



Ledbury Estate



The residents of the tower blocks on the Ledbury are facing complete disruption to their lives and many of the residents I've spoken to are worried sick about what's going to happen. Ledbury is a settled community where generations live together and help each other. Elderly residents are looked after by their children and grandchildren, grandparents look after the grandchildren while the parents are out at work. People work locally and their children are in local schools and everyone is now uncertain about whether they'll have to move, where to, for how long and how they'll cope. People are taking time off work to deal with their rehousing and losing money. One woman had planned to go on holiday tomorrow - a treat for her retirement - and now doesn't know whether she should go.

It is an awful situation but the council are working hard to ensure that every individual resident is helped. They are sorting temporary accommodation, permanent accommodation and even hotels and compensation for the costs people are facing. The council have assured me that they will refurbish the Ledbury Tower blocks and they will continue to be council flats. They are not

going to sell them off.

The council are doing their best and it's time for the government to step up to the plate. The government has cut Southwark Council's grant by half in the last 7 years. They must give them the cash they need to deal with this. I and the other Southwark MPs Helen Hayes and Neil Coyle have been pressing the government to give the council the money they need. So far it's just been evasion and obfuscation and no commitment on cash. The council will pay the cost for the Ledbury refurbishment and rehousing. But they must not be forced to take the money away from other important major works projects. Tenants and residents in other estates have been waiting for important improvements and Ledbury mustn't mean that they have to wait still longer. And nor should the burden fall on leaseholders who've already been faced with big charges. I welcome that the council has told the Ledbury leaseholders that they won't have to pay for the major works that are now underway.

I'd like to pay a big tribute to Jeanette Mason and the Ledbury Tenants Association. Like so many tenants reps, Jeanette works tirelessly, unpaid, for her local community. I'd like to thank the local councillors, Richard Livingstone, Evelyn Akoto and Michael Situ and the council staff who are there on site and working 7 days a week. They are dedicated and caring and determined to do their best for the council's residents in such a dire situation.

We will need to find out why, when the block has been subject to so many investigations and reports over the past decades, that it was not until the last few hours that the council was told that the blocks are not safe for their gas supply and why this has not been the advice that the council received over the last decades.



Advice Surgeries

A disabled woman attended surgery to raise concerns about the time restrictions on disabled person's freedom passes which mean she cannot use her pass to travel to work from Queen's Road Peckham Station before 9.30am. I fully agree with her that it is wrong for transport authorities to assume disabled people are not working and do not need to travel at peak times. I've written to the Secretary of State for Transport, the Mayor of London, the Minister for Women and Equalities, Network Rail and the Equality and Human Rights Commission to ask them to remove this discriminatory time restraint so disabled people can travel on their freedom pass when they need to.

I'm helping a single father in Peckham who is full-time carer to his severely autistic 15 year old son get the support he needs from his landlord Wandle and Southwark Children Services. He is struggling to get the home adaptations his son needs for his own safety and quality of life, such as soundproofing insulation, tinted windows and protective padding. He told me his son's behaviour is affecting his daughter's studies and neighbours have made numerous complaints. I've written to Wandle and Southwark to ask for their support, for the necessary adaptations to be carried out and for increased respite care for the family.

A group of Wandle residents who live on Camberwell Station Road came to see me because they are facing faced continuous disrepair and security issues in their new build homes. I've written to the Wandle Chief Executive to ask them to facilitate the setting up of a residents association, pay for an independent resident advisor and carry out a full audit of all of the properties and I will continue to support the residents.

Fire Safety

The Grenfell Tower fire was an unimaginable tragedy and an all too painful reminder of Lakanal House in 2009 and the threat from fire and our collective responsibility to improve safety. Following Grenfell Southwark Council has confirmed that none of the 174 tower blocks in Southwark are clad in the same material. While this is welcome news, many residents remain understandably concerned about fire hazards, smoke alarms working properly and what to do in a fire and I continue to liaise closely with Council Leader Peter John, Cllr Stephanie Cryan, Cabinet Member for Housing and Gerri Scott, Director of Housing, to ensure tenants' concerns are addressed urgently. The council are carrying out type 4 fire safety checks (the highest level of check possible) on all 174 Southwark tower blocks by the end of August. Copies of these checks will be available online and hard copies will be sent to residents who request them. The council have agreed to my request to publish block-specific fire safety packs online, which you can access here: <http://www.southwark.gov.uk/housing/safety-in-the-home/fire-safety-information-packs>. My Labour colleagues and I are calling on the Government to give Southwark the money they need to ensure tenants are safe, to end Tory cuts to the Fire Service and to urgently publish the fire regulation review they promised after the 2013 Lakanal fire inquest.

Sierra Leone Mudslide

Sierra Leone has been hit by a dreadful mudslide which has left many dead, many injured, homes unsafe and transport disrupted. There is a vibrant Sierra Leonean community in Camberwell and Peckham and the UK has a longstanding close relationship with Sierra Leone. I wrote to the Secretary of State for International Development, Priti Patel MP, asking her to provide help and money to Sierra Leone and to support our aid agencies there. This is an immediate emergency but it will also leave long term problems which I am urging the government to help resolve.

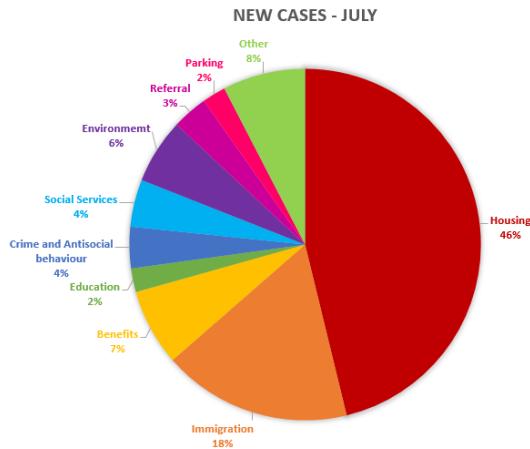
Backing the 'Protect the Protectors Bill'

I'm sponsoring a bill with Chris Bryant MP to make a new law to increase protection for emergency workers such as nurses, police and firefighters from abuse and attacks while they are doing their jobs.



Casework—July

Action on 336 cases



Constituency case studies

A single mother from Peckham Rye contacted me because her Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) was suspended. She could not attend a work capability assessment as she was caring for her terminally ill mother. I wrote to the Department for Work and Pensions on her behalf and they have reconsidered their decision to suspend her claim.

A woman contacted me because her 15 year old daughter, who is Congolese, went on a school trip to Geneva and couldn't return home as she had lost her biometric residence permit (BRP). Her application for a replacement permit was delayed. I urgently wrote to the Home Office and a replacement document was issued and my constituent's daughter is now home.

A Peckham resident contacted me because she was due to travel to Jamaica with her baby son to attend her grandmother's funeral but his passport application was delayed. I made urgent enquiries with HM Passport Office on 22nd June 2017 and the passport was printed and dispatched on the same day.

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