

If you have an insatiable thirst for knowledge then being an MP is great. You get to learn so much about things you never knew you needed to know. Over the course of the last few weeks I have discovered, just in the course of conversation with organisations and businesses, that I know quite a lot of really geeky stuff!

For example, thanks to ongoing problems on the Medway valley line with the closure of barriers in Aylesford causing significant congestion at certain times of day I have now learnt more about rail signalling and when a train is required to sound its horn, which is not in legislation, than any self-respecting person who does not work in the rail industry should really need to know!

Having fought for better noise protection for residents living on either side of the M20 motorway I can now answer questions on the benefits of differing types of road surfaces, the height of barriers, and whether natural protections such as trees or foliage actually make a difference. And oh did you know that Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday are the busiest freight days on our local motorway? Well, like me, you do now!

This week, our first of recess, I have been in Taiwan as a chosen British politician for a delegation. I didn't realise that Taiwan has one of the freest press and media industries in the world, something you don't normally think of East Asian countries. The UK provides a huge import and export market to them, and has over 300 UK companies based in Taiwan. Not only does its media regulation fascinate me but in terms of a current debate we are having in Westminster, Taiwan already has "recall" laws, something many people have written to me about supporting in Parliament.

You are never too old to learn and there are many things about my job that I love and cherish. Having my mind opened to new information is just one of them, not that it has ever helped me win a quiz; there aren't often questions on railways or road surfaces!