

## Westminster Diary

By Steve Brine, MP for Winchester & Chandler's Ford

SINCE my election in May 2010, I have organised a series of open meetings to debate key local, national and international issues.

My Ask the... series has become well known for tackling some big subjects and they have been well attended each time.

We began with ASKtheMINISTER to debate UK Aid policy in 2012, continued with ASKSWT talking train services in 2013 and ASKtheNHS — held in March — heard of plans for a possible major reconfiguration of hospital services at the Royal Hampshire County Hospital.

While I was pleased with the March meeting, we did not have too many young mums and dads there (which was maybe to be expected of a meeting on a Thursday evening) and consequently, we didn't spend as much time discussing obstetrics and maternity as I would have liked.

This September I will therefore be organising a second event — ASKtheNHS (Again) — this time focused specifically on obstetric care and maternity services.

It will be a chance to hear about potential changes at the RHCH in this key area and to ask senior clinicians the tough



questions I know we all have.

As parents of two little ones ourselves, who were both born at the Florence Portal House in recent years, Susie and I certainly have many.

I think it is my responsibility to help give these plans the fullest hearing, and want to ensure there is as much understanding as possible among residents.

This meeting is the next part of that and I am determined we will do it with a sensible, evidence-based, clinically-led approach; not one that misleads constituents, deliberately or otherwise.

For instance, it's important we

start from a place that understands what level of care we currently have at the RHCH so am pleased chief executive, Mary Edwards, will again be present as well as a leading obstetrician and the head of midwifery for the whole trust.

The meeting takes place from 10am to midday on Saturday, September 20, in central Winchester.

Please check [stevebrine.com/asktheseries](http://stevebrine.com/asktheseries) for further details and how to register so we can manage a safe event that accommodates all who want to come.

One other thing I have been up to in recent weeks is my summer tour.

This year it contained more dates than ever, and the idea was the same as usual; to get out and meet as many constituents as possible while Parliament is in recess — and the BBC like to tell you all MPs are on the beach!

This year I once again held a supermarket surgery at Badger Farm Sainsbury's, street surgeries across my constituency, and knocked on doors to the surprise of many!

The website is at [stevebrine.com/summertour14](http://stevebrine.com/summertour14).

You can find out more about my work and get in touch via 01962 791110, or [stevebrine.com](http://stevebrine.com).