

Rachel Reeves MP Monthly Report

News from Rachel Reeves, Labour MP for Leeds West

April 2013

SHOCK HEART UNIT CLOSURE CONDEMNED

The extraordinary suspension of surgery at Leeds Children's Heart Unit over Easter has been condemned by MPs, councillors and families across Yorkshire, with calls mounting for NHS Chief, Sir Bruce Keogh, to quit.

Sir Roger Boyle, the top doctor at the centre of this controversy, announced his decision to stand down from his position of Director of the National Institute for Cardiovascular Outcomes

Research (NICOR) on Tuesday 16th April.

The decision to suspend surgery at short notice, a day after the High Court had ruled in favour of the Heart Unit, cast a huge shadow over the unit and left patients and their families having to travel across the country for serious operations.

This week Rachel signed a letter from Yorkshire and Humber MPs to the Parliamentary Health

Select Committee, calling on it to investigate the circumstances around the shock suspension.

A debate over the closure of the surgery took place in Parliament on Monday 15th April and the transcript can be read online at:

www.publications.parliament.uk



GREAT RESPONSE TO BUS SURVEY

Rachel launched her 2013 bus survey in February this year, one year on from her survey conducted in 2012, which revealed anger and dissatisfaction over rising fares and poor levels of service and, led to a public meeting with representatives from First and Metro.

Over 150 local people have submitted their responses to the latest survey and results will be compiled and publicised in the next few weeks.

Thank you to all those who contributed their views.

ED MILIBAND PLEDGES TO TACKLE PAYDAY LENDERS



Plans to give Leeds and other councils around the country the power to curb the increasing number of payday loan shops were announced by Ed Miliband in a speech this month.

Rachel, who has campaigned against the scourge of payday lenders and loan sharks across Leeds West,

highlighted the amount of money lenders currently operating on Armley Town Street, saying :

"It is a shameful reality that people are being pushed into taking out payday loans as they cope with the increasing pressures on their pockets from the rising cost of food, energy and travel.

"Armley Town Street is littered with payday lenders charging interest rates of over 1000 per cent and engulfing people in debt.

"That's why Ed Miliband's policy, giving power to local councils to act when new payday lenders open, is so important."

MORE NEWS VIA Web: www.rachelreeves.net **Twitter:** [@rachelreevesmp](https://twitter.com/rachelreevesmp)
Facebook: www.facebook.com/rachelreeves10



POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER VISITS BRAMLEY FORUM

West Yorkshire PCC Mark Burns-Williamson attended a recent Bramley Forum to discuss his Crime Plan for the next five years, setting out his vision for policing and community safety.

As well as Mr Burns-Williamson, Councillor Peter Gruen, Deputy Leader of Leeds City Council and Executive Member for Neighbourhoods Planning & Support Services and David Oldroyd, Chief Superintendent for North West Leeds gave short speeches on tackling problems such as anti-social behaviour and theft.

SWIM-ALONG CINEMA AT BRAMLEY BATHS



Community enterprise [Bramley Baths](#) is finding innovative ways to entertain the local community and surpassed themselves in late March with a swim-along cinema experience, hosted in partnership with [I Love West Leeds](#).

A screen was fitted at the end of the pool, and films Finding Nemo and Jaws were shown, with speakers being placed both over and under the water to create a cinematic effect.

Brave audience members viewed from the pool, where fellow swimmers prowled the waters wearing shark fins, whilst others watched from the balcony.

GOVERNMENT WELFARE CHANGES HIT LOCAL RESIDENTS HARD



Many local residents have contacted Rachel's office in confusion and distress this month, as government changes to welfare kicked in on 1st April. Changes include the controversial 'Bedroom Tax', the scrapping of crisis loans and the reduction of the Council Tax Benefit Scheme.

Many individuals are still not clear if they will be affected by the changes and those already affected feel they have not received adequate warnings or explanations.

Leeds City Council are working to ensure the most vulnerable are protected from these changes and have launched a range of booklets explaining the new benefit schemes and who will be affected.

You can find all the booklets online at <http://www.leeds.gov.uk> and these should also be available in public places, such as your local library and One Stop Centre.

If you feel you should be exempt from the changes do contact the Leeds City Council Benefit Service to discuss your circumstances.

BRAMLEY PRIMARY PUPILS PUT SAFETY FIRST WITH YORKSHIRE WATER

Yorkshire Water is currently building one of Yorkshire's largest underground drinking water reservoirs very close to Bramley Primary School and the company have set out to educate pupils about the dangers of building sites.

A competition was held to design safety posters, to be displayed on the site and 138 entries were received with all year groups taking part. Competition was tough, with so many great designs to choose from but talented Kieran Campbell was declared the overall winner, taking home a great prize and getting to see



his poster displayed on the site.

Several runners-up also won prizes, including vouchers and Easter Eggs, at an awards assembly, attended by Councillor Ted Hanley and representatives from Rachel's office.

WELCOME BABY ANNA: Rachel announced the birth of her first child on Monday 25th March. Anna Elizabeth Joicey arrived at 6:56am, weighing a healthy 7lb 15oz. The family are all doing well and Rachel is taking a period of maternity leave to spend time with her newborn daughter. Rachel's offices are still open in the meantime and you can get in touch in the normal way.