



20 May 2019

Dear all,

I'm sorry that I cannot be with you this evening, but I am needed up in Westminster on Parliamentary business.

That being said, I wanted to write to update you on some work I have been doing following last year's unauthorised traveller encampment on Godstone Green.

As I'm sure you will recall, it took some time to get the group to move on. At the request of the Parish Council, I wrote to Surrey Police requesting that they action Section 61 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 which would remove the Travellers from Godstone Green and prevent them returning for the next three months. I was pleased that Surrey Police did decide to issue the Section 61 notice and the Travellers were moved on. I know that the Parish Council worked extremely hard to get this result and I pay tribute to you, and thank you for your dedication.

Of course, it is not just Godstone that has seen the impact of unauthorised encampments over the last year or so. Examples of unauthorised encampments have been seen across Surrey. That is why I am working with my colleagues across the county to see what more can be done to ensure communities have the powers they need to move on unauthorised encampments.

Last month, Philip Hammond MP convened a meeting in Runnymede which was attended by representatives from Tandridge and other local authorities, Surrey County Council, Surrey Police, the Police and Crime Commissioner and other local MPs. It was an extremely valuable meeting, and while I cannot go into detail about the ideas discussed until they are formalised, I am confident that plans will enable local authorities and the police to continue to improve their collaboration and information sharing. Ideas were also discussed that could put in place the necessary powers for this summer to move on any unauthorised incursions as quickly and painlessly as possible.

I would be more than happy to share some more information about this when it becomes available and please do get in touch with me should you have any questions or thoughts.

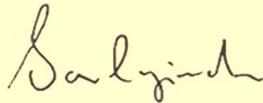
I'm sure you will agree that Godstone Green and its surroundings are a beautiful part of our area and we must all do what we can to maintain that. Be that by working to keep unauthorised traveller encampments away, or protecting the nature and surroundings. In March, I visited the Bay Pond Nature Reserve with the Surrey Wildlife Trust to support them in their work safeguarding the environment we are so fortunate to have. Their important work helps preserve and promote the wildlife and natural spaces we have and I was pleased to spend the morning with them learning more about their work.

Finally, I thought you might be interested to hear that Govia Thameslink Railway have recently set up a Passenger Benefit Fund to provide tangible new benefits for passengers. The fund has been allocated to passengers based on the tiers of the additional industry compensation scheme which were agreed following the disruption caused by the May 2018 timetable issue. Godstone station has been awarded £30,000 and Govia will be engaging with communities to understand what they would like the money to be spent on. More information can be found here: <https://www.passengerbenefitfund.co.uk/getting-involved/>. I will be writing to Govia with some suggestions of my own, so if you have any that you would like to share, do let me know.

As always, should you want any more information on the above, or need any support on any issues at all, please do get in touch with me and I would be happy to see what I can do to help.

I hope you all have an enjoyable and productive evening.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sam Gyimah', written in a cursive style.

Sam Gyimah MP