

Funeral of Amy Redwood

The funeral will take place of Amy Redwood at 9.45 am on June 8th 2018 at Easthampstead Park Crematorium near Crowthorne. Her friends and relatives will be most welcome to join us on that sad occasion to remember her and commemorate her life .

Does the EU favour No Deal?

Reading the spin coming out of Brussels from the talks, it sounds as if the EU favours No Deal. Their rejection of every helpful and sensible proposal to let them export more easily to the UK is bad enough. When coupled to their demands that we pay them money we do not owe them, obey laws we might want to modify, and avoid trade deals with faster growing countries elsewhere it means No Deal will be better than the Deal on offer.

I regularly stress to government to need to be ready to leave on 29 March 2019 given this background. If that turns out to be the answer we can start spending the £12bn a year saving immediately, we can sign early trade deals with a number of countries that have been keen to get on with it, take back control of our fish and put in a UK migration policy that works for us. Any Deal has to be better than this. The EU seems to think a Deal has to be a punishment. As an independent country they will not be able to punish us, so the sooner we are out the better.

Green policies and producing food

Defra is keen that our new farming policy should be ultra green. If that means we value and look after our fields and farmland, and protect our forests and wild areas, I am all in favour. The good news is we can do that at the same time as expanding the food we produce and meeting more of our own food needs.

I trust the Defra Secretary will take on board from his current consultations a strong feeling in the rural community that we need a farming policy that puts food production into a more central role than it achieved during the years of the Common Agricultural Policy. There are good environmental reasons to cut down the food miles, as well as good economic reasons why it would be better to cut the balance of payments deficit.

Over the last winter I was pleased to find I could largely rely on home produce. There were good home grown potatoes, carrots, cauliflowers, leeks and onions available most of the time. For much of the winter there were excellent English coxes and varieties of pears. More recently I have turned to New Zealand for their fruit when English has not been available.

It was difficult to find oranges from anywhere other than Spain thanks to EU tariffs, though some citrus fruits from Israel, North Africa and South Africa did find their way to UK supermarkets. A new agriculture and tariff policy after we leave could be a big boost for our farms and a bonus for our consumers.

M4 improvement plans

Highways England came to see me to explain their plans to widen the M4 out to Junction 12 under their so called Smart Motorway project.

The aim is to provide a 33% increase in capacity by making a 3 lane a side highway into a 4 lane one. There need to be bridge works, new emergency reservations have to be constructed, a new central barrier installed, and new sensors and signs to regulate traffic flows and speeds.

Most of the work will take place at night. The motorway will be tackled in sections, starting in the west. Whilst works are underway on a section there will be 50mph narrower lane operation for traffic, with closures overnight when needed.

Works will start later this year, with completion of the whole motorway J 3 to J12 by March 2022

I stressed the importance of putting in the promised new noise barriers and noise reducing surfaces for the road.

I also stressed the need to keep the motorway flowing as freely as possible during the works, as this motorway is crucial to constituents travel plans and daily lives.

Should we limit everyone's bread as well as water?

I could scarce believe my ears when I heard there is talk of a limit being

placed on how much water each one of us should be invited to use. Water is the staff of life. It is difficult to predict how much water you need for cleaning or cooking. I thought it was agreed that as water is so fundamental special care is taken to ensure we all have access to a good supply in our homes and places of work.

No-one argues that with strong growth in our population we could run out of bread in a few years time. They do not point out that baking more bread and putting in more ovens will entail burning more fuel and creating more emissions. They do not advocate a bread allowance, to ensure we control the total and at the same time allow fair shares for all.

We do not do so for a very good reason. The market can take care of future demand. There is no need to interrupt individual choice. I do not eat a loaf of bread at the expense of my neighbour. There are enough loaves at affordable prices for both of us. Bread supply expands to fill the shopping baskets available.

The same should be true of water. Water is a resource in massive supply. Much of the surface area of our planet is taken up by huge quantities of water. You do not destroy the water by using it, but return it to the water cycle after use for reuse. It is the ultimate renewable. If we allowed full competition to supply domestic water as we now allow for commercial water, supply would expand to meet the demand. Let's do just that.

Water is a good growth product. Let's clean, store and use more of it. If we need an additional reservoir, put it in. If mending leaking pipes is cheaper, do that. There is no need to ration.