



News from **Meg Munn MP**

I thought it would be useful if I let you have a flavour of the many different things I get involved in – I hope you find this interesting. My website carries regular news reports and I invite you to log-on at www.megmunmp.org.uk, - there's also more news in my column in *Co-operative News*. In addition to being Chair of the Co-operative Group of MPs, I am also the Parliamentary Private Secretary (PPS) to the Children's Minister, Margaret Hodge – so co-ops and education take up a fair amount of my time.

Attending events at schools in the constituency continues to be a joy – particularly as they often have new or refurbished buildings, much better funding and improving exam results. Many children in Heeley have had low expectations of life; it's wonderful to see them expanding their horizons of what is achievable.



Pictured with pupils of Newfield School

Local Entrepreneurs

In the summer I hosted a seminar for 'local entrepreneurs' – over 120 attended and it was very exciting to hear the plans of these local inventors, artists and business people. Apart from the self fulfilment people get from pursuing their plans, our economic future depends upon individuals creating and developing new ideas – particularly in the 'knowledge economy'.



Pictured with the then Education Minister Charles Clarke at Myrtle Springs School

In Parliament I have been very busy with what is now the Children Act – legislation that will improve the lives of many children. I took an active part in the proceedings of the Domestic Violence Act, the first piece of legislation in this area for 30 years. Also this year I have welcomed new measures in tackling anti-social behaviour such as the restrictions on fireworks, which according to the many letters and phone calls to the office, has had a significant positive impact in many communities.

The issues of international aid and trade continue to be important to me. During this year there will be a concerted push by the government to fully engage other countries by using the Presidency of the G8, and then the European Union later in the year, to ensure the issues are tackled more productively.



I visited the Prince's Trust in Sheffield - I'm with a group from Foundry Mountain Activities, young people undertake activities to improve their confidence, skills, teamwork and motivation.

I welcomed the figures announced in the Chancellors pre-budget report about unemployment in Sheffield Heeley - unemployment falling by 62% since 1997 and 2500 people finding work through the New Deal. We can see huge improvements taking place in the constituency, more jobs and more opportunities. The majority of people have seen huge benefits from increased government investment.

As a Co-operative MP I'm pleased that we changed the law so that Christmas Day is kept special for shop-workers as well as everyone else – I don't think large shops should be open this day.

Seconding the Queens Speech

In a packed Commons Chamber, I praised my Sheffield Heeley constituency and spoke of my involvement with the Co-operative movement – recycling Lord (Ted) Graham's joke; "it's not very co-operative, nor does it move a lot". I swiftly brought things up to date, reporting the positive upswing experienced by the movement in recent years in the retail sector, and the growth of interest in the ideas of co-operation and mutuality.

As expected on these occasions I provided the House with funny stories of my time as an MP. I had the House in laughter, observing that I had recently covered for the Minister for Children, Margaret Hodge, as she was 'otherwise tied up'. This being a reference to an incident where the Minister had been handcuffed by a 'Fathers for Justice' activist.

Whilst acknowledging my speech, the Prime Minister praised the work of my mother Lillian, and my late father Reg, a former Sheffield Lord Mayor and active member of the Co-operative Party for many years. The speech is available, online at www.parliament.uk and click on 'Hansard' and go to the 23rd November report.



I was happy to attend the Remembrance Service lunch with the local TA. I'm with Major Carr and Captain Orr

Meg Munn MP, 2nd Floor Barkers Pool House, Burgess Street, Sheffield, S1 2HF. Tel: 0114 263 4004
