

Laurence Robertson MP

Member of parliament for Tewkesbury



MP HELPS SECURE IN OR OUT OF EUROPE DEBATE

Tewkesbury MP Laurence Robertson has helped secure a debate in the House of Commons to move a motion calling on the government to hold a referendum on the UK's membership of the European Union.

The motion calls on the government to ask the electorate if they wish to remain in the EU, leave the EU altogether or negotiate a different relationship with the EU based on trade. The Backbench Business Committee has agreed to the debate and it will take place on Thursday 27th October.

"I have been calling for a referendum to be held on the UK's membership of the EU for many years now and am pleased that at least the subject will now be debated" said Mr Robertson.

"I'm 53 years old and no-one my age or under has ever been asked if they want to continue to belong to the EU, even though our taxes pay for the EU and many of our laws are decided there. The holding of a referendum is therefore much overdue.

"The last referendum on this subject was held in 1975. Since then, the EU has changed beyond recognition from a trade body to a political organisation which dictates much of what we can and cannot do. Given that we have 650 MPs in Westminster, I believe that we are well capable of governing ourselves and don't need the interference from Brussels.

"Each and every day, the EU dictates to us one policy or another. I believe that it's time for that to end and am fully supportive of this motion and am pleased to have played a part in securing it."

Date of Release: 18th October 2011 Time of Release: 4.00pm

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MP OPPOSES JOINT CORE STRATEGY PROPOSALS

Tewkesbury MP Laurence Robertson has expressed opposition to the Joint Core Strategy's proposals for housing in this area. The MP is calling on councillors to have a rethink on the plans being made.

The proposals are for about 36,000 houses to be built on the Tewkesbury, Cheltenham and Gloucester council areas over the next 20 years.

"To start with, the assumptions about the number of houses which will be needed over the next twenty years are, in my view, flawed. There is very little economic growth in the country at the moment and it is likely to remain low for a number of years. Also, in general, the growth in housing figures being suggested is higher than the growth in housing numbers which has taken place over the last few years.

"Secondly, the figures being proposed are as a result of the Joint Core Strategy process, which I have been opposed to. The Tewkesbury Borough area is being asked to take houses which ordinarily would have been allocated to Cheltenham and Gloucester, yet it seems that other local authority areas, such as the Cotswold, Stroud and the Forest, will not be taking any of Cheltenham or Gloucester's allocation. That has to be wrong, because people who work in Cheltenham and Gloucester don't just live in the Tewkesbury area – they live all over the County.

"Thirdly, the Tewkesbury Borough area did, of course, suffer greatly from flooding in 2007, when many people were forced to live in caravans and other accommodation for over a year. Building extra houses in these areas, as is being proposed – perhaps by people who didn't experience the flooding – will only serve to make the prospect of future flooding so much worse.

"Fourthly, the proposals represent massive incursions into the Green Belt, at a time when the government is saying that the Green Belt should be protected. What is the point of having Green Belt if councils just build all over it?

"And fifthly, I question the policy of extending principal urban areas. There are very many villages throughout Gloucestershire which would benefit from allocations of, say 50 or 100 houses, which would enable people in those villages to get onto the housing ladder in those areas, and would help ensure that small shops, pubs and post offices remain vibrant. Instead, urban sprawl is being proposed.

"I have long opposed the Joint Core Strategy process and am firmly against the proposal to build approximately 16,000 houses in the Tewkesbury Borough area, as very many people will be when they hear these plans. I'm also very concerned that, certainly as far as Tewkesbury goes, very few councillors seem to have been involved in this process so I would ask whose proposals these actually are?

"The Councils involved need to have an urgent rethink."

Date of Release 17th October 2011

Laurence Robertson MP

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Press Release 10th October 2011

MP TAKES UP ROAD CLOSURE ISSUE

Tewkesbury MP Laurence Robertson is seeking a meeting with the Secretary of State for Transport, Philip Hammond MP, to discuss the proposed closure of the A4019 in its approach to junction 10 of the M5.

The Highways Agency has announced that the bridge leading up to the junction needs major work to prevent its eroding and has stated that the work could take up to a year to complete. Mr Robertson says that this timescale is unacceptable.

"I have been approached by many people who will find the closure of this road extremely inconvenient" says Mr Robertson. "There are many people who use that road to travel to work and they will find their days much longer if they have to take other routes. It will also cause congestion in the villages which they will have to go through.

"Businesses will also be inconvenienced at a time when we should be trying to help them. I can't accept that even major work like this should take up to a year to complete

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Tewkesbury MP Laurence Robertson is supporting Breast Cancer Campaign to raise awareness of its *Wear it Pink* day which will take place on Friday 28th October.

People in schools, colleges and businesses throughout the country are to be encouraged to don an item of pink in support of the campaign and each donate £2 to fund breast cancer research. Last year hundreds of thousands of people took part in *Wear it Pink* to help improve survival rates for the one in eight women who experience breast cancer during their lifetime.

Mr Robertson says "Every year in the UK, around 48,000 new cases of breast cancer are diagnosed in women. Although it is rare, men can also suffer from breast cancer, with around 340 men diagnosed each year.

"Many people have lost friends and family members to the disease and I would like to encourage everyone in my Tewkesbury constituency to support **wear it pink** on October 28, to raise valuable funds for breast cancer research."

Date of Release: 14th September 2011 Time of Release: 10.10am

Laurence Robertson MP

Member of parliament for Tewkesbury



Tewkesbury MP Laurence Robertson visited the Defence & Security Equipment International exhibition in East London today and paid tribute to the "degree of excellence" achieved by companies from his constituency who were exhibiting.

Mr Robertson visited companies such as L3, GE Aviation, Moog, Ultra Electronics, Allen Vanguard and General Dynamics at what is thought to be the world's biggest defence and security exhibition. Earlier in the week the MP had hosted a Commons reception for some of the companies involved.

"These companies have achieved a high degree of excellence, which represents world leading technology, and they all have bases in the Tewkesbury constituency" said Mr Robertson. "It is good to see companies such as these at the forefront of what is a global industry and employing people, and generating wealth, locally.

"Much of the equipment manufactured is designed to prevent casualties and to fight the forces of evil, as our servicemen and women are doing in different parts of the world. We have a strict export licensing regime in this country which tries to ensure that equipment doesn't fall into the wrong hands and I'm pleased to see that the Secretary of State, Liam Fox, refer to this in his speech at the exhibition.

"There is much talk of the demise of our manufacturing industry in this country, but these companies demonstrate that we can and do continue to lead the world in our engineering and designing expertise."

Date of Release: 13th September 2011 Time of Release: 2.00pm

Contact: Laurence Robertson M.P. 07765 254998

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MP MEETS MINISTER TO DISCUSS PLANNING CHANGES

Tewkesbury MP Laurence Robertson has held a meeting with Ministers to discuss proposed changes to the planning system. Mr Robertson met Planning Minister Greg Clark MP and Andrew Stunnell MP, also a Communities & Local Government Minister, in Westminster today.

"I have received a number of letters and emails from people concerned about the proposed changes and this meeting was one of a series which I am holding with Ministers to discuss these concerns" said Mr Robertson.

"I have always opposed inappropriate development and fought hard to protect the area from flooding, which is made worse by such development. These are the issues I have raised with Ministers.

"The planning proposals are intended to give a stronger voice to local people. The government rightly scrapped the Regional Spatial Strategy system and it will be for local councils to decide on their own development plans.

"The proposals do make it clear that development should be directed away from areas at risk of flooding and, for the first time, recognise the water displacement issue, where building in one area can cause flooding in another area. This is something I have been calling to be recognised for some years now.

"One of the objections people have raised with me is that the proposals say that there should be a presumption in favour of sustainable development, yet there has always been such a presumption. What is important is to strengthen the protections, such as Green Belt, ANOB and flood risk areas.

"I will continue to meet Ministers, and local groups and individuals, to gather and put forward any ideas which might help produce a better planning system than the one which was inherited by this government. This is a consultation and we must all contribute to it"

Date of Release: 7th September 2011 Time of Release: 12.00noon
Contact: Laurence Robertson M.P. 0207 219 4196 07765 254998

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Tewkesbury MP Laurence Robertson is seeking an urgent meeting with the Primary Care Trust (PCT) to discuss the future of Tewkesbury Hospital and the proposed doctors' surgery.

Mr Robertson's call for a meeting comes after it was announced that the PCT had purchased land next to the present hospital with a view to building a new hospital and accommodating the doctors on the same site. However, some of the doctors are objecting to this proposal.

"I know that a lot of people want the new hospital to be built in the town centre, and for the doctors' surgery to be there too, but some of the GPs are objecting to the proposal to redevelop this site" said Mr Robertson.

"I have held a meeting with some of the GPs recently and they have expressed concern that the current site, even with the extended land, is not big enough to build both the hospital and the new surgery on as it would leave no room for expansion.

"They are also objecting on the grounds that this land has flooded. In 2007, certainly one ward had to be evacuated.

"We need to ensure that any money spent on this project is spent carefully and with the maximum effect. We also need to make sure that the services provided are those which are needed by local residents, and that includes having a sufficient number of beds.

"I am therefore requesting an urgent meeting with the Chief Executive of the PCT to discuss the possibilities."

Date of Release: 12th July 2011 Time of release: 4.00pm.
Contact: Laurence Robertson MP 0207 219 4196

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MP GETS ANSWERS ON POWER CUTS

Tewkesbury MP Laurence Robertson has been questioning Central Networks about the power cut which took place in Bishop's Cleeve recently, causing disruption and inconvenience to individuals and businesses in the area.

"I have contacted Central Networks to ask why the village seems to have had quite a few losses of electricity supply recently" said Mr Robertson.

"I have received a helpful reply from the company. They are saying that the three interruptions last year occurred as a result of an underground cable fault. The one on 27th January was caused by a fault on the low voltage network to an underground cable joint adjacent to Church Road substation.

"The company tells me that they intend to replace a section of the existing mains underground cable that provides the electricity supplies from the local distribution substation in Church Road. This scheme will involve the replacement of the cable adjacent to the shopping centre car park. They hope to complete this work by 2012, but that will depend on their obtaining all the necessary permits.

"I have let the company know that cuts of these frequencies are not acceptable and I'm pleased that they have agreed to try to improve matters. I will keep in touch with them on this issue."

Date of Release: 8th February 2011 Time of Release: 3.00pm
Contact: Laurence Robertson M.P. 0207 219 4196

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MP WELCOMES EXTENSIONS TO LIBRARY OPENING HOURS

Tewkesbury MP Laurence Robertson has welcomed the extension in the planned opening hours of a number of libraries in his constituency, as announced by Gloucestershire County Council this morning.

Bishop's Cleeve is being proposed for a six-day a week opening and Longlevens for five days.

"I visited Bishop's Cleeve library on Friday morning and saw the excellent work which is carried out there. The staff are dedicated and carry out a variety of duties" said Mr Robertson. "I will be visiting Longlevens library for a surgery on Saturday and expect to find the same there.

"I am also pleased that Churchdown will have longer opening times than was originally anticipated, although I am asking the County to see if they can possibly afford to have that library open for even longer.

"The problem is, of course, that the country's finances were left in such a terrible state that action has had to be taken. I've asked the County to try to ensure that vulnerable people are not affected by the cuts and I'm pleased to see that the County is trying to make sure that this is the case."

Date of Release: 31st January 2011 Time of Release: 4.00pm
Contact: Laurence Robertson M.P.

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16th January 2011 **FOOTBALL HAS LOST A TRUE LEGEND - MP**

Tewkesbury MP Laurence Robertson, who originally hails from Bolton, paid tribute to Nat Lofthouse, who died last night.

"The football world, and Bolton, has lost one of the true legends of the game, an absolute icon.

"I never saw Nat play but I met him some years ago. He was a real gentleman. He won the FA Cup with two goals for Bolton Wanderers in 1958 when I was six weeks old! Apparently, they brought the cup back in an open-top bus past my grandmother's shop. Bolton has not won the FA Cup since.

"He did as much as anyone to put Lancashire on the foot ball map. In those days, Bolton, Bury, Burnley, Blackburn and Blackpool, as well as Manchester United, were famous football clubs. A one club man, he stayed with Bolton, in one capacity or another, for over 50 years after he stopped playing for them.

"Nat became known as the "Lion of Vienna" for his performance in an England shirt in Austria, but, overall he scored 30 goals in 33 appearances for England – one of the best scoring records of all England players ever.