

# **We All Win Together When We Win**

*Sir Peter Bottomley MP*

*Worthing Herald Article*

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I was delighted to watch the England Women's EURO final on Sunday, along with 17million others. The players are a credit to themselves, their clubs and their nation. I send my congratulations to all in England's squad, including supports, team coaches and everyone who has helped the team to be so successful. We would have been proud whatever the result. My particular congratulations on the spirit with which they have played together throughout the competition.

Football at Worthing: a pupil at Our Lady of Sion told me about the lack of changing rooms for girls and women at some local football pitches. There are loos and rooms for females at most places of congregation, though not at her place of recreation. Let us build upon the inspirational win of the Lionesses and ensure the facilities are there to enable women and young girls to play and watch football.

This week, one of my favourite constituents sent to me her reflections with the title 'Women are different'. Amongst many sensible points, she told me about the absurdity of mixed toilets based on previous men's stalls allowing photographs sneaked from above or below a partial screen.

When I played to raise funds for Children in Need at the old Wembley Stadium, the Labour captain of the Westminster Wobblers was unusually useless in goal. He and the Liberal Democrat outvoted me, thinking it funny to put me, the Conservative, on the left wing.

When I asked a friend whether he had watched any of the game on television, he said it had been unspectacularly boring except for the amazing goal scored in the last minute. I explained that by then I had been told to replace the inept goalkeeper.

Tracey Crouch, MP for Chatham and Aylesford in Kent, is one of the best footballers in the Commons. Before becoming a minister she coached a junior girls' football team. The Football Association was concerned about her playing in a mixed Commons team. To her credit, Tracey resigned as sports minister because government was going slow on abolishing the terrible fixed odds betting terminals that encouraged rapid losses at high stakes. Her departure gained victory for the cross-party campaign I had supported for years.

Worthing Council has been rightly successful in overturning the previous Persimmon appeal against refusal of planning permission at Chatsmore Farm, the Goring Gap north of St Romero's school. This is a massive victory for our local councils and for our communities.

Many people have fought the good fight, I am glad to have supported them and to have worked with them.

It was wrong that the Appeal Inspectorate overruled the elected council and the initial inspectorate's justified refusal to build over 400 homes in the Goring Gap. Their decision was perverse. It wrecked the planning system as we know it and eroded the authority of our elected local council.

Ministers should now intervene and give their own inspectors clear instructions and guidance to preserve the identity of local villages and towns, not to concrete every field, vineyard, market garden or recreation space.

This is a deserved victory. We go on in defence of our green spaces.

The situation with unauthorised caravanning and the illegal activities of members of the traveller community continues. The disturbance to local members of the public has never been felt so severely.

My team and I have organised an opportunity for the local community to brief the Police and Crime Commissioner - Katy Bourne OBE, alongside myself, in order for us to respond most effectively to the situation as it develops. In the past week I have had other meetings with our local police. I shall continue to ensure the links between Sussex Police, the British Transport Police (responsible for offences on trains and stations) and our councils are as effective as possible.

Another week, let us consider what cooperation can achieve.