



### In 2018 my constituency priority is the NHS

#### Celebrating the NHS at 70

As we mark the NHS turning 70 it's impossible to look back and overstate just how much its creation by the then Labour government meant to people's lives in Britain in 1948, and still means today. Before its introduction only people who earned enough could see a doctor or get treatment. For the first time in 1948 the NHS meant people who couldn't afford to take their sick children or elderly relatives to the GP suddenly found that they could get the treatment they needed and women who hadn't been able to afford to have their babies in hospital safely could now do so.

70 years on the NHS has grown to 1 million dedicated and compassionate staff, it is a beacon of equality around the world and remains our most cherished national institution. The NHS represents that sense that we all have a duty to each other, we pay in collectively and it is there for us whenever we need it. But after 8 years of Tory government all around us now we see the effect of the cuts. For example at King's College Hospital, which is a fantastic and important hospital for people locally, A & E waiting times are missed, cancer treatment targets are missed, there's been an increase in cancelled operations, and the chair, Sir Bob Kerslake, resigned in December because he said it was impossible to cut the amount government are asking them to cut without affecting patient care. The Prime Minister, Theresa May, claims the Government is spending more than ever on the NHS. But in reality they have cut £20 billion since 2010 and spend 3% less a year than was spent by the last Labour government. When we got back into Government in 1997 we made one of our key 5 pledges cutting waiting times and we trebled investment in the NHS. Soon waiting times were coming down and people were no longer coming to my advice surgery asking for help with cancelled operations or the inability to get on a GP's list. That's why there's such a need for Labour to get back into government. The 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the NHS is a time to recognise that, though healthcare has completely changed, the principles at its foundation are as important as ever. I'm working with Southwark MPs Helen Hayes and Neil Coyle and Southwark Council to use this anniversary year to intensify our support for our local NHS and our demand to the government to give the NHS the money it needs.

#### People suffering mental health crises wait too long for treatment

On 21<sup>st</sup> June I visited psychiatrists at the Maudsley Hospital. It was very worrying to hear from them that when they have someone who is psychotic and paranoid who needs to be sectioned because they're a risk to themselves or others in the community, cuts to policing mean there is a shortage of police to go with doctors to safely take the person to the Maudsley and sometimes they have to wait weeks before they get the treatment they so desperately need. During that time that person and their family suffer terribly and sometimes are at risk of violence. The Maudsley team only section someone if they have tried everything else and that person is in crisis. They cannot wait. I've written to the Minister to demand that she tackle these unacceptable delays and I'm liaising with the police as well.



On 2<sup>nd</sup> July I visited Southwark Clinical Commissioning Group to discuss progress on reducing GP and operation waiting lists, improving children's mental health services and action they're taking to ensure that the governing board of local health bodies like the CCG reflect the diverse community in Camberwell and Peckham. There are no black or minority ethnic people on their board and I am concerned they must be representative of our community at all levels of the organisation.

#### MPs who are new parents must not miss important votes

On 17th July Liberal Democrat MP, Jo Swinson, was "paired" with Tory chairman Brandon Lewis so she could be at home with her new baby son Gabriel during the Trade Bill vote. This should have meant neither her nor Brandon Lewis votes so their absences cancel each other out and this does not unfairly impact the result of the vote or discriminate against her because she has just given birth. But despite this agreement Brandon Lewis MP did turn up and vote with the Government. This shambles should put it beyond doubt that pairing is not the answer for MPs having babies. We're elected as MPs to vote on behalf of constituents and MPs having babies shouldn't lose that right. In [Prime Minister's Questions on 18th July I pressed Theresa May](#) to urgently bring forward a vote on proxy voting for baby leave. There are loads more parliamentary babies in the pipeline and more crucial votes coming up. It's time to sort it out. This one is overdue.



## Harris Academy Peckham visit

On 17<sup>th</sup> July Cllr Jasmine Ali, Southwark Council Cabinet Member for Children and Schools and I met Executive Head at Harris Academy Peckham secondary school, Rebecca Hickey, to discuss progress at the school and working with local parents to improve first preference applications to the school and hear from students on the important local issues they're concerned about like youth violence, mental health and energy drinks. I'm looking forward to the students shortly visiting Parliament to see us at work.



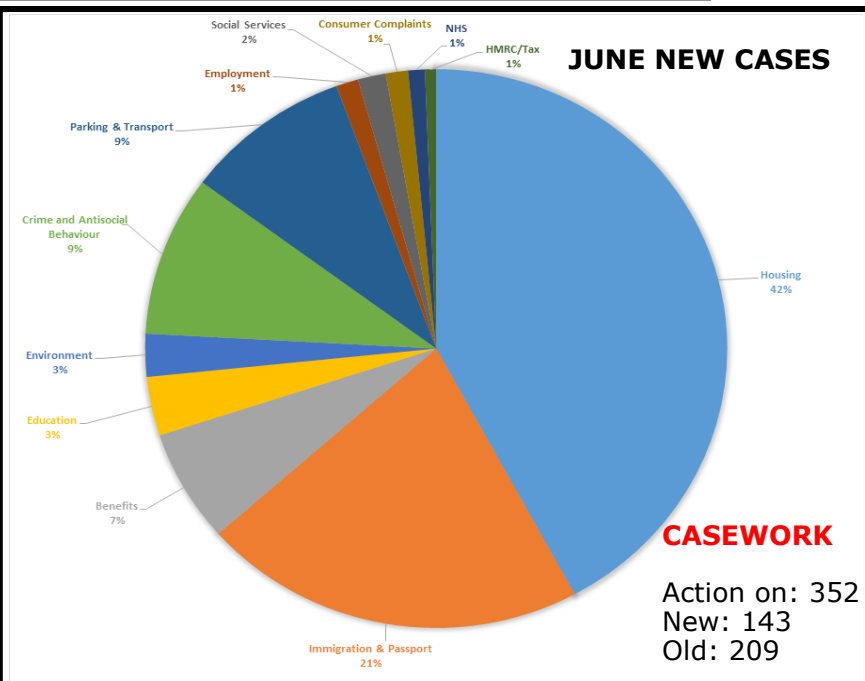
## Bellenden Primary School New Building

Pleased to see award-winning new Bellenden Primary School building on 27<sup>th</sup> June with Cllr Jasmine Ali. Staff & students are doing good work but like so many other schools in Southwark despite struggling with cuts.



## Special delivery!

On 15<sup>th</sup> July Jack and I welcomed our first grandchild, Holly. Both mum and baby are doing well. [The Speaker announced the birth in the Commons on 16<sup>th</sup> July.](#)



## Policy issues update

In June 1,170 Camberwell & Peckham residents wrote to me about policy issues. The top 3 concerns raised were:

1. Increasing scrutiny of government trade deals. I voted to ensure MPs would get a say in negotiations. Disappointingly the Government did not accept this.
2. Call for NHS staff to be exempt from the Home Office visa cap. I backed this call and after months of Labour pressure the Government scrapped the proposal.
3. Extending abortion rights to women in Northern Ireland. This provoked strong feelings on both sides of the issue. View my support for this on the ['Policy Issues'](#) & [Letters to Ministers](#) pages on my website.

## Helping constituents with their problems

\*A mother from Nunhead whose daughter was the victim of a serious sexual assault came to see me. She wanted Southwark Council to rehouse her family for their own safety but 7 months on she has not received a response. I wrote to Michael Scorer, Director of Housing and Modernisation to ask that this family be offered a property in their preferred location as soon as possible.

\*A disabled leaseholder from Peckham that owes £4,335.80 in unpaid service charge contacted me. She applied to the DWP in August 2017 for an Income Based ESA top up that would cover her service charge costs but they did not reply. Bailiffs are now seeking to remove goods from her home to recover the debt. I wrote to the DWP to ask them to review my constituent's benefit entitlement and to back date any money she is owed and I have also asked for a stay of enforcement proceedings. I am awaiting a response.

\*The daughter of a blind 77 year old man with dementia from Peckham came to see me because he was sent a bill for £22,000 by Southwark Council for care services he has been receiving since 2014. I wrote to Jay Stickland, Director of Adult Services at Southwark Council to ask for these charges to be written off as he had never been told he'd be charged for the services he was receiving and had no way of paying. I am awaiting a response.

\*The sister of a 59 year old man from Peckham Rye, with a learning disability came to see me as she would like him to be rehoused in sheltered accommodation nearer to her in Greenwich, as she is his support system. I wrote to Jay Stickland, Director of Adult Services at Southwark Council to reiterate that my constituent's family feel it is in his best interest to move closer to them and I am awaiting a response.



**Contact**  
**Harriet**

**Post**  
House of Commons  
London SW1A 0AA

**Email**  
harmanh@parliament.uk  
**Online**  
www.harrietharman.org

**Phone**  
0207 219  
4218