



In 2018 my constituency priority is the NHS

Outlining devastating impact of Tory cuts on mental health services at #SouthwarkLabour conference

On 15th September I joined Labour members & councillors for Southwark's Borough Conference. I was glad to pay tribute to our councillors & leader Cllr Peter John. The Tories are starving councils of funds, so it's a difficult time to be a councillor. No Labour councillor wants to carry out cuts. It's impressive that despite the difficult climate Southwark Labour remain determined to innovate, improve the lives of local people and quest for equality. I raised the damage the Government is doing to our NHS, in particular mental health services. I am seeing disturbing cases of people who need to be sectioned not getting the treatment they need. Mental health professionals only decide on a section if they believe the person is a danger to themselves or others. It is a high bar and a last resort. So it's imperative that once the decision is made the person is brought in for treatment immediately. But doctors cannot put a section into effect unless they have police with them to gain entry if the person won't let them in, or if they resist. But the police are so overstretched that it is taking weeks to get bookings. Meanwhile the person suffers without treatment, their family suffer and are in danger and they are a threat to the public. One 20 year old man with psychosis who is agitated, sexual towards his mother and violent was referred to be sectioned on 10th July but because there was no police team available this can't happen until 28th September. Then there's a 23 year old man, who is paranoid with a history of verbal and physical aggression towards others, referred to be sectioned by the Maudsley on 21st August, but they've still got no date at all for safely taking him to hospital. Often desperate family or neighbours call 999 and emergency services end up dealing with the situation because the system is not properly resourced. In Opposition we have to expose what is actually happening as a result of the inhumane, unfair and reckless Tory cuts to public services. The only solution is a Labour government, properly funding our NHS. I look forward to working with local members as we strive for this.



Government must restore Legal Aid funding

On 11th September I spoke to charities, lawyers, MPs and members of the public about the Joint Committee on Human Rights' campaign against Legal Aid cuts at the [All-Party Parliamentary Group on Legal Aid](#), chaired by Labour MP Karen Buck. The JCHR, which I chair, recently carried out an [inquiry on the inability for most people to enforce their rights](#). While in 1979 77% of people were eligible for Civil Legal Aid, now only 25% of people are. This is due to Legal Aid cuts, which have led to a lack of Legal Aid lawyers in many areas, no Legal Aid for some proceedings e.g. inquests, and the government's drumbeat of criticism of claimants. It is wrong that now you cannot enforce your rights or challenge unfairness against you unless you have money. The JCHR is calling on the Government to increase the number of people eligible for Legal Aid, at least to include those who qualify for tax credits and benefits and we proposed



there should be Legal Aid for representation at inquests. In the 2013 Lakanal House inquest all the public services- fire, ambulance, council- had QCs and solicitors at public expense. The only people unrepresented were the tenants in the neighbouring identical block who had to watch their neighbours' children being brought out in body bags and put their own children to bed every night worried about their safety. The Government must ensure there is "equality of

arms". I'm working with Jeremy Lefroy MP to table an amendment to the next available Bill to require public bodies to pay 10% of what they're paying for their own lawyers towards lawyers for members of the public with an interest but no legal representation.

Women MPs of the World Conference—8th November

To mark 100 years since the first women in this country won the right to stand for parliament, we are holding the first ever Women MPs of the World Conference on 8th November. MPs have agreed that it will be held in the historic chamber of the House of Commons. Imagine how it will look when the green benches of the Commons are crammed with women from over 100 countries from Sierra Leone, to Nigeria, Pakistan, Kenya, Japan, Peru, Australia and the USA - so different to how our Commons usually looks. Women have fought their way into parliaments in nearly every country in the world. But we are still only relatively recent arrivals on the political scene, still pioneers in male-dominated parliaments. We want not only to be in parliaments but to share power equally and be strong enough to make a real difference for women in our countries. So we'll be discussing policy ideas for helping women and girls and how to change rules to reflect that women are now in parliaments too. It will show that as we acknowledge the progress made by women in the UK, we recognise that women are striving for the same progress in every country - and we support them. The public gallery will be opened up to the public and community groups to watch debates. So put that date in your diary.. ***Tweet us & find out more [here](#). #WomenMPsoftheWorld***

International Congress of Parliamentary Women's Caucuses—Dublin

On 10th September I had the privilege of speaking at an event which brought together women MPs from more than 40 countries, including Argentina, Malawi, Mongolia, New Zealand, Pakistan and the US to discuss challenges facing women and how parliamentarians can address them. I talked about fighting the misogyny backlash, pressing forward on equal pay, baby leave for MPs and why the next leader of the Labour Party must be a woman.

You can watch my speech [here](#).



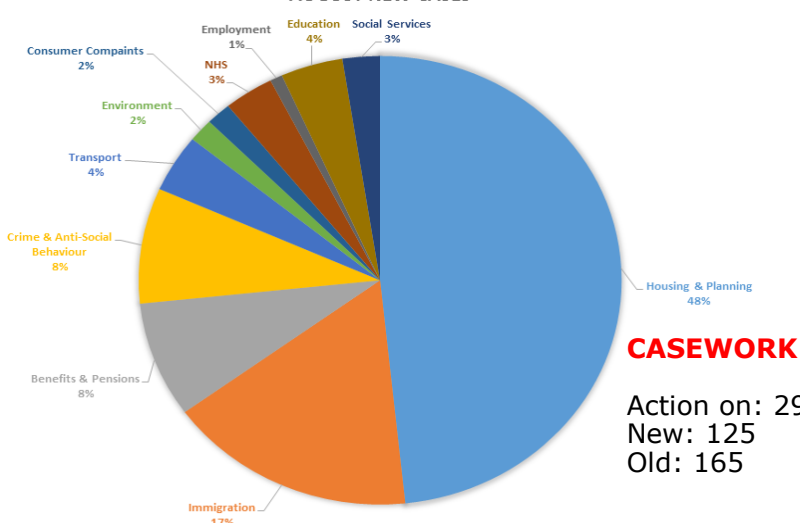
In Parliament

*I welcome the government plans for a new Victims' Law, but it must also include new laws to end the injustice of cross-examination of rape victims on their previous sexual history. [My question to Justice Minister Edward Argar MP.](#)

*Following my cross-party campaign with Jo Swinson MP, Maria Miller MP and Hannah Bardell MP, the Leader of the House Andrea Leadsom MP announced on 13th September that the Government will bring forward rule changes for proxy voting for MPs on maternity leave! The House is due to vote next month. [Read my speech here.](#)

*All MPs were appalled at the harassment of Jacob Rees Mogg MP's children. This isn't free speech or the right to protest. It's intimidation and undermines our democracy. [I'm calling for a Speaker's Conference & cross-party action.](#)

AUGUST NEW CASES



Policy issues update

In August 394 Camberwell & Peckham residents wrote to me about policy issues. The top 3 concerns raised were:

1. Stop the Department for Work & Pensions scrapping the Pensions Dashboard where people keep track of their pensions in 1 place.
2. Back a People's Vote on the Government's Brexit deal.
3. Ensure environmental standards are not watered down after Brexit.

Read my position on these issues and more on the '[Policy Issues](#)' & [Letters to Ministers](#) pages on my website. Following the controversy about anti-Semitism in the Labour Party I wrote to all local members. You can read my email [here](#).

Helping constituents with their problems

*In May/June 2018 I reported that I had taken up the case of a homeless man whose recovery from heart disease was being hindered by having to live in hostel accommodation and move frequently. He has now moved in to a sheltered council flat.

*A British man from Camberwell contacted me because he was having difficulties getting another copy of a No Trace Marriage letter from the Home Office. He is due to marry his Irish fiancée in Ireland later this month and is required to provide this letter, proving to the Irish authorities he is not already married. I wrote to the Home Office and asked for copy of this letter to be sent to him as soon as possible. He has received it and is now preparing to get married.

*A young Iranian man living in Camberwell asked for my help to expedite his application for leave to remain in the UK to enable him to begin his pharmacy studies at the University of Reading. I wrote to the Home Office and asked for his application to be considered as soon as possible. It was granted and he is preparing to start his pharmacy degree this term.

*The Grounds Keeper at Ilderton Primary School contacted me about a dangerous uncovered drain just outside the school gate. He had reported it to the council but nothing had been done. He feared students would get seriously hurt if the drain was not covered before the start of the new school term. I wrote to the council to ask for the repairs to be carried out urgently and the drain has now been covered.



I hope all those going from Camberwell and Peckham have a good Labour conference in Liverpool. With the recent birth of my first grandchild and my mother ill in hospital, I won't be going this year.

Contact
Harriet

Post
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

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

Phone
0207 219
4218



@HarrietHarman

