

don't work. Well that's on interest rate caps. This is something different." Creasy's plan is to have a regulator applying the caps. They would decide the level of the caps, which would differ depending on whether they are short- or long-term loans. She also wants the cap to take into account any additional charges included in the credit deal.

An independent report into the industry would be a sign to Creasy that the government has taken note of the concerns raised by MPs from around the country. She sees a contradiction between the government's commitment to regulate excessive rates on credit and store cards but not to act on the high-interest lending market.

Creasy will continue to raise the issue in Parliament. What's her message to the government? "My advice for Ed Davey is get to grips with the issue. Show us that you are willing to work with us on this and we'll applaud you. If you don't, we won't forgive you." ■

## FROM THE EDITOR

Our MP of the Month can be chosen for a variety of reasons. It could be a stunning parliamentary performance, charity work, voter engagement or dogged pursuit of a cause to help a constituent – anything that makes an MP stand out. Stella Creasy was the clear favourite of her colleagues, and her campaign has inspired support from across the party divide – and outside Parliament too. It's also notable that the backbench business committee adopted Creasy's motion to be debated in the Commons – a sign of the boost that the committee can provide to backbenchers' campaigns. For her ability to get attention for her work, her hyperactive communication among her colleagues and on social networking sites, and determination to unite fellow MPs behind a cause, Stella Creasy is our MP of the Month. She has provided a strong example of the impact new backbench MPs can have, even with tough obstacles in their way.

**Ben Duckworth**

## HONOURABLE MENTIONS

### NICK DE BOIS

Conservative MP for Enfield North



Nick was nominated because of his work organising a Jobs Fair in his constituency – an idea conceived only 10 weeks before the

event. Over 40 local companies, training providers and voluntary organisations were invited to set up stalls and advertise jobs and training opportunities. Done with "no money", a local leisure centre was donated for the day and a local school designed the leaflets and flyers. Even jobcentres got involved, handing out 3,000 cards to every claimant that walked

through their doors. Organisers anticipated around 300 people would turn up. On the day 1,200 people attended between 10am and 3pm. "It was great. We've had some fantastic feedback," Nick said. Nick is now keen to brief other MPs who wish to put on similar events, and his work has caught the eye of Iain Duncan Smith and Chris Grayling.

### CATHERINE MCKINNELL

Labour MP for Newcastle North



Catherine's 'Small Change, Big Difference' campaign and her Apprenticeships and Skills Bill were the reasons for her nomination. The aim

of both is to encourage companies that make profits from public money to 'do their bit' and provide apprenticeships.

"What I have proposed is a small change that will make a big difference," said McKinnell. "A law requiring private companies to provide apprenticeships in return for winning a high-value public contract is long-overdue." Her Bill has also won

the backing of Apprentice star Lord Sugar, who described it as an "impressive stride" on apprenticeships. She received cross-party support for the legislation.

If passed, it would mean that firms tendering for new contracts of over £1m from public bodies would be required to consider how to provide additional apprenticeship places as part of their bid.

### CHARLIE ELPHICKE

Conservative MP for Dover and Deal



Charlie Elphicke was nominated for his work to prevent the Port of

Dover being sold off abroad. Becoming involved in the campaign as soon as he was elected, Elphicke and the community trust – the Dover People's Port Trust Limited – are trying to make a community bid to buy Dover port rather than the current plan to sell it overseas. Other high profile figures

involved in the campaign include Dame Vera Lynn and ResPublica head Phillip Blond.

One colleague who nominated Charlie said: "He has gone out on a limb – politically and emotionally – to try and get this to work. If he pulls it off it could be the flag mark of the big society."