

# **Tell Your Men We Respect**

*Sir Peter Bottomley MP*

*Worthing Herald Article*

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There are times to take seriously the purposes and the practices of political and public service, in the United Kingdom and elsewhere. On Tuesday, Tim Loughton MP and I welcomed to Westminster a fine group of Ukrainian women. We thank every local person and each of the groups helping refugees build settled lives.

Before they toured the Palace of Westminster, I offered my thoughts on what goes on. As we prepared to say goodbye, I did not find it easy to ask them to say to their husbands, brothers and fathers how we respect them, their dedication and their selflessness in confronting the bloody aggression dictated by Russia's Vladimir Putin.

We know women fight too. We know they have to pick up the pieces in times of war and at times of peace. Some see it as almost miraculous that Volodymyr Zelenskyy has been the sixth and present president of Ukraine. I commend the Wikipedia article on his life and how a law graduate became an actor before fulfilling a role as the European of this decade.

While some of Worthing's Ukrainians relaxed on the Commons' green bench in Westminster's Great Hall, I compared parliamentary activity with family life or a football match. Momentous events, including births, deaths and divorces, or penalties, sending-off and challenges to the referee, gain broadcasting coverage; most of the other hours are worthwhile, if comparatively dull.

Our visitors had noticed how within four days Britain had changed the prime minister and one head of state had been succeeded by another, while the only demonstrations were of respect and affectionate memories of the seventy years of public service by Queen Elizabeth, together with King Charles passing on to his son and successor as Prince of Wales the interest in environmental and other good causes.

One good cause supported by government and opposition is Levelling Up. I am asking the Secretary of State to recognise the excellent bid by Worthing for funds for the Golden Mile between the pier and the station. We can take the opportunity to make walking, working and visiting easier and more enjoyable.

Updating the museum, developing the lido and revitalising the public realm can be achieved by joint investment to build civic pride, benefit the local economy by creating a cultural mile by 'greening' and connecting the town's station and the seafront.

Do not overlook the importance of car access to the mobility of the Blue Badgers. A concerned constituent showed me the inadequacies of provision by the pier where there is one space for unloading a wheelchair for a user. The car is expected to be driven off some way, splitting a couple. Councillor Russ Cochran kindly said he will help to ask the County and the Borough Councils consider together what can be made possible on their shared land.

Let us hope the development at the old Inland Revenue site by Durrington station can be associated with action to make it possible for a wheelchair user to transfer from one platform to the other without a long journey around the streets and over the bridge.

I went to the Beach Office to be briefed by Robert Dove, senior coastal warden for Adur & Worthing councils. We should respect the contribution made to safety and security by the wardens. Our beaches need environmental care. The patrols give assurance. We all gain.

On Wednesday, I supported the all-party report's recommendations on menopause issues. If men shared women's lives, more would have been done earlier. We ask for widespread action to improve the situation for those going through the menopause, as well as for their families, friends and colleagues. Respect for females needs to include the right information and treatment to manage the menopause transition.