



COVID-19 UPDATE FOR ERITH AND THAMESMEAD

We will shortly be reaching the end of the second COVID-19 lockdown and non-essential shops and restaurants will again be allowed to open. I want to thank everyone for their commitment to ensuring public safety, I know the sacrifice people have made during this second lockdown. I am pleased to see that places of worship and gyms will be opening on December 2nd which are extremely important aspects of personal wellbeing.

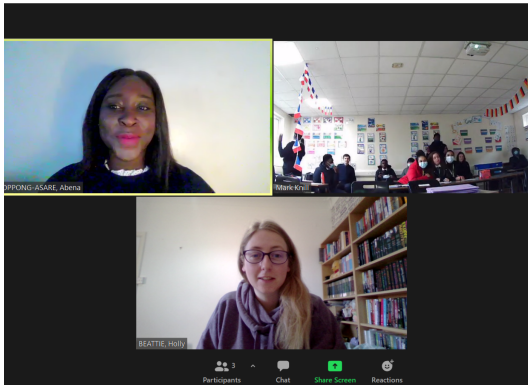
However, COVID-19 cases are continuing to rise in both Greenwich and Bexley. It is therefore important that people continue to act with caution and follow social distancing and mask wearing measures. Over the past 7 days Greenwich has had 509 new cases of COVID-19 and Bexley has confirmed 702 new cases.

Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 should book an NHS [test here](#).

MP CHRISTMAS CARD COMPETITION

This month I launched my Christmas card competition, open to all students aged 18 and below in Erith and Thamesmead. The competition is a celebration of key workers and their commitment to working on the front line to protect our community this year.

I'm calling on young people in the constituency to share their portraits and inspiring stories of key workers close to them. Whether it be their teacher, bus driver, postie or doctor. The winner will have their drawing featured on my Christmas card. Full details of how to enter can be [found here](#).



This month I met with Public Services students from Trinity Bexley School to discuss working in the Civil Service and my role as the MP for Erith and Thamesmead.



Last week I met with Men in Sheds, an AgeUK Bexley initiative. The group comes together to socialise and, before COVID-19, to share skills with each other.

ONGOING SITUATION IN NIGERIA WITH POLICE AND MILITARY VIOLENCE

Last month we saw tragic scenes unfold at Lekki toll gate in Lagos, Nigeria when Nigerian police and military opened fire on young protesters. Young people across Nigeria have been protesting against the use of violence by the Special Anti-Robbery Squad.

Over 4000 people in Erith and Thamesmead signed a petition calling for sanctions to be placed on the Nigerian Government following the deaths at Lekki toll gate in October. According to Nigerian officials, 2 young people were killed in the shooting but reports by Amnesty International claim 10 lives were taken.

I spoke in a debate on Monday 23rd November where I called for an independent investigation into allegations of human rights abuses in Nigeria. You can watch my [full speech here](#).

COMPREHENSIVE SPENDING REVIEW UPDATE

On Wednesday 25th November the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak MP, announced the spending review. The announcement confirmed that the UK has been hit harder than any other big economy and the measures announced by the Chancellor will see the financial burden placed on individuals.

Buried in the small print of the Chancellor's statement is a potential rise of up to 5% in council tax – a bombshell that will hit people in Erith and Thamesmead who are already struggling financially. The Chancellor also confirmed that pay would be frozen for the majority of public sector workers, meaning key workers will again be denied a pay rise after working to protect our community during COVID-19. On top of that he ploughed on with plans to cut Universal Credit in April.

You can see my reaction to the Chancellor's statement [on Sky News here](#).