

Rachel Reeves MP

Monthly Report September 2014

Labour Member of Parliament for Leeds West, Shadow Secretary of State for Work & Pensions

SUPPORT OUR LEEDS WEST LIBRARIES



**Full crowd at Bramley Library
Public Meeting**

Rachel is spearheading a campaign against the proposed reduction of opening hours at Armley and Bramley Libraries.

Armley and Bramley are the only libraries left in the Leeds West

Constituency, following a number of closures in the past few years, and Leeds West now has the lowest number of libraries in Leeds. For comparison, Elmet and Rothwell Constituency has 7 Libraries.

As part of the campaign, Rachel has visited schools across Leeds West and chatted with pupils and teachers about their love of libraries. Armley writers, Alan Bennett and Barbara Taylor-Bradford have sent messages of support to the campaign, with Alan Bennett writing, "...Every child in Leeds today deserves these facilities and the support that I had fifty years ago". A petition against the proposed cuts has received almost

1000 signatures.

Rachel has also hosted a public meetings at Bramley and Armley Library and a 'read in' event at Bramley Library. A further read-in will be taking place at Armley Library on Saturday 20th September from 10am. There will be storytellers and fun activities for kids.



BRAMLEY VETERAN SECURES MEDAL

Bramley war veteran Peter Paylor, age 91, has finally received his campaign medal for service in Palestine between 1945—1948, following intervention from Rachel and Bramley & Stanningley Councillor Kevin Ritchie.

Mr Paylor received four medals in 1945 for his service during WWII but had given up hope of receiving a medal for his service in Palestine following the war.

Mr Paylor mentioned the missing medal to Cllr Kevin Ritchie who raised the issue with Rachel. Rachel swiftly contacted the Ministry of

Defence and was able to secure Mr Paylor his medal after a 66 year wait.

Rachel, who first met Mr Paylor at the Bramley War Memorial dedication ceremony, said, "After hearing Mr Paylor's first-hand accounts of life as a young man fighting for our country, I was determined to help him get his medal for serving in Palestine shortly after the Second World War.

"I know Mr Paylor is delighted with his medal, and it goes to show that brave men and women who serve our country rightly deserve recognition, regardless of



how much time has passed."



www.rachelreevesmp.co.uk



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IN BRIEF

BEDROOM TAX VOTE VICTORY

This month MPs voted through a Bill that would reduce the number of people affected by the Bedroom Tax with a majority of 75.

Clegg's cruel and unfair Bedroom Tax has hit hundreds of thousands of people across the country causing misery, hardship and forcing families to rely on food banks.

Labour MPs will try to amend the Bill so it abolishes the Bedroom Tax completely.

If the government won't ditch the Bedroom Tax, then the next Labour government will.

David Cameron and Nick



Rachel has joined Scottish Labour activists on the doorstep this month, campaigning for a 'No' vote in the Scottish Independence Referendum. [#bettertogether](#)

THE CHOICE ON SOCIAL SECURITY



Rachel recently gave a speech in Pudsey regarding 'The Choice' on social

security.

As part of Labour's summer campaign 'The Choice: the Labour future; the Tory threat', Rachel called upon the Government to get a grip on its failing social security reforms, outlining David Cameron's failure on social security since 2010,

the risk the Tories pose for the future and Labour's plans to tackle the rising cost of social security and to make work pay.

You can read the full text of the speech on Rachel's website at: www.rachelreevesmp.co.uk/speeches

* DATES FOR YOUR DIARY *

Saturday 20th September at 10am: Armley Library Read In, with storyteller Eden Ballantyne and screenwriter Lisa Holdsworth.

Monday 22nd September at 2:40pm : Rachel's Labour Party Conference Speech.

Saturday 27th September at 11:30am: campaigning in Bramley, meet at Bramley Community Centre.

Thursday 16th October at 7:30pm: Leeds West Labour General Meeting, Milford Sports Club.

Saturday 18th October at 1pm : Kirkstall Super Saturday, 12 De Lacy Mount. Come at 1pm for lunch at Cllr Fiona Venner's or join up at 2pm for the start of campaigning. If you are coming for a sustaining lunch prior to campaigning just let Fiona know.

We have many more campaigning sessions and events happening across Leeds West, visit www.rachelreevesmp.co.uk/events for more dates and look out for emails. For campaigning sessions in key-seat Pudsey contact Pudsey Organiser Charlotte Walker at: charlotte_walker@labour.org.uk and visit www.jamiehanley.co.uk for the latest news.



Rachel met with Bramley veteran Mr Peter Paylor at the touching Bramley War Memorial dedication ceremony in August. Rachel read an extract from Mr Paylor's memoirs as part of the ceremony.

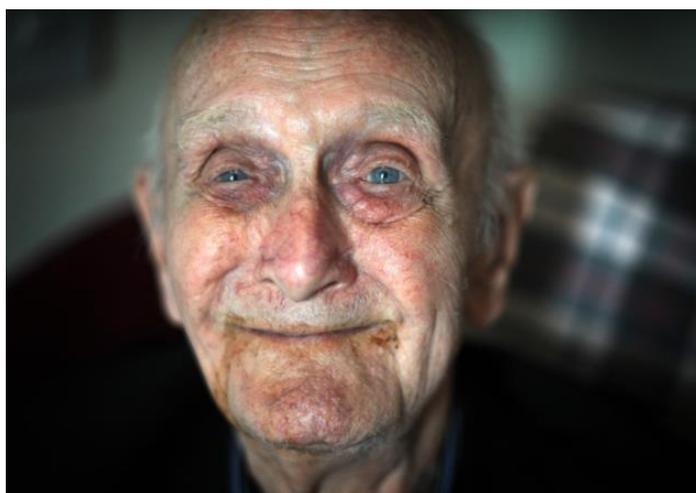


Rachel joined the Leeds West Food Bank team and Jamie Hanley recently for a food collection at Asda in Pudsey.

Appendix 1: from the *Yorkshire Evening Post*, Tuesday 16th September 2014

Leeds soldier **FINALLY** gets his war medal - aged 91

<http://www.yorkshireeveningpost.co.uk/news/latest-news/top-stories/leeds-soldier-finally-gets-his-war-medal-aged-91-1-6842812>



Peter Paylor. PIC: Simon Hulme

Published on the 16 September
2014
08:22

A WORLD War Two veteran from Leeds has finally received a campaign service medal after more than 60 years of waiting.

D-Day survivor Peter Paylor, 91, of Bramley, received four WWII campaign medals soon after hostilities ended in 1945.

But Mr Paylor did not receive a medal for his service with the British army during a peace keeping mission in Palestine from 1945 to 1948.

He had given up hope of ever getting the medal he was entitled to until Coun Kevin Ritchie and MP Rachel Reeves stepped in to help.

After finally receiving his Palestine medal last week, Mr Paylor said: "I knew I was due the medal, just thought it had been forgotten."

He added: "I'm delighted to finally get it, I'm absolutely over the moon. I have waited all these years and I wasn't expecting it all."

Mr Paylor had mentioned the missing medal during a chat with Coun Ritchie (Labour/Bramley and Stanningley) in May this year.

Coun Ritchie raised the issue with Leeds West MP Rachel Reeves and she investigated the matter before contacting the Ministry of Defence.

Ms Reeves, who met Mr Paylor last month when she read an extract from his memoirs at the unveiling of the Bramley War Memorial, said: "After hearing Mr Paylor's first-hand accounts of life as a young man fighting for our country, I was determined to help him get his medal for serving in Palestine shortly after the Second World War.

"I know Mr Paylor is delighted with his medal, and it goes to show that brave men and women who serve our country rightly deserve recognition, regardless of how much time has passed."

Coun Ritchie said: "He is a true hero of this country and this medal is much deserved. It's a shame it has taken almost 70 years to get there, but delighted we have been able to deliver it for him thanks to the intervention of Rachel Reeves."

Mr Paylor, who was a signaller in the Royal Corps of Signals, was aged just 21 when he was involved of the D-Day landings on June 6, 1944.

After the war Mr Paylor worked as a bus and tram driver in Leeds.

HOW TO CLAIM MEDALS

MINISTRY of Defence chiefs say the largest group of veterans who have not received medals they are entitled to are those who served in the Second World War.

An MOD spokesman said: "Although the availability of medals for wartime service was widely advertised at the time, many people did not come forward.

"As a consequence, some 70 years later, the MOD Medal Office are receiving in the order of 200 applications for WW2 medals per week. They are still issued in the first instance free of charge. Medals can be issued to the legal next of kin of deceased ex-Servicemen/women; however proof of kinship will be required."

Veterans can apply for medals by writing to MOD Medal Office, Innsworth House, Imjin Barracks, Gloucester, GL3 1HW.

Enquiries about medals can be made by calling the MOD on 0800 0853600 or by emailing DBS-medals@mod.uk

For more information, go to www.veterans-uk.info/medals/claiming

Support gathers to stop cuts at Leeds libraries



Rachel Reeves, Leeds West MP

Published on the 03 September
2014
06:00

A Leeds MP has come up with a page-turning idea in a bid to stop council bosses from slashing the opening hours at two libraries.

Rachel Reeves, who represents Leeds West, has organised a series of “Read Ins” at Bramley and Armley libraries.

Under current proposals Bramley’s hours could be cut by 18 per cent while Armley’s could come down by 15 per cent. The Bramley site might also close on Thursdays.

Ms Reeves, who is spearheading the campaign to support the libraries, has also received backing from Armley born author and screenwriter Alan Bennett.

In a letter he said: “I learned to read at the Armley Public library at the bottom of Hall Lane.

“As a schoolboy I used to take books out of Headingley library, opposite the Lounge cinema on North Lane. I often did my homework in the Reference library on the Headrow.

“Reading and the city went hand in hand.

“Every child in Leeds today deserves these facilities and the support that I had.”

Ms Reeves added: “Libraries in Leeds provide a vital public service, helping people to learn and acting as a place for the community to come together.

“But deep government cuts have hit northern towns and cities like Leeds hard, threatening the future of our libraries.

“That’s why I’ve launched a campaign to protect Armley and Bramley libraries from a proposal to reduce their opening hours.

“We’ve had a fantastic response over the last few weeks with hundreds of people signing the petition.

“I urge everyone who wants to keep libraries open to back my campaign by signing the petition and coming along to the read in events I’ve organised at Bramley and Armley Libraries.”

A consultation has been launched across the city over the proposals which could mean a reduction of about 15 per cent in the overall time that more than 30 libraries in Leeds are open each week.

But the impact of the proposed cutbacks is also likely to vary wildly from site to site.

Gildersome, Whinmoor and Scholes libraries could have their opening hours cut by more than 40 per cent.

Rothwell’s hours could drop by 28 per cent while Seacroft’s could fall by 22 per cent.

Other sites, such as Holt Park, Yeadon, Guiseley, Chapel Allerton and Leeds Central, could escape with reductions of less than 10 per cent.

A “Read In” will be held at Bramley Library on September 13 at 10am followed by another at Armley Library on September 20 at 10am.

A public meeting will be held in Bramley on September 11 at 4.30pm and Armley on September 18 at 5.30pm.

To sign a petition visit www.rachelreevesmp.co.uk

Labour will hit back at the Bedroom Tax this Friday – will the Lib Dems?

September 1, 2014 9:04 am

Author:

[Rachel Reeves](#)

Tags:

[Andrew George](#) [Bedroom Tax](#) [Nick Clegg](#)

Labour has been clear and consistent in its opposition to the Bedroom Tax.

We said it was cruel and unfair, taking an average £700 a year from half a million low income households. The government has admitted that two thirds of those hit have disabilities, and another 60,000 are carers. All the evidence from housing and disability experts showed that most would have nowhere else to move to.

We also said it was unworkable and could end up costing more than it saved, with people unable to keep up with their rent, destabilising the finances of housing providers and risking costly eviction proceedings, or ending up with private landlords where rents and housing benefit bills are higher.



Our fears were confirmed by the government's [own independent evaluation of the policy slipped out over the summer](#). This revealed that just 4.5% of affected claimants had been able to move to smaller accommodation within the social sector, that 60% had fallen behind with their rent after just six months, and that there was “widespread concern that those who were paying were making cuts to other household essentials or incurring other debts”.

These are the reasons why Labour MPs forced [a vote in the House of Commons for its abolition in November last year](#). It is why [we supported a Bill to abolish the tax put forward by Ian Lavery MP in February this year](#). And it is why [Ed Miliband has committed the next Labour government to repealing it](#) if we win the general election next year.

To his credit, Andrew George MP has also been consistent in his criticism of the Bedroom Tax. He even [voted in support of our motion to abolish it last November](#). But unfortunately the same cannot be said of his party, the Liberal Democrats.

They joined the Tories in the lobbies to vote through the Bedroom Tax at [second](#) and [third reading](#) in 2011. They combined with the Tories [to defeat Labour's opposition motion last November](#). And they were [nowhere to be seen when Ian Lavery proposed his Bill to repeal the tax in February](#).

The plain truth is that there would be no Bedroom Tax if it wasn't for Nick Clegg and the Liberal Democrats.

The Liberal Democrats even refused to support amendments that Labour tabled in the [Commons](#) and the [Lords](#) to exempt disabled people whose homes had been specially adapted for them, or who could not find alternative accommodation where support services and suitable employment was locally available.

Lately Nick Clegg has attempted a u-turn on the issue, claiming that new evidence showed people were unable to move to avoid the tax. But the evidence for this has always been available.

In fact [the government's own assumption was that no one would move](#), and that if they tried ["there would be a mismatch between available accommodation and the needs of tenants"](#), and that ["in many areas this mismatch could mean that there are insufficient properties to enable tenants to move to accommodation of an appropriate size"](#).

In fact, the very report that the leader of the Liberal Democrats has cited as "the trigger" for his change of heart points out that the small number of moves is in fact ["higher than some had expected as the DWP's impact assessment was modelled on the assumption that no significant numbers would downsize"](#). The utter disingenuousness of Nick Clegg's attempt to excuse his collaboration with this Tories on this issue confirms once again that you simply cannot trust a word the man says.

The Liberal Democrat leadership have not yet announced what position they will take on Andrew George's Private Members' Bill to exempt certain categories of household from the Bedroom Tax.

The Labour Party will support it. This Bill does not go as far as the full abolition we want to see. But we will take any opportunity to limit the terrible impact of the Bedroom Tax. So this Friday, though most MPs will have commitments in their constituencies, I and other Labour MPs will be present in the House of Commons chamber to support the Bill so that it has the best chance of progressing through to its next stage. And in Committee we will do what we can to strengthen and extend its scope.

We in the Labour Party will take any opportunity to protect as many people as we can from this unjust and ill-conceived policy. But the only sure way to get the Bedroom Tax fully repealed will be to [elect a Labour government next May](#).

Rachel Reeves is Shadow Secretary of State for Work and Pensions