I am writing to you to advise you that as a result of the annual review of the Cold Weather Payments scheme, some of the postcodes in your constituency have been linked to a new weather station.

The Cold Weather Payment scheme is reviewed after the end of each winter season to ensure that the weather station network remains viable and representative. Expert advice is sought from the Met Office and changes made where appropriate before the start of the next winter period. We have been informed by the Met Office that Langdon Bay weather station will be closing and the most appropriate weather station to replace it for the ME9 postcode is the Shoeburyness weather station. We have accepted this recommendation.

In its advice, the Met Office stated:

‘All postcodes linked to Gravesend were switched to Shoeburyness. A more thorough review of the postcode linkages was conducted as part of this review. It concluded that the Kent postcodes (ME9 - ME13, CT5 - CT6) north of the North Downs along the Thames Estuary would also be best represented by Shoeburyness than Langdon Bay, being geographically closer to this station and representing the climate of the Thames estuary.’

In making its recommendations, the Met Office examined the Geographic Information System database showing postcode areas, weather stations,
topography, built-up areas and 1km-gridded winter mean air temperature for 1981-2010 (i.e. the latest 30 year measurement of winter mean temperature used to calculate various weather parameters).

I have asked for a copy of this letter to be deposited in the house library. If you have any further questions, please contact my officials at SOCIALFUNDSTRATEGY.SINGLEPOINTOFCONTACT@DWP.GOV.UK

Best Wishes,

Will

Will Quince MP
Minister for Welfare Delivery