

## Letter from Westminster



**Steve Brine:  
Winchester MP**

LAST week, I voted for a safe and orderly exit from the EU. Next week, I will do so again.

We should remember that the alternative is a no-deal Brexit (or a 'clean break') and, while I know many take a different and sincerely held view, I do not believe that is

where we as a country WANT to be.

Of course we will survive. The planes will still fly from Southampton and the drugs will still work thanks to meticulous planning (some of which I have been working on at DH), but the point is we don't NEED to over-complicate this.

And we can't pretend the EU won't still exist after we leave it. Even if it's no deal in March, and therefore no transition period, eventually we will have to find A DEAL with our closest neighbours and biggest market.

It's well known I voted to remain in 2016 and, while I regret the outcome of the referendum, I respect what was a national result just as I - and some 80% of MPs - said we would in 2017.

For me, politics is the art of the possible and Brexit was always going to be a compromise.

You cannot leave the club and have the exact same benefits which is why I think the Government's deal, which preserved the advantages of EU membership for Britain's manufacturers while ensuring a smooth transition to a new future for everything else, was worthy of support.

Clearly, that was not enough for the House of Commons, which (like the nation) remains divided. Sure we know what it's against - last week's deal, no deal, no Brexit, a second referendum - but not what it's for.

The Government has confirmed it will come back to the House with the Meaningful Vote 2.0 next Tuesday. If Ministers can find a majority for a revised deal I think everyone will breathe again and I predict an economic bounce will follow.

In this week of prayer for Christian unity, begun with last Sunday's special service organised by Churches Together Winchester, I hope everyone will listen to hear and understand not just in order to respond.

Time is short, and if we have to extend Article 50 a little to secure safe passage and get the vast amounts of legislation through so be it, but there is a process here and Parliament must do its job and solve this puzzle. If we cannot do that, and compromise alludes us, anything is possible and both sides will have to accept that wherever it leads.

The Prime Minister has a fiendishly difficult task as she tries to decipher what 17.4m people meant when they voted leave while trying to take the 48% with her. When we met for talks in Downing Street last week I found someone solely focused on the national interest who wants to get this done and move on. And we can all say Amen to that.

Finally, I am holding the latest in my series of ASK events next Thursday evening (January 31) in Winchester. I am bringing the bosses of South Western Railway and Network Rail together so they can answer your questions about our local train service. If you would like to attend, please email [steve.brine.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:steve.brine.mp@parliament.uk) or call 01962 791110 to register.

**Steve Brine**  
MP Winchester & Chandler's Ford

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