



What the people say...

In 2008 Philip wrote over 8,000 letters to, or on behalf of, local residents. He occasionally receives a note of thanks. Below are extracts from letters or emails which Philip has received since the summer.



If you need help or advice, contact your Member of Parliament



Philip Dunne MP WESTMINSTER Report

WEATHERING THE ECONOMIC STORM



HOUSE OF COMMONS
London SW1A 0AA

January 2009

Dear Resident

We are now officially in a recession. So much for the end of Boom and Bust.

In these uncertain times I am doing what I can to support measures that I judge will help keep Britain and Shropshire working. I see it as my responsibility to point out the pitfalls when I believe Government moves are misguided.

I receive evidence every day of pressures by the banks on the small business lifeblood of our economy.

There have thankfully been relatively few tales of individual woe, so far. But as unemployment rises and the spectre of negative equity looms, I suspect 2009 will be the year when the recession bites in Shropshire.

All is not bleak. The largest employers in both Bridgnorth and Ludlow are planning to expand.

I have sought to find out how my constituents are faring and their hopes and fears for the future. This Westminster Report includes answers to my latest online survey which I hope you find of interest.

In Parliament I was appointed an Assistant Opposition Whip in October. This means I have had to relinquish my roles on both the Treasury Select Committee and the Public Accounts Committee, both of which have helped me help you, so I shall miss them.

But as a Whip I shall continue to hold Ministers to account in the House of Commons. So please let me know of problems where I can help.

www.philipdunne.com

Philip Dunne MP

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Appointments can be booked online at:

www.philipdunne.com

or by telephoning 01584 872187

Let Philip know your views by completing his surveys on-line at:

www.tellphilip.com

LISTENING TO YOU...

Philip Dunne is always keen to hear the views of his constituents. To this end, he often carries out surveys if a specific group of people are affected by a particular Government policy. He then uses the results in the House of Commons to inform Ministers of what is really happening on the ground in the Ludlow constituency. If you have an issue you would like Philip to pursue through a survey on a topic of particular interest, do get in touch.

Tell Philip Survey



PHILIP undertook three 'Philip's Panel' questionnaires last year to gauge Ludlow constituents views on a wide range of issues. He believes it is important for individuals to take part in these regular surveys so that he can represent them effectively in Westminster.

They have been particularly useful in informing Philip of local views ahead of important votes in the House of Commons; including some of the ethical issues around the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill, for example where nearly 64% of those responding were in favour of a child retaining the right to identify their biological father.

Philip will use the results of the most recent Economic survey to press home

the importance of helping families and small businesses through the current economic downturn.

You can join Philip's Panel by registering at www.tellphilip.com. Everyone who takes part will receive feedback showing the results and each quarter Philip makes a modest donation to a charity of local interest chosen by the participants. The most recent survey voted to support the Lingen Davies Cancer Appeal.

Congratulating Bridgnorth's oldest veteran



Thanking Christmas card designer



Supporting Bishop's Castle Community Hospital



Dear Philip...

"...We are thrilled to be able to tell you that we heard by telephone today that the Learning and Skills Council have agreed to fund... We cannot tell you how much this means to us. He has not stopped talking about the college. May we take this opportunity to thank you for your support and to tell you how much we appreciated your involvement."

Mr C.M., Bridgnorth

"Thanks for your reply of the 7th November regarding the Climate Change Bill... Its good to have an MP who, like myself, obviously cares about the legacy we will leave our children/grandchildren."

Mr D.L., Much Wenlock

"Thank you for your letter of 18th September in reply to mine on the situation with my pensions. As always your reply is helpful and comprehensive..."

Mr J.N., Church Stretton

"...I wrote to you in August regarding my ongoing battle with the DWP to obtain a Funeral Grant but with no success, and I received your very comforting letter of 28th August. It seems your efforts have succeeded beyond my expectations... I am so very grateful for you help in this matter."

Ms R.T., Ludlow

"Marvellous!... my driving licence duly arrived amended with my new address, last Saturday - after 6+ months, largely, I'm sure due to your intervention - or folk in your constituency office here in Ludlow..."

Mr B.D., Ludlow

"As a constituent - though not one who has voted for you! - I find it refreshing to know that my MP is listening and attentive. Thanks again."

Mr G.H., Bridgnorth

www.philipdunne.com

Economic Downturn



PHILIP recently carried out an online survey of opinions on the economic downturn. He is increasingly using his established online survey network to gain a better understanding of local concerns.

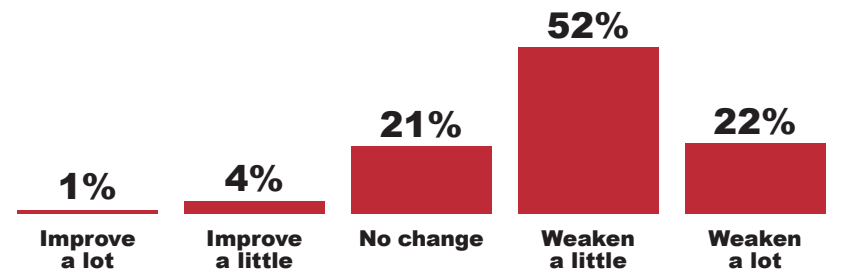
The survey tapped respondents' feelings about the prospects for the British economy and labour markets and how their personal economic position will fare in the coming months as we officially enter a recession. 99 per cent believed the economy was 'Likely' or 'Very likely' to enter a recession.

All respondents expect unemployment to rise with three quarters expecting unemployment to 'Rise a lot'. 74 per cent of respondents think their household income will weaken over the coming 12 months, whilst over 80 per cent expect household bills will rise. Over 50 per cent were concerned about job losses within their family and almost 50 per cent reported being worried about the safety of their money in banks or building societies.

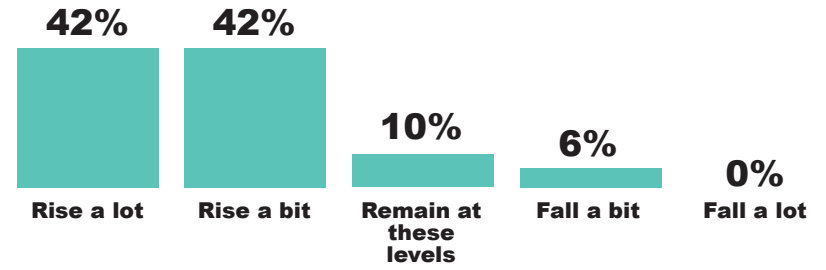
38 per cent hold The British Government responsible for the weakening economy and 35 per cent Bankers.

A selection of questions and your responses are illustrated:

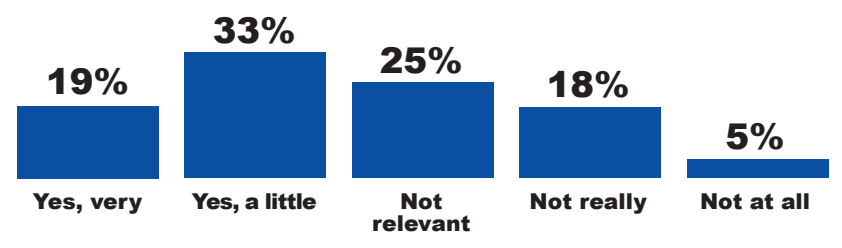
How do you expect your household income to be affected over the next 12 months?



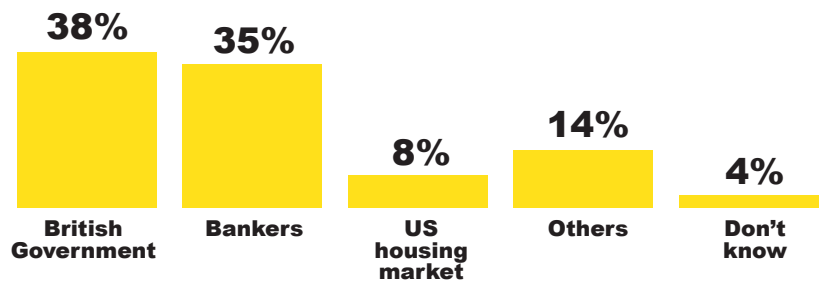
Do you think your own household bills will rise or fall over the next year?



Are you worried about possible job losses for you or members of your family?



Who do you hold responsible for the weakening economy?



In the last edition of my Westminster Report I asked some questions of local interest, the replies to which are listed below.

Many thanks to all who found the time to complete and return the survey to me. It is a great help for me to know the strength of feeling of those whom I am honoured to represent.

Should detention without charge be extended from 28 to 42 days? **YES 44%**
NO 47%
DON'T KNOW 9%

Should more speed limits be introduced on Shropshire's main roads through villages? **YES 75%**
NO 23%
DON'T KNOW 2%

Do you think Shropshire gets fair funding from central government? **YES 2%**
NO 80%
DON'T KNOW 18%

Let me know your views...

When complete, please return to:
Philip Dunne MP,
House of Commons,
London SW1A 0AA

Is it right to spend our way out of recession if it means doubling the national debt over the next four years?
YES **NO** **DON'T KNOW**

Do you think taxes will have to be raised by a future government to pay off debt?
YES **NO** **DON'T KNOW**

Are you concerned about the prospect of job losses for yourself or for your family?
YES **NO**

Your comments...

Name

Address

Postcode

Tel

Email

The information provided is for the use of Philip Dunne MP and his office only. The information provided will not be passed to a third party or any other organisation.

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Public debt soars



PHILIP responded to the Government's Pre-Budget Report by warning that we face higher taxes and record levels of public debt in the coming years. National debt will double to £1,000,000,000,000 (one trillion pounds), forcing even higher taxes to pay back the nation's overdraft.

This is equivalent to £30,000 per taxpayer in Shropshire. Philip is concerned that this will take years to pay off, saddling future generations with debt and leaving the country exposed, should the recession last longer than expected.

We urgently need action to get lending going and to protect jobs. Philip has called for the Government to adopt a National Loan Guarantee Scheme to help keep Shropshire working.

Challenging the Prime Minister over the economy



Working to help save primary schools, seen here at Lydbury North school

School consultation continues

THE pattern of primary school provision in Shropshire is being reviewed by an Independent Policy Commission due to report this summer. Philip has presented evidence to this Commission arguing for village primary schools to be retained.

The campaign to keep Lydbury North and Clunbury primary schools open has succeeded. The schools at Ashford Carbonnel and Caynham are due to merge into a new school site.

Plans have been finalised for a completely new William Brookes secondary school with community sports and leisure facilities in Much Wenlock which should be on stream in time for the London 2012 Olympics.

Post Office Card Account saved

PHILIP received over 1,000 postcards from local people keen to keep the Post Office Card Account which has proved so popular in paying pensions and benefits through Post Offices.

The good news is that after nine months of uncertainty, the Government finally agreed in November to scrap the tender process and to give the Post Office another five years to run and improve their card.

Local Post Offices and their customers have been through the mill this past 12 months. They now need to be allowed to get on with doing their job.



Opening a small, but new, Post-Office at Bourton