

NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2019



SIR GRAHAM BRADY
Member of Parliament for Altrincham and Sale West

Dear all,
Welcome to February's newsletter

During the week when the House had been scheduled to be in recess, I was chairing a number of committees dealing with Statutory Instruments. While there was no major legislation, there are plenty of pieces of delegated legislation to be dealt with, mostly Brexit-related, to ensure that we can leave the EU smoothly next month.

1st February I was on Nick Robinson's podcast, if you'd like to listen, click here:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p06zq22f> my interview is at 9mins 41; we talk, among other things, about the Brady amendment, the origin of the 1922 Committee and whether Altrincham Grammar School changed my life...



With a group from Kensington and Chelsea Young Conservatives who came into Westminster to hear me speak.

Also on 1st February I spoke at the Chamber of Altrincham and Sale Commerce lunch at the Belmore Hotel on Brooklands Rd in Sale. I spoke about the Brady amendment among other things and took questions. Another speaking engagement came on Saturday 2nd at the Cheshire and Wirral West Conservative Conference. Then on Monday 4th I went to the launch of a new group; Conservative Friends of the Armed Forces, helping to ensure the right political support for our brave servicemen and women.

On 7th February I was speaking at Oxford University to their PPE Society about Brexit and every aspect of UK politics and took a large number of questions.

On Friday 8th I was honoured to receive a visit from the High Commissioner for Bangladesh at our office in Timperley. That evening we were off to the Altrincham Ward Quiz Night at Altrincham Conservative Club. We had great fun and did pretty well!

On Saturday 9th we were at the wonderful new Broadheath Community Centre for Chinese New Year celebrations with some of the Chinese community in Trafford.



At Broadheath Community Centre

On Monday 11th I had lunch with the French and Spanish Ambassadors; I was doing my bit, trying to move the Brexit negotiations on. I hope we can improve our bilateral relationships around Europe and beyond when we leave the EU.

On 14th I was asked to record a short piece on Altrincham's win in the High Street Awards which took place at Lancaster House.

<https://confidentials.com/manchester/altrincham-has-the-best-high-street-in-england>

It's great that Altrincham's success is becoming so widely known and a model for others to follow.

The next day before my Advice Bureau I was glad to have the opportunity to attend one of the board meetings of the Hamblin Educational Trust at Altrincham Boys.

On 17th February I had a piece in the Sunday Times regarding Brexit and the 'Backstop':

MPs must help May transform Irish backstop or risk thwarting country's will

GRAHAM BRADY

It was a landmark moment. Since the 2016 EU referendum, a parliament largely made up of MPs who voted to remain, speaking on behalf of a country that voted to leave, has been unable to agree on very much.

But as a result of this amendment, a clear majority of MPs in the House of Commons coalesced around a plan and, for the first time in a very long while, colleagues handed Theresa May a clear direction and mandate to get the changes necessary to the Northern Irish backstop that will achieve a good Brexit deal for our great country.

The prime minister went to Brussels and had positive meetings with the EU hierarchy that resulted in further discussions between members of the government and EU officials, with the aim of breaking the impasse. Sadly, on Thursday evening, this positive unity dissipated as about 60 of my Conservative colleagues abstained and the vast majority of Labour MPs voted against the government's motion restating parliament's support for my amendment.

I voted with the government, although I can understand why several of my good friends did not. The government offered the House a motion that appeared to rule out the freedom to leave the EU if no agreement is reached deal – something that anyone who has negotiated anything knows is fundamental to securing a good deal. Crucially, the prime minister and Brexit secretary have guaranteed that the government will not take no deal off the table – under the terms of article 50 it is a matter of law that the UK will leave the EU on March 29. But there are moves afoot in parliament by Labour and some Tory MPs to delay our exit with the obvious intention that Brexit would be put on ice for good.

This would be unconscionable. It is almost three years since people voted to leave the EU and two years since MPs overwhelmingly voted to trigger article 50 to start the formal process of leaving.

Almost all members of the public I speak to – whether they voted to remain or leave – just want MPs to get the job done. Delay would mean more uncertainty for business too, with the danger of dragging UK growth down to eurozone levels. We need to achieve a resolution: it is incumbent on all of us in parliament to make the necessary compromises in the national interest and ensure we leave the EU on March 29.

That means, for those of us who are determined to restore our democratic sovereignty, not playing into the hands of those who want to delay or thwart Brexit, and instead giving the prime minister the time and space to get the necessary changes to the backstop.

That job has been made more difficult by the votes on Thursday. But those who imagine things are irretrievable are wrong. We need Theresa May to throw all her energy into ensuring that the backstop is replaced either by a rapid agreement about how the Irish border will function or by a legally watertight guarantee that the backstop could never be permanent.

We are so close to an agreement that can work, taking us out of the EU on time, into the transition arrangements and gaining the freedom to negotiate the free trade agreement that should be at the heart of a close and profitable relationship with the EU.

This can only happen if all of us who respect the biggest democratic vote in Britain's history rediscover the unity that we found on January 29 and pull together behind the prime minister for that final push to Brexit on March 29.

Sir Graham Brady is chairman of the Conservative 1922 committee

To read the full article, go to [thesundaytimes.co.uk](https://www.sundaytimes.co.uk)

On Friday 22nd I spoke at lunch at the European Economics and Financial Centre. The gathering of City investors was firmly of the view that it is time to conclude the negotiations and not risk a further delay or uncertainty.

On Saturday morning I was pleased to be able to give the opening speech at the National Convention meeting in Oxfordshire.

On Monday 25 the Centre for Opposition Studies invited me to do an 'In Conversation with...' on a wide range of issues.

The following day started with a speech to a construction industry breakfast and ended as I spoke to students from University College, London.



Meeting with constituents at the House of Commons

On 28th I spoke at an investor event organised by Redburn and then went on to chair a Westminster Hall debate on Carrier strike strategy and its contribution to UK defence, before going to speak to students at Cambridge University.

That's all from me for this month, I'll be back with more next time.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Graham Brady". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Sir Graham Brady MP