

Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker for allowing me to make this contribution in this debate.

It is an honour to be following the contribution from the honorable member for Rutherglen and Hamilton West who spoke very powerfully on behalf of her constituents.

It is a great privilege to be addressing this house on behalf of my constituents in Eddisbury I arrived ready to be a serious politician but almost the first thing to happen to me was to be selected for the ladies tug of war team. I hope this parliamentary debut does not lead to me being flat on my backside!

I wish firstly to pay tribute to my predecessor. I am acutely conscious that Eddisbury has been represented by a number of illustrious members of parliament. The most recent, Stephen O'Brien, who served the constituency of Eddisbury with distinction and dedication for the last 16 years.

His commitment to his constituents and his dedication as a parliamentarian has been accompanied by his achievements in office during the last government as Minister for International Development between 2010 and 2012, as well as the Prime Minister's Envoy for Sahel. Stephen has fought to eradicate the problem of Malaria and worked closely with the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine and other acknowledged world leaders in tackling this issue.

Stephen will bring substantial experience to his new role in the United Nations as Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs. That experience will prove invaluable in the light of the challenges of the humanitarian crises which beset Syria, Nepal and the horrific humanitarian consequences of the conflict with ISIL. Members from all sides of the House will want to wish him well in his new role.

The difficulties of others suffering the consequences of humanitarian disaster can sometimes feel a long way from the delights of the Eddisbury constituency in South West Cheshire. Beautiful canals which crisscross the landscape in Wrenbury and Audlem which can be enjoyed on the narrow boats which can be hired for relaxing holidays.

The Cheshire plains form the bedrock of the dairy industry. The importance of dairy industry in my constituency is recorded as far back as 1125 by William of Malmesbury.

Concerns about the milk price don't quite go back that far but the fact that it is cheaper to buy a litre of milk than a litre of water is as true 15 years ago as it is today, and it is something on which we do need to take action if we want to ensure that British family farms survive. Farm diversification can be seen in Eddisbury with milk being turned into one of the oldest English cheeses, namely Cheshire cheese, and that entrepreneurial spirit continues with delicious Cheshire ice cream and yoghurt.

Eddisbury is home to the to the oldest Church in Cheshire dating back to 1190 in Shocklach, and the Scottish Members of Parliament will be interested to know of the link of St Boniface who in the 7th century founded over 150 churches in Scotland.

The Reverend Butler in the 18th Century recorded “St Boniface, by preaching the word of God, reformed manners of the people in the provinces of Angus, Marris, Buchan, Elgin, Murray and Ross” witnessing seatgate in this House over the last few weeks, I am not certain that the reformation of manners he describes was a lasting one.

The link with St Boniface can be seen in St Boniface’s church in Bunbury one of many historic buildings in Eddisbury. Beeston and Peckforton castles can be appreciated from the beautiful Sandstone Trail which attracts walkers from throughout the UK.

If big engines and racing are your thing then come to the Cholmondeley pageant of power or watch the racing at Oulton Park. Bolesworth provides top quality international eventing for those with a love of horses. And all of these Madam Deputy Speaker can be enjoyed over the next few weekends if I can persuade other Honourable Members to visit.

However the real strength of the constituency is the people who live within it, and I want to thank my constituents for the warm welcome they have given to me.

Their generosity of spirit can be seen in Winsford. Winsford the main town in the constituency is known for its salt mines, and I have no doubt that every honourable member in this house has benefited from the salt produced in Winsford and the surrounding areas dating back to Roman times which helps keep our roads clear when snow storms hit the country.

What is not so well known is the record my constituents have of giving back to the community, a record of which my constituents can rightly be proud.

St Luke’s hospice, a hospice which has a history of being small but which punches above its weight in terms of invocation and working with others.

The Wingate centre which provides life enriching experiences to children with disabilities and providing respite care for those that need it.

In the numerous villages which are scattered throughout the constituency are small local businesses who typify the determination of those who are employers’ employees and business owners, be they a high street shop, a local farm or a business located on one of the many industrial sites we have. Hard work is clearly evident in Eddisbury, and there is a quiet but steely determination for people to get on, to strive and to achieve. You can see that in the streets of Bunbury Kelsall, Malpas, Tarvin and Tarporley.

I got involved in politics as a single parent, having struggled to access childcare in the rural area in which I lived. Single parents come in all shapes and sizes – as you can see. Many have jobs and childcare is crucial to allow parents to make the most of themselves and also their children.

The family and childcare trust has pointed out the particular lack in provision in rural areas. This government's commitment to thirty hours free childcare provides an opportunity for local councils to ensure that there is appropriate provision during school holidays and wrap around care which is vital. For working parents and single parents in particular. Improvement of provision is crucial if we are to make the most of talented women and men who want to work, but often face barriers because of the high cost of childcare.

My constituents voted Conservative so they can build on those aspirational hopes they have in Cheshire for themselves and their families. Aspiration and achievement are admired in Cheshire, and yet they watch as policies which could help them, and their families are placed under threat by MPs from nations which make their own decisions on childcare, health services, and access to education. That cannot be right and the West Lothian question needs to be addressed to ensure English votes for English laws.

Cheshire has strong links into Wales. My constituency is a border constituency and therefore sees firsthand the impacts of devolution. In fact the wonderful village of Audlem, an independently minded part of the constituency held a referendum to join Wales in 2008. Wales did not accept the offer. I can't think why – as it is a beautiful place but residents there now see people moving over the border from Wales to access cancer drugs, they see the Countess of Chester hospital under strain because of threatened closure of the maternity unit at Glan Clwyd hospital.

It is important that we recognize the strong links we have, as someone who has both English and Welsh roots I have been accused of being too English in Wales and too Welsh in England.

I make no apology for being British and we should perhaps reflect that what unites us is stronger than what divides us. Having experienced devolution first hand it is clear that if decision making is taken closer to those affected by it they will benefit. This is the benefit of the northern powerhouse to my constituents. This is the principle perhaps that we should bear in mind when considering the impact of the European Union referendum, and it seems a contradiction that the SNP seek independence yet apparently are happy to cede sovereignty to Europe. It is particularly puzzling that the SNP seek to argue through a Barnett formula they fought to retain, that they should vote on English laws despite having devolution and the ability to raise taxes in Scotland. The unfairness to English voters of the current position has to be tackled.

Whatever happens in respect of devolution in Scotland and Wales, what will be key for all of us going forward is communication. Eddisbury is 631st out of 650 constituencies for mobile and broadband services and British telecom and the

mobile operators have to change their approach to services in my part of Cheshire and improve them so we can build on the strong rural economy we need vastly improved digital communications in order to raise the productivity and to maximize tourism and business opportunities.

In a global economy we need interconnectivity and it is vital the government's broadband infrastructure project delivers.

Mobile telephone operators need to be aware that if they don't take advantage of the mobile infrastructure funding to improve signal in my constituency that I will be campaigning to support proposals to allow roaming across networks. There is no part of the constituency that has an operator which provides a strong signal over all of it. That has to change.

Madam Deputy Speaker I will be a strong voice for constituency in Westminster and look forward to speaking up for my constituents in the years to come.