

Well this week wasn't the one I had been expecting! There I was on Saturday about to spend a relaxing afternoon watching Aylesford Bulls Rugby team when all of a sudden the news broke about my Medway colleague defecting to UKIP. My phone melted. The colour drained from my face. And I saw pretty much none of the rugby, which given the result might have been a blessing.

However the supporters were brilliant. Having started off with the type of banter that you'd expect from a rugby crowd they were soon checking every few minutes (or basically every time I looked up from or put down my phone) to see if I was OK. While my former colleague was glowing in the glory of UKIP conference goers in Doncaster and grabbing the national and local headlines I was basically left to pooper scoop. So I wanted to say thank you to the many who saw the pain and anger of the moment and made me laugh or gave me a hug when I was on the verge of tears. That's you Andy, Kevin, Des, Graham, Mark, Matt, Frank, Jeannie and so many more. At least when I popped back on Sunday to watch the Ladies play I got to watch a bit more of the game.

Once the dust settled, alongside my own schedule of events etc, the rest of the week has been more about the practicalities. Without doubt a by election in a neighbouring seat, especially one of such national prominence, has a knock on effect. At the moment the people of Rochester & Strood don't have a Member of Parliament so I have agreed that I, and my office, will pick up the casework. No-one should go without the help they need.

In the meantime I think we should spare a thought for our neighbours just north of us who will have the world's media descend on them. It is going to be a long few weeks.