helping to launch the East Anglian Rail Prospectus at the start of the last decade and then actively campaigning with colleagues and stakeholders for the upgrading of Ely North Rail Junction and Trowse Bridge so that we can get half-hourly trains. I was proud to announce as a DfT Minister that the Government's East-West Rail project would be extended East from Cambridge to Norwich and Ipswich.

Having lobbied and helped win a commitment for an entire new, modern, more accessible train fleet in the last franchise, I also reconvened key stakeholders to get access to platform 2 of Wymondham Station improved too. Funds have been secured and I am now supporting South Norfolk Council and Greater Anglia as they look to finalise plans in the spring.

Longer term, I want to see our Mid Norfolk stations transformed into high quality community/business hubs with 5G internet - as well as the Wymondham-Dereham line reopened for a basic commuter service.

[Read more](#)



## SUPPORTING A PROPER OFFSHORE WIND SOLUTION

Norfolk, and the East, are on the brink of becoming the 'Saudi Arabia' of Offshore Wind production. The Southern North Sea will be the global hub - putting our region at the forefront of the UK's 'Green Revolution' and bringing thousands of new jobs and opportunities.

I continue to actively work with parliamentary colleagues and local communities to drive forward the campaign for an Offshore Transmission Network - to avoid the needless environmental damage to our precious rural and coastal landscapes, along with the major disruption that businesses, tourists and communities encounter when each wind farm cables inland to Wembley Stadium-sized Substations.

[Read more](#)





# IMPROVING OUR ROADS

For too long, successive governments on all sides of the House have failed to properly invest in road infrastructure in the East.

I was delighted to work with fellow eastern MPs to get a government commitment to full dualling of the A11 at the start of the last decade, and why I was over the moon to bring the then PM to Hockering in 2014 to secure a £300 million commitment to dual the North Tuddenham-Easton stretch of the A47.

I continue to actively lobby National Highways to ensure there is no further slippage in construction of these A47 improvements - and expect full works to begin in 2022. We must go further however, and that's why I support the A47 Alliance's campaign to secure full A47 dualling - from Lowestoft in the East, all the way to the A1 in the West.

My work to support a local A47 Taskforce in the Honingham to Wymondham corridor is ongoing too - with the group drawing up promising plans with NCC to ensure that there is a proper strategy to deal with increased rat-running as a result of the nearby A47 improvements and potential Norwich Western Link.

[Read more](#)

# REFORMING OUR PLANNING SYSTEM

Building enough houses to make sure everyone in our area has the chance for a home of their own, while also making sure we protect our rural landscape and heritage, is often a difficult balance.

Since becoming MP for Mid Norfolk back in 2010, I have worked with local community groups and councillors to promote a more local and organic model of development, and endeavoured to make sure everyone's voice is heard. Whether that be to protect the Lizard or the Tiffey Valley in Wymondham, or to oppose an inappropriate and unsustainable development in Watton or Dereham, where there is a danger of large-scale over-development, I will always speak out to make sure we protect our landscape and heritage.

What we need is a long-term plan led by local communities. That's why I made submissions to the National Planning consultations last year, and why I welcomed the Government's announcement that they would go back and reconsider their Planning reform proposals in light of considerable feedback.

We need to stop huge edge-of-town commuter housing estates & insist on proper community planning with infrastructure, green space & infrastructure & facilities.

[Read more](#)



# BACKING LOCAL BUSINESS

Having worked for fifteen years as an entrepreneur before coming to Parliament and having served previously as a Business Minister, I passionately believe in the potential of Norfolk's rural economy to play a significant role in helping to rebalance the national economy and create prosperity and opportunities across our area - especially as we look to Build Back Better post-Covid.

Too often rural businesses suffer from isolation and struggle to access the finance and support they need. Many of the market towns and high streets in Mid Norfolk face real challenges as the older local manufacturing businesses and jobs leave, while villages suffer from closing Post Offices and pubs.

In response, I set up the Norfolk Enterprise Festival to give the tens of thousands of SMEs and local entrepreneurs a fun, family-friendly event to come together, promote themselves and network - and I work with local councillors, council officials, parish councils, the New Anglia LEP and businesses themselves to emphasise Norfolk's (often hidden!) entrepreneurial spirit. There is so much for our county to be proud of and we must do more to celebrate Business and innovation here.



[Read more](#)



# SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY

Small Business is the engine that drives our local, and national, economy.

I was delighted to join this year's "Small Business Saturday" campaign once again to shine a light on the thousands of SMEs in our part of the world - many doing exciting, bold and innovative things!

In the run up to Christmas and as we go into 2022, it's vital that we shop local and support our small businesses. If we don't use them, we'll lose them!

[Read more](#)

## SHINING A LIGHT ON NORFOLK'S INNOVATION ECONOMY

Norfolk is home to some of THE most exciting businesses of tomorrow.

Tucked away in our many small industrial estates - invisible to many - we have a cluster of world class small businesses on the cutting edge of engineering, manufacturing, agriculture & clean technology: from Mirus lightweight aircraft seating and Rodtech in Hingham to Novo Farina pea flour snacks to vertical farming on the Food Enterprise Hub & satellite technology at Hethel.

With thousands of great local companies like this, as well as the NRP and Hethel Engineering Centre, all on our doorstep, Mid Norfolk has exciting times ahead.



[Read more](#)

## KICKSTARTING OUR JOBS AND RECOVERY

The past eighteen months have been unprecedentedly hard for many and, with the Furlough scheme coming to an end in the autumn, it is now more important than ever that we have effective job centres helping our out of work return to employment.

I have appreciated regular conversations with the wonderful Julia Nix (East Anglia's District Manager for the DWP) about the great opportunities they are offering - such as the Kickstart scheme for young people - and why I was delighted to visit the Dereham Job Centre to catch up with Kat and her excellent team on the front line.

The modernisation of our Job Centres & introduction of Universal Credit has transformed the service to jobseekers. Our local DWP teams - led by the excellent Julia Nix - are doing great work helping place jobseekers in work.

With many sectors like food processing, haulage & catering experiencing labour shortages after Brexit & Covid we urgently need to get more jobseekers into practical frontline vocational job training.



[Read more](#)

## SUPPORTING TOWN CENTRES

Our High Streets and Market Places are the beating hearts of our local towns. That's why I strive to do all I can to support them, especially as we look to get through Covid and move forward.

Over the years, I have supported Wymondham as it has successfully breathed new life into its Friday Market. Similarly in Watton, I have supported local efforts to make more of its market, as well as regularly visited shops and local businesses to raise awareness.

In Dereham, Watton and Attleborough, I have supported local work to make more of their town centres too - through Breckland Council's 'Future Breckland' initiative. That work is ongoing, but I am already looking to see what needs to be done to ensure their proposals are taken forward and pursued. We have real opportunities to make our high streets and markets thrive and be vibrant again.

[Read more](#)

## BACKING VILLAGE REGENERATION

Pubs are so often at the heart of our communities and rural heritage, playing a key part in keeping our villages and towns vibrant. We have to use them or lose them (Especially after Covid!)

I have kept up with my work to support many of our local pubs.

One such campaign was the [Save Our Swan! campaign](#) in Gressenhall - with Alex Begg and the team doing a marvellous job to raise the funds necessary to buy the village pub and start renovations.

Mid Norfolk is home to some truly brilliant pubs (the [Brisley Bell](#) was recently crowned Great British Pub of the Year!). Please be assured that I will continue to do all I can to support them.

[Read more](#)



## DELIVERING BETTER BROADBAND

For far too long our part of the world has suffered from poor broadband. Reliable, superfast internet is essential to 21st century life, and one of my central missions as an MP has been to campaign for substantial improvements.

Much great work has happened over the last decade, but there are still large parts of our area with poor coverage. I am determined to change that.

I recently chaired BT's 'Delivering a Gigabit East of England Roundtable' back in January, with over two dozen MPs present, as well as other key stakeholders.

If our region is to enjoy a 'Rural Renaissance', we must have first class internet and mobile signal.

[Read more](#)





# BACKING NORFOLK'S FARMERS

Farming is such an important part of Norfolk life and, coming from a farming background, I do all I can to support this vital local industry.

Among my various efforts this year, I continued to speak up for sugar beet farmers; met with the Breckland Farmers Wildlife Network; visited local farms such as the Dennis Family's Kings Row Farm in North Pickenham; met with local NFU members to discuss, and then lobby on their behalf regarding, labour issues; endorsed new, cleaner, greener models and technologies that will boost production, take farming closer to Net Zero and not only protect, but enhance our local environment; and continued my work with Lloyds Bank to promote mental health in agriculture.

I feel very strongly we should be supporting our local family farms by creating a framework we can value so that family and small-scale farms can survive and contribute in the future. To me, it's as much about fair trade as it is free trade.

[Read more](#)



# SUPPORTING BREAK - OUR LOCAL CHARITY HELPING CHILDREN IN CARE

Break is a wonderful local charity that provides hope and support for vulnerable and young people across East Anglia.

I welcomed the opportunity to liaise with Rachel Cowdry, CEO of Break, and her team over recent months - to explore how I can help raise the profile of their pioneering work in Norfolk, and in Westminster.

The charity leads a number of exciting and worthwhile projects - including their 'Coffee Break' van, which gives care leavers/those soon to be leaving care the opportunity to get first-hand experience of work, and a chance to nurture their skills.

I look forward to continuing my work with them in 2022 - including, hopefully, a Coffee Break van visit to Parliament!

[Read more](#)



# PROTECTING OUR COUNTY

It is not just our nurses, doctors and care staff that deserve particular praise again this year. Our dedicated police officers and support staff also need a special mention - having gone above and beyond for us yet again.

This year, I supported the Bill to give emergency workers increased protection from assaults on the front line by raising the maximum length of sentences for those that abuse emergency workers.

I also continue to work closely with the Police and Crime Commissioner, interim Chief Constable and local Police Federation to raise a number of issues with Ministers and officials on their behalf.

Rest assured, I will continue to stand up for our brilliant police.



# GEORGE WORKING FOR MIDNORFOLK IN PARLIAMENT



As an MP & now again as Minister in Government (for Science Research & Innovation) my work in London during the week is all shaped by my determination to make a difference locally: hence my focus on issues of importance to us here locally: health & care, the rural economy, planning Reform for vibrant villages & thriving towns, small businesses, innovation & skills for new jobs & opportunities.



## REGULATION FOR INNOVATION

Nothing better illustrates the advantages of being outside the EU than the UK's vaccine success. Our leadership in genomics, vaccine research and development, accelerated access trials and our ability to procure at speed has allowed the UK to lead the world in the battle against the pandemic. This year has truly been a London 2012 moment for UK Life Science.

That's why I was delighted to accept the Prime Minister's invitation in the summer to help lead the new Taskforce for Innovation, Growth and Regulatory Reform (TIGRR) with Iain Duncan Smith and Theresa Villiers. We came from opposite sides of the Brexit debate but with a shared determination to make this a moment of profound renewal. The urgency of the post-Covid recovery makes this more essential than ever. Our TIGRR report published in the summer shows how the UK can deliver on the promises of Brexit without abandoning our high standards. Liberated from EU red tape, this is a once-in-a-generation opportunity. We must seize it.

[Read more](#)

## BUILDING A NEW HEALTH ECONOMY



Reform for Resilience  
Healthy Growth

COVID-19 has revealed that the world was not prepared for a pandemic that we had every reason to anticipate. We neglected to adequately invest in developing and maintaining global health system resilience. Consequently, the COVID-19 pandemic should serve as a wake-up call to global leaders every bit as significant - and urgent - as the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) of more than a decade ago, and the worsening climate emergency of today. They are linked. The pandemic, the GFC, and the climate emergency are all crises of resilience, testing our ability to adapt and thrive.

This year I launched the Reform for Resilience Global Health Commission, along side co-chair Malcolm Turnbull, Jose Manuel Barroso and Michelle Williams. This independent Commission brings together experts from across the fields of health and life sciences, business, finance, and global political leadership at the highest level, to help inform the 2021 policy 'reset' that the current pandemic has rightly triggered.

This Commission has been created to help shape the new models, metrics and practical policy reforms to help leaders - in the public and private sectors - deliver the changes needed for healthier growth. Through our ongoing work with the OECD, G20, World Economic Forum, Cambridge Public Health, our global network of hubs and academic partners, and the other initiatives in this post-pandemic policy 'reset,' we have led the conversation about building a resilient post-pandemic world that ensures we don't let history repeat itself.

[Read more](#)



## Innovation Here In The East

For the last eleven years, I have set out a vision of how the Eastern region could become the new California. I truly believe that the Eastern region could be Europe's premier hub for technology, innovation and life sciences. It was a vision I promoted as Government Adviser on Life Sciences, Minister for Life Sciences, Minister for the Future of Transport and now as Science and Innovation Minister.

I was delighted that this vision is starting to become a reality. I was honoured recently to accompany HRH The Prince of Wales as he opened the new global R&D facility of AstraZeneca in Cambridge. As Minister for Life Sciences, I helped cut the turf in 2016. Now, with the AZ Research Centre open, the building is a testament to the Eastern region's place as a centre of scientific research in the UK and throughout Europe.

As Minister for Science, I am determined to ensure that this is just the start.

[Read more](#)





## Budget: speaking for small business/rural areas & lowest paid workers

Having spent fifteen years running my own small business before being elected to Parliament, I know first-hand the struggles that entrepreneurs face. With new pandemic restrictions, many small businesses face yet more challenges ahead.

Now serving as Minister for Innovation at the Department of Business, I was so pleased to see the local response to Small Business Saturday. It is a day for all of us locally, in Government and the Business Department, to show and redouble our commitment to back the self-employed who are the engine of enterprise.

Mid Norfolk is blessed with many great small local businesses which I work with and support as an MP through the Norfolk Way and Norfolk Enterprise Festival.

As a former small business owner myself, I will always ensure that the concerns of local entrepreneurs are head loud and clear in Westminster.

[Read more](#)

## Reducing use of animals in research

The issue of animals in research is one I take very seriously indeed. It is a moral and legal issue about the values that we hold as a country.

I was proud to speak in a Westminster Hall debate recently on the issue as Minister responsible. I am personally passionate about this agenda for a whole raft of reasons. I feel very strongly that we have a duty of care as human beings to the animals around us. I also had a career in medical research before coming to Parliament in 2010 and have seen for myself the importance both of using every piece of technology to try to remove dependence on animals in the development of medicines and of carrying public trust in the research process with us.

Indeed, having once tried to found a company developing toxicology artificial intelligence-predictive software that would predict the toxicology of compounds so that we do not have to rely on animal models, I have personal experience of this fight. Treating animals humanely is fundamental to who we are as a society.

[Read more](#)



## Securing better royalty rights for artists

Artists are the beating heart of the UK creative industries sector.

We must ensure the digital streaming market is working fairly. I was delighted recently to respond to a debate in the House of Commons to make clear today that the Government is acting on the 'Broken Record' Report from the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee.

We are working on proposals to ensure a fair and vibrant digital creative sector. And we are clear in our support for fair remuneration for musicians (and all our creative artists).

[Read more](#)



## Supporting Local Farmers & Growers with the NFU in Westminster

With a family background in farming and having experience as a Parliamentary Officer of the NFU, I know just how important it is for our farmers' concerns to be heard locally and in Westminster. In the face of global climate change, it is vital to maintain open lines of communication with this hugely important sector in order to maintain the quality of our food and the productivity of the sector.

I make sure to meet and stay in contact with local and national NFU representatives throughout the year.

Over the past year our discussions have ranged from issues about water usage rights and public rights of way, to more general concerns about the environment, costs and the labour market.

We must continue to ensure their voices and concerns are heard by Ministers and officials in Westminster,

[Read more](#)

## Securing £350m for MND Research

People living with neurodegenerative diseases could live longer, healthier lives due to innovative new research.

I was delighted recently when the Government committed £375 million over the next 5 years for the vital research necessary for MND sufferers.

At least £50 million will be made available specifically for research to help find a cure for MND - a condition that affects the brain and nerves and affects 5,000 people in the UK and many people here in the east.

New, innovative projects will help researchers to better understand the disease and its related conditions, develop and test treatments and improve care for those living with MND.

The full £375 million investment will fund projects into a range of diseases such as Pick's Disease, Fronto-temporal dementia, wernicke-korsakoff, Parkinson's disease dementia, Lewy Body dementia, Alzheimer's disease and mild cognitive impairment, improving our understanding while searching for new treatments.

[Read more](#)



## Working with Minister for Disabilities Chloe Smith MP on Disability Rights

How we care for our most vulnerable people is an important marker by which our society can, and should, be judged.

They are also one of the key groups for whom we need to level-up access to opportunities: mobility, accessibility and jobs.

I have been speaking with Andrew Proctor (Leader of Norfolk County Council), NCC officials and Chloe Smith MP (the new Minister for Disabled People, Health and Work) to hear how HMG is delivering the National Disability Strategy and brief the Minister on the work taking place locally with groups like the Disability Network Norfolk Group to speak up for working age disabled adults and their families.

I remain committed to doing all I can to support our region's most vulnerable, making sure their voices are heard and their needs met.

[Read more](#)



## Opening Astra Zeneca R&D HQ with HRH The Prince of Wales

UK leadership in science and innovation is bringing huge investment in to create the new technologies, companies and jobs of tomorrow.

I was delighted recently to accompany HRH The Prince of Wales as he opened the new global R&D facility of AstraZeneca in Cambridge.

As Minister for Life Sciences, I helped cut the turf in 2016. Now, with the AZ Research Centre open, the building is a testament to the Eastern region's place as a centre of scientific research in the UK and throughout Europe. As Minister for Science, I am determined to ensure that this is just the start.

[Read more](#)

## Supporting British Antarctic Survey on board RSS Sir David Attenborough

British scientists are on the frontline of the battle against the climate emergency.

Our British Antarctic Survey scientists discovered the ozone hole & conclusive proof from ice cores of global warming. They are now key to mitigating climate change & polar ice melt.

It was a huge honour as Minister for BAS to join Sir David Attenborough and BAS scientists to see and showcase UK climate science aboard the new £200m RRS Sir David Attenborough Polar Research Vessel.

[Read more](#)



## Congratulations to the winners of this year's Christmas card competition

"Father Christmas Delivers Presents to George's House" Henry Rule (Wicklewood Primary).

Many thanks to all those that submitted entries, it was a very strong field this year. Special thanks go to the runners up - Cassie Waterman (Spoooner Row Primary) "The Night Before Christmas". Olivia Clark (Hingham Primary) - "Christmas Tree"



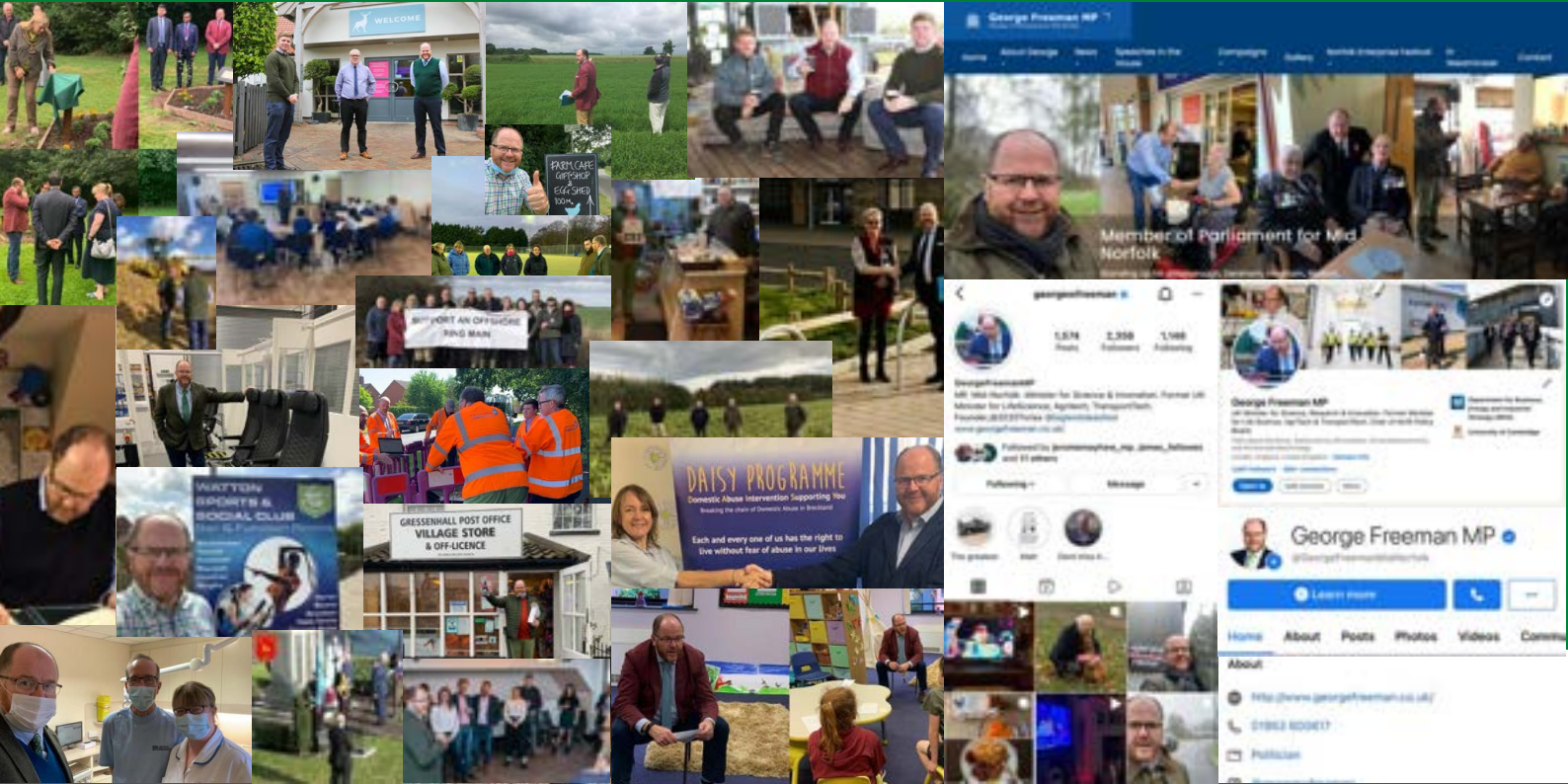
# ACCESSIBLE AND ACCOUNTABLE TO YOU

I remain committed to trying to make my work accessible with my programme Digital Democracy, so people who are busy and want to stay in touch easily online can do so at the press of a button.

I believe its very important for MP's to be seen and accessible locally. I do this through a number of ways:

My social media channels, my website, through email, and through calls to my office here in Norfolk and also in Westminster.

Toward the end of the week when I return from Westminster I also visit as many towns and villages as I can, and (covid rules permitting) a range of outreach programmes such as my supermarket surgeries and politics in the pub events.



With 5 towns & 114 villages across a constituency with a 90mile boundary, it's impossible to visit every village, pub or community centre regularly.

Each Friday & Saturday I pack in as many visits as I can, and move my surgery around to make it easy for the less mobile.

It's why I also work hard on digital outreach - through my Website, Facebook, Instagram, Linked-In & regular targeted Bulletins to key interest groups.

**Each week we receive 1000+ pieces of correspondence from constituents**, which Ruth & Elliot and I sort, prioritise & respond to. (With so much Covid-related correspondence we no longer reply to hostile party-political correspondence: we prioritise constituents who most need their MPs help.)

This year we have dealt with:  
helping c6000 individual constituents with new Casework  
dealing with another c3000 existing/open casework cases  
progress on 25 important local projects/campaigns

As a rural area we are home to much silent suffering of people isolated & lonely. But we are also a famously strong local community.

Let's all do all we can to keep an eye out to help our vulnerable neighbours this Christmas.

Thank you to all those of you who do so much as volunteers, carers & hidden heroes behind the scenes.

With best wishes for what I hope will be a Happy Christmas!



George

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