

Rt Hon Harriet Harman QC MP
Member of Parliament for Camberwell and Peckham
Mother of the House of Commons

Coronavirus Crisis Parliamentary Report 9

22nd December 2020



CORONAVIRUS TIER 4

STAY AT HOME

gov.uk/coronavirus

If you live in a Tier 4 area, you cannot join or form a Christmas bubble. You must not leave or be outside of your home except for specific purposes.

MEETING FRIENDS AND FAMILY No household mixing, aside from support bubbles and two people meeting in public outdoor spaces.	BARS, PUBS AND RESTAURANTS Hospitality closed, aside from sales by takeaway, drive-through or delivery.	RETAIL Essential shops can open. Non-essential retail must close and can only open for click-and-collect and delivery.	WORK AND BUSINESS Everyone must work from home unless they are unable to do so.
EDUCATION Early years settings, schools, colleges and universities open during term time. Registered childcare, other supervised activities for childcare purposes, and childcare bubbles permitted.	INDOOR LEISURE Closed.	ACCOMMODATION Closed (with limited exceptions).	PERSONAL CARE Closed.
OVERNIGHT STAYS You must not stay overnight away from home. Limited exceptions apply.	WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS Funerals of up to 30 people permitted. Wakes and other linked ceremonial events can continue in a group of up to six. Weddings of up to six can continue in exceptional circumstances.	ENTERTAINMENT Indoor entertainment closed. Some outdoor attractions may remain open.	PLACES OF WORSHIP Open for private prayer and communal worship, but cannot interact with anyone outside household or support bubble.
TRAVELLING You must stay at home and only travel for work, education or other legally permitted reasons. If you must travel, you should stay local, and reduce the number of journeys you make. You must not leave a Tier 4 area or stay overnight away from home. Residents in Tiers 1 - 3 should not enter Tier 4 areas. Do not travel abroad if you live in a Tier 4 area unless an exemption applies.	EXERCISE You can leave your home to exercise by yourself, with your household or support bubble, or with one person from another household. Outdoor sport allowed but gatherings limit applies except for youth and disabled sport.	RESIDENTIAL CARE You can visit relatives in care homes with COVID-secure arrangements such as substantial screens, visiting pods, and window visits.	CLINICALLY EXTREMELY VULNERABLE The Clinically Extremely Vulnerable are advised to stay at home as much as possible, except to go outdoors for exercise or to attend health appointments.

For support and more information visit:
gov.uk/coronavirus





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This is my ninth report during the COVID crisis in which I:

- share with you how I'm seeking to go about my work as MP during this coronavirus crisis,
- hear from you if you agree with how I'm approaching things and
- what further issues you think I should be addressing.

I, and my office team, continue to help constituents and to raise issues with the government or with agencies if they do not appear to have them on their agenda. Where they are aware of problems but appear to be taking too long to solve them I am pressuring government to act more speedily.

I continue to support the public health guidance issued by Public Health England.

Haniel Hamman

The COVID pandemic remains frightening and still threatens our health and economic wellbeing. But it has brought out the best in so many, so here's my top 10 I want to personally thank.



December 2020

1. NHS staff who went into work even when there weren't enough masks and personal protective equipment to guarantee their safety. They saved all those they could and held the hands of those who passed away. All the NHS stepped up from the cleaners to the student nurses who had to work in the Intensive Care Unit.
2. Our care home and homecare staff looking after the elderly and disabled. Like NHS staff working without proper PPE to start with. This pandemic should be the reminder, if anyone needed it, that this should not be low paid but is vital highly skilled work.
3. The Council staff who emptied our bins and carried on all the essential services, from cleaning our streets to safeguarding children at risk. My doorstep claps were for them too.
4. Our scientists. If anything can save us from this pandemic, it's the vaccine. It was developed by scientists in Britain and all over the world working at breakneck speed. I can't wait for my jab. Let's hear no more disparagement of experts. These expert scientists are literally going to save our lives.
5. The food banks and all the shops and individuals who donated to them and volunteers who run them. It shouldn't be necessary, but with so many losing some or all of their income and with the government compensation so woefully inadequate the food banks have been a lifeline. And they've made sure that those coming to get food for their families not only get the very best quality food but keep their dignity. The shame is on the government for failing to

ensure people have enough money to eat, not on those who despite working hard have fallen through the net.

6. Local businesses who've responded to the endless rule changes and changed what they do in order to keep their employees in work. I hope they are all able to carry on and I'm pressing the government to increase the help for local businesses. It would be a travesty if even more brilliant local businesses go to the wall because they can't operate during the lockdown. This is especially the case for the restaurants, bars and cafes and our vibrant artistic and creative community here in Southwark. We need our arts and I will be demanding that at the end of this the government properly invest in our culture.
7. Our teachers and all the staff who have kept our schools open and who've kept children safe in school and taught them online at home. I'm fighting for better compensation for all the extra costs and more laptops for the kids in families who don't have the devices they need for home learning online.
8. Our shop workers, providing a vital public service we all rely on, have faced angry and frustrated shoppers complaining about queuing and shortages. I'm grateful for their patience and resilience. And let's not forget those delivery drivers who've got supplies out including to those who have been shielding and not able to leave home.
9. Our transport staff who went out to work to keep the buses and trains going when everyone else who could was working from home.
10. Our postal workers who delivered our post everyday even at the height of lockdown.

And to my incredible parliamentary office team who helped constituents stranded abroad to get back home at the start of the pandemic, help with Universal Credit claims, housing, immigration and all the other problems which the pandemic is making worse.

Thank you all so much. The spirit of the people of Southwark is inspiring. Happy Christmas and let's hope for a very much better 2021.

Constituency problems – update

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to bring many new problems to people in Camberwell and Peckham and make many pre-existing problems worse. So there continues to be an increase in the number of constituents seeking my help. Those who already had financial problems are finding that the COVID-19 crisis only makes them worse. My casework team continue to deal with pre-existing problems as well as the new COVID-19 problems. I have taken action on behalf of **4,750** constituents from 1st March – 30th November.

So far since the start of 2020, I have recouped **£75,002.61** for constituents who have requested my assistance. This includes underpaid benefit payments, Coronavirus business grants for local business owners, waived HMRC penalties and compensation for errors and delays from housing associations and the Home Office.

Case summaries:

- I was contacted by several residents from Don Phelan Close regarding a major power outage lasting over a week. I urgently contacted Southwark Council on their behalf and the issue has been fixed.
- A Peckham woman wrote to me after accidentally damaging the toilet in her property. She did not have the financial means to repair the toilet herself and had been told by Southwark Council that the repair was her responsibility. I wrote to Southwark Council explaining that she was unemployed and was unable to afford the repair and the Council agreed to fit a new toilet at the property.
- I was contacted by a doctor because he needed help with his family's travel arrangements. His wife and children had received their Tier-2 Visa and were due to join him in Camberwell from Lebanon, but due to the ongoing coronavirus crisis they were unable to travel within the specified time period. Their passports were being held in the Beirut Visa Application Centre at the time of the catastrophic Beirut explosion, leading to increased distress and uncertainty. I contacted UKVI to request that the family's travel window be extended and to request that their documents be returned. The family have since been reunited in Camberwell.
- A man from Dulwich Hill contacted me upon discovering that the Council was charging him for four garden waste bins even though he only had the one. I wrote to Southwark Council and the constituent was refunded the full £165 overpayment.
- I was contacted by a Camberwell Green man who had been without hot water in his property for over three weeks. This resulted in him being unable to adequately bathe after being discharged from hospital following an operation. I urgently contacted Peabody Housing to ask them to restore the hot water to the property and requested that he be compensated for the stress and inconvenience caused by this period without hot water. The hot water has been restored, and I am continuing to pursue compensation for the constituent.
- I was contacted by the partner of a Camberwell man who required assistance with his application for further Leave to Remain as a civil partner. He had been waiting seven months for a response, significantly longer than the eight weeks that the Home Office aim to decide this category of application within. I wrote to the Home Office on his behalf, and he has been granted Leave to Remain until 2023.
- I received an email from a local older persons Charity as they needed help with a financial disagreement with Southwark Council. I wrote to Southwark Council to see whether an amicable resolution could be achieved. After further consultation, a resolution was reached and the Charity were very pleased with the outcome.
- I was contacted by the sister of a young boy at risk of gang violence. Due to the urgent situation the family want to change the boy's school and move to a property outside of Southwark. I am in contact with Southwark Council, the

Metropolitan Police, and the boy's school to ensure that the family get the support they need.

- A Peckham woman contacted me as she had been denied access to a financial current account provided by 'Pockit'. 'Pockit' had suspended her account without providing an explanation, leaving her unable to access her money and pay for her urgent medical expenses. Although the constituent had provided the information and documentation requested by 'Pockit' to unlock the account weeks later she was still not granted access. I contacted 'Pockit' on the constituent's behalf and she has now been granted access to her account.

I have received **9,564** emails from constituents on policy issues between 1st March & 30th November, the majority relating to COVID-19. Other issues raised since my eighth report:

- #EndOurCladdingScandal Campaign
- Campaign to ban import of animal fur to the UK
- Opposition to the scheduled 2nd December Jamaica deportation charter flight
- Internal Market Bill and support for Labour attempts to improve the bill
- Calls to remove private companies from track and trace
- No-one should be punished for being homeless campaign, opposing rough sleeping from being grounds to refuse or cancel right to remain
- Support for hospitality businesses impacted by Tier system
- Opposition to cutting foreign aid
- Impact of coronavirus on people affected by dementia and Alzheimer's
- Church closures due to coronavirus

'As someone who's over 70 I will be amongst the first offered the vaccine and I will jump at the chance'



November 27

There is a huge focus on Christmas, understandably. We've had nine long months of restrictions, writes Harriet Harman MP...

And Christmas is the most important time of the year for families to get together even for the many people in Southwark who still have to work across the Christmas period because they are providing vital services. To ensure that we are able to get together with family members who don't live with us, we need to ensure that we keep strictly to the regulations.



The infection level is coming down, but if we let down our guard it will start going up again and we will not be able to have the temporary relaxation in the rules we are all hoping for. It's true to say that the virus does not recognise it's Christmas!

It seems inevitable that after Christmas we'll have to put on the brakes again to compensate for the progress the virus will have made during the temporary lockdown. So the government must keep the financial support going for all

those who have been unable to work during the restrictions or whose work has been curtailed.

Some people have not stayed at home as they should do when they've come into contact with someone who's tested positive because they can't afford the loss of income from not going to work. So, the government have got to plug the gaps for all those who fall outside the compensation scheme to make sure that businesses can survive and that people can afford to stay home to protect others.

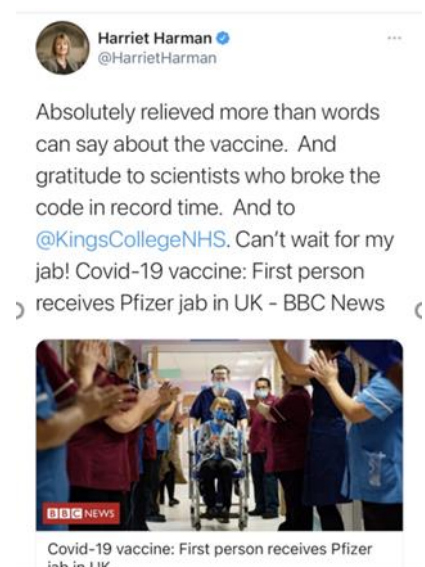
But the restrictions seem more bearable when the solution is in sight. And that is a vaccine which will protect us from getting ill and prevent the disease from spreading.

The scientists in Oxford and elsewhere have worked miracles. The first people offered the vaccine in December will be those working in the health and caring services. Most will jump at the chance to make themselves, their families and those they care for safe. But I hope all will.

The more of us who have the vaccine the safer everyone will be. So when we have the vaccine we are doing something not just for ourselves but for our local community. We need all those who can be vaccinated to do so in order to protect those who have those rare health conditions which mean they can't be vaccinated.

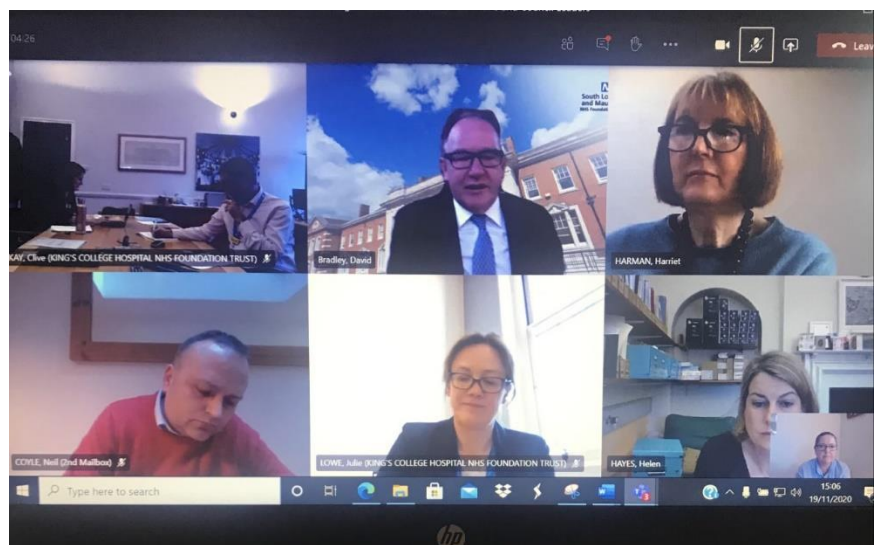
We've got no right to refuse the vaccine if our doing so means continued risk for someone who can't have the vaccine. The vaccine is safe. It's been rigorously tested. And it works.

As someone who's over 70 I will be amongst the first offered the vaccine and I will jump at the chance. If we all do, this awful period can be put behind us and we can start to rebuild.



Joint briefing with Kings College Hospital and South London & Maudsley (SLaM) - Winter preparations

I met with the Chief Executive of Kings Hospital, Clive Kay and Chief Executive of SLaM, David Bradley along with Southwark MPs Neil Coyle and Helen Hayes to get important updates on testing rollout for staff, PPE levels, Track & Trace staffing levels due to self-isolation, and winter preparations.



We also discussed the plans for the rollout of the mass vaccination programme and the importance of getting the message out to local people clearly and concisely when the time comes for each group.



King's College NHS
@KingsCollegeNHS

We are able to offer the COVID-19 vaccination to King's and PRUH patients who are aged 80 years and over. To book an appointment, please contact the King's team on 02032999844, or contact the PRUH on 01689 866100. We are not offering a walk in service.

1:02 PM · Dec 20, 2020 · Twitter Web App

A message to all the staff of KCH and SLaM NHS Foundation Trusts

Neil Coyle and I sent out the following message to all staff of Kings College Hospital and SLaM to thank them for their amazing efforts in this extraordinary time.

Thank you

As MPs for Southwark we know that King's College Hospital and the South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trusts are world class institutions, providing globally recognised first class services and support day in, day out through your wonderful teams. But this year, we are even more extraordinarily proud of you all and all you have done for everyone in our constituencies and borough, above and beyond the highest levels of services you provide for the people of Southwark and wider afield every single day of every year.

We are acutely aware that this year has been hugely difficult, with great risks and an uncertain outlook when Covid initially struck. The scale of the task you faced was without precedent and we are immensely thankful for all the hard work and sacrifice which it has taken your teams to meet this challenge head on.

You could not have amazed us more at how quickly, professionally and skilfully your teams responded to the pandemic. This is all despite the organisational and logistical issues with personal protective equipment and before knowing a vaccine could possibly be created this year. We hope any inquiry into the response and treatment of covid covers the amazing work of your teams and ensures we are all in a stronger position to manage any future pandemic and help prevent people avoidably losing their lives.

We are aware of the heart-breaking loss of lives that has brought tragedy to families across our community, but we also know that your teams have strived to prevent every death and to protect and serve every patient



David Bradley
@CEO_DavidB

Thank you @HarrietHarman & @coyleneil for the letter of support and thanks that you have sent to all our staff @MaudsleyNHS - its really appreciated. Thank you.



5:12 PM · Dec 21, 2020 · Twitter Web App

you saw, at times in very difficult circumstances.

We also hope to see the support the public has shown for our NHS throughout this crisis recognised in better Government resources and support for your teams here and across the country. In the meantime, and especially in the run up to Christmas, we send you our love, support and best wishes, and we thank you again for everything you've done to save lives and protect our communities.

With every best wish and our gratitude once again.

Harriet Harman MP and Neil Coyle MP

Support for the Royal College of Nursing 'Fair Pay for Nursing Campaign'

42 Camberwell and Peckham RCN members contacted me to share their concerns about the issues facing the nursing profession and to ask for my support for the RCN's 'Fair Pay for Nursing Campaign'.

Throughout the pandemic, the country has witnessed the most impressive demonstration of nursing, seeing it as a highly skilled profession deserving of fair pay.

During a listening event of nursing staff voices from across South East London I heard directly from nurses, student nurses, midwives and nursing support workers about their experiences particularly of working during COVID-19.

 Lisa RCN London
@LisaRCNLDN

It's been a busy evening @RCN London. Thank you to members who joined us and shared their experiences of nursing during COVID-19 with South London MPs @HarrietHarman, @BellRibeiroAddy, @CliveEfford, @abenaopp, @FloEshalomi and @helenhayes_.

Its time for #FairPayForNursing now.

London RCN branch, for hosting this important meeting.

They shared their experiences and stories of inadequate PPE levels at the start of the pandemic, initial concern about nursing to patient ratios, financial and staffing retention and there was real worry about the morale and mental health of nursing staff as a whole.

I thanked them for their tireless work and offered them my full support for the campaign for fairer pay and I have agreed to meet them again in the New Year to continue to offer them my full support.

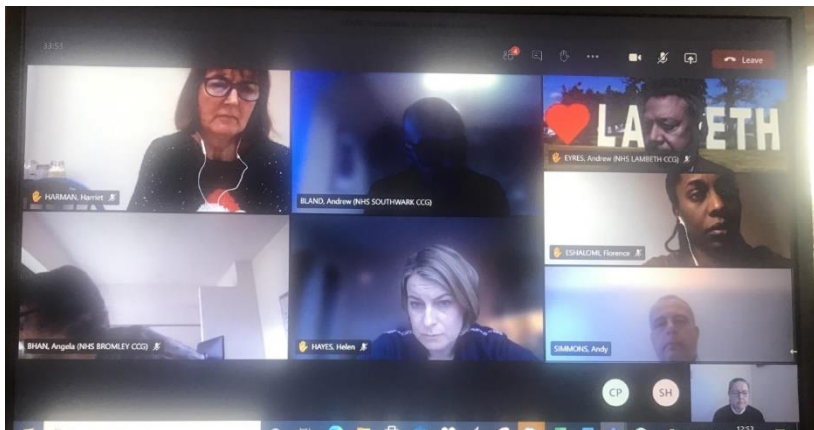
My thanks to Camberwell and Peckham constituent, Laura Duffell, Chair of the South

 Harriet Harman
@HarrietHarman

I & sth london Labour MPs pledged 100% support @RCNLondon campaign Fair Pay for Nurses. We heard from student nurse. Student nurses on COVID front line in ICU yet burdened w £60k debt. Let's have amnesty for student nurse debt for those who served on COVID front line !



Briefing with the South East London Clinical Commissioning Group – Mass vaccination program



I also attended an important briefing hosted by the South East London CCG on the plans for the mass rollout of the vaccination program.

Key message was to ensure that communication is vital in ensuring that all people have access and opportunity to get the vaccine when their turn comes.

Albrighton Community Fridge Visit

The Albrighton Community Fridge on the East Dulwich Estate provides food and other essentials to more than 1,300 people each week.

In March 2020, the centre became a Covid-Food Hub and the Community Fridge ramped up with more volunteers, longer opening hours, and a much wider range of goods.

The fridge provides food and other essentials to an average of 360 households per week — that's a total of over 900 adults and more than 400 children.

The fridge offers fresh fruit and vegetables, hot meals, frozen meat, bread, tinned goods and a limited selection of toiletries and sanitary products.

Inspiring to see generosity of donations and commitment of volunteers [@albrightonse22](#). But sad that it's so needed! [#CommunityFridge](#) [#FillTheFridge](#)



My special thanks to Steve Hedger, Chair of the East Dulwich Estate Tenants & Residents Association, Bayoh Conteh, Secretary of the East Dulwich Estate Tenants & Residents Association and all of the volunteers at the Fridge.

The new American Garden in Peckham Rye Park

The American Garden is a terrific new addition to Peckham Rye Park and I was delighted to join the tree planting ceremony in celebration.

My huge thanks go to Nancy Coleman-Frank and all the teams that made the creation of the American Garden possible.

Peckham Rye Park is a magnet for local people. They come to enjoy themselves outdoors, to exercise, to be with family & friends and to see the wonderful nature.

The whole community will get to enjoy the American Garden and the great thing about planting new trees is that they take a long term view so everyone will get to see them grow over the years to come.



Harriet Harman
@HarrietHarman

Great to join @PeckhamRyePark celebrating work of Nancy Coleman-Frank, @RoseCllr @lb_southwark & Liz Brough in planting the new American garden 🌳
@USAmbUK 🌍 #EarthDay50



Christmas visit to Camberwell Delivery Office

Every year I visit the hardworking and dedicated post office team at Camberwell Delivery Office to say thank you at the busiest time of the year. Unfortunately, due to Covid restrictions visits have been postponed until it is safe for everyone to do so.

My huge thanks go to all the postal keyworkers in Camberwell and Peckham who have been doing their absolute best to keep everyone in touch with their families during this challenging time.



All photos are pre pandemic

The Joint Committee on Human Rights hears from the Lord Chancellor about the Government's human rights plans

On Wednesday 18 November the Joint Committee on Human Rights heard from The Rt Hon Robert Buckland QC MP, Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice, about the Government's plans to 'update' the human rights act, judicial review and his role in upholding human rights law.

Topics included:

- The Government plans to 'update' the Human Rights Act;
- The Government's plans on Judicial Review;
- The Government's plans on reform of the Supreme Court;
- The Government's plans to address the unequal protection of human rights of black people;
- The Government's approach to ensuring human rights compliance; and
- The role of the Lord Chancellor in upholding the rule of law, in particular in light of recent criticisms of the rule of law, human rights and the legal profession by members of the Cabinet.



You can watch the session on Parliament TV [here](#).

Human rights implications of long lockdown inquiry launched

In order to seek to control the impact of Covid-19, the Government has introduced successive restrictive measures, with varying degrees of severity, both nationally and locally. The impact of these measures has been widely felt, and some groups have been more affected than others.

As part of the ongoing work into the Government's response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Joint Committee on Human Rights is examining the impact of lockdown restrictions on human rights and whether those measures only interfere with human rights to the extent that is necessary and proportionate. In particular, we are interested in the impact of long lockdown on certain communities.



Read the call for evidence and submit your views here [committees.parliament.uk/call-for-evidence...](https://committees.parliament.uk/call-for-evidence/)



The Committee is seeking views on:

- The impact of lockdown on university students. Have interferences with students' right to liberty and right to private and family life been proportionate? Have the fixed penalty notices issued to students been proportionate?
- The impact of lockdown on the freedom of religion and belief, and in particular on collective worship. Have interferences with the freedom of religion and belief been proportionate?
- Care Home and Hospital Visits. Has current Government guidance struck the correct balance between the right to private and family life and the right to life? Is it being applied fairly and consistently in practice?
- The human rights impacts of extended lockdown restrictions on those areas subjected to the most stringent, lasting, lockdown conditions. What have been

the human rights impacts on family life and mental health for those communities? Are there ways that these rights might be better addressed?

- Policing of Lockdown. Is the use of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) for lockdown offences proportionate, fair and non-discriminatory? Is it clear why FPNs have been issued and are there adequate ways to seek a review or appeal of an FPN? Are the amounts of FPN fines proportionate? Has there been a disproportionate impact on certain groups?
- The right to protest and lockdown. How have lockdown restrictions affected the right to protest? Has the correct balance been struck.

Inquiry launch: Freedom of Expression

Freedom of expression is an essential foundation of democratic society, guaranteed by the common law and by Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

The Joint Committee on Human Rights will investigate this issue. Our inquiry will focus on the following questions:

- Does hate speech law need to be updated or clarified as shifting social attitudes lead some to consider commonly held views hateful?
- Does current police guidance and practice on hate speech law help promote freedom of expression?
- Is there a need to review the wording and application of Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) legislation?
- What obligations does an employee have to their employer when expressing views on social media, and to what extent can, and should, employers respond to what their employees say on these platforms?
- Is greater clarity required to ensure the law is understood and fair?
- How has the situation changed in universities in the two years since the Committee's report on the issue?
- Does everyone have equal protection of their right to freedom of expression?



Committee take evidence on freedom of expression

The Joint Committee on Human Rights held its introductory evidence session for its inquiry into freedom of expression, looking at issues such as whether everyone has freedom of speech, who has it and who doesn't, freedom of speech in universities, the law relating to hate speech and freedom of expression for employees.

Witnesses:

- Alan Rusbridger, former editor of the Guardian (1995 – 2015), Chair of the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, Principal of Lady Margaret Hall Oxford



- Ruth Smeeth, CEO Index on Censorship
- Jim Killock, CEO, Open Rights Group

The Committee asked about:

- Whether freedom of expression is under threat – and if it is, whose freedom of expression is under threat;
- Diversity of opinion in the public sphere;
- The role of social media platforms in guaranteeing freedom of expression and protecting people from abuse;
- Freedom of expression and academic freedom at universities;
- Hate speech law; and
- Employment and freedom of expression.

You can watch the session [here](#).

Liz Truss is trying to set up a hierarchy of suffering and turn back the clock on 40 years of equalities progress



In a speech today, Women and Equality Minister, Liz Truss says we should “switch focus from race and gender” to poverty and geographical disparities. Race, sexuality and gender are supposedly “fashionable” issues under the dominance of “identity politics, loud lobby groups and the idea of lived experience”.

This signals an attack on the consensus which has been gaining ground over the last 40 years that regards all equality and discrimination as bad. That consensus has seen great progress made though still much further to go. Instead of seeking to tackle prejudice and discrimination irrespective of on what it is based, Liz Truss sews disunity amongst those who suffer from different forms of inequality and sets up a divisive hierarchy. No-one should have to put up with any sort of discrimination, prejudice or oppression no matter what its cause. The only people who benefit from the argument about whether poverty, racism or sexism is worse are those who care about none of those things. Arguing that you are dealing with class discrimination is no basis to argue against tackling homophobia or disability discrimination. Especially when you aren't dealing with class discrimination either.

You can't wave away racism against a black man on the grounds that it doesn't matter because he's middle class.

Setting the issue of poverty against sex discrimination is wrong in principle because both are bad. But also because women make up most of the low paid and most of those at risk of redundancy. Covid has made this, as so much else, clear. The biggest greatest beneficiaries from the Equal Pay Act were low paid women. And it was women who got the biggest pay rise from the National Minimum



5:17 PM · Dec 17, 2020 · Twitter Web App

Wage. The fights for women's equality and against poverty have always been the same.

Liz Truss says that she wants to give individuals more control over their own lives. That is exactly what the right to work part time and greater maternity pay and leave does. And that needs to be extended. Race and sex discrimination robs people of exactly that self-determination to which all should be entitled on an equal footing. You cannot be free in your own life if you're circumscribed by discrimination.

Discrimination, whether based on class or anything else, is bad for the individual, denying them their human rights. It's bad for families when the man rules and the woman has no say. It is bad for society too. A society where people are oppressed and subjected to prejudice is not at ease with itself. It's bad for the economy. Successful economies are those which draw on the talents of all their citizens irrespective of whether they are black or white, straight or gay, women or men.

The entrenched culture of discrimination is evident in the fact that 8 out of 10 employers still pay their women employees less per hour than their men. That is exposed by the Equality Act pay transparency law which requires employers to publish their gender pay gap. You have to recognise that is discrimination unless you are labouring under the belief that men are harder working, more committed and more intelligent than women. But you've got to do more than just see it, you've got to take action to change it.

The reality is that the quest to tackle inequality on the grounds of class, race or gender are different strands but all are the same cause. They all need government action to strip away the obstacles which hold people back and expose the discrimination which demeans them.

It was women Labour MPs who fought to put childcare on to the public policy agenda and make it important. Those who gained most from government support for childcare have been low-income women and their families. And it is the low paid, particularly women, who'll suffer most from this government's public sector pay freeze.

The recognition that it is all the same cause was embodied in the very first clause of Labour's Equality Act. Section 1 placed a duty on all public authorities to make every decision in a way that narrowed the gap between rich and poor. Inevitably, subsequent Tory governments have failed to implement it and it lies dormant on the statute book. The reality is that Liz Truss is no more likely to bring s1 into force than she is do anything else to tackle the poverty and class inequality which thrives under Tory Governments.



Pippa Crerar
@PippaCrerar

Replying to @PippaCrerar

Truss wants to switch focus from race & gender to poverty & geographical disparities.

Very first clause of Equality Act places duty on all public authorities to make every decision in way that narrows gap between rich & poor.

BUT Tory governments have failed to implement it

5:21 PM · Dec 17, 2020 · Twitter Web App

Liz Truss was part of a generation of women who were able to get into parliament precisely because of the argument that parliament needed more women and could not call itself representative when it was 97% men - as it was when I joined in 1982.

She will give no backing to those striving against discrimination and prejudice. She will legitimise those who want to turn the clock back and she will do nothing about tackling the class division either. It is deplorable, but telling, that our new Minister for Women and Equality will be popular with all those hate women's rights and want no change in race or class inequality.

Working differently!

I and my staff team are continuing to work remotely. I remain enormously grateful to my dedicated team who are diligently continuing to help my constituents, supporting my work as an MP and as chair of the Human Rights Committee. They have overcome technology issues and made their homes into their offices to continue their work.

Coronavirus Help and Support

Southwark Council:

- [General information on Coronavirus](#)
- [Covid-19: What can you do to help](#)
- [Financial support for residents](#)
- [Food access](#)
- [Coronavirus housing advice](#)
- [Covid-19: Support and information for businesses and employers](#)
- [Southwark COVID-19 community grants](#)
- [Voluntary sector help and advice on Coronavirus](#)
- [Impact on council services](#)
- [Advice on potential coronavirus related scams](#)

Bereavement support:

- The government has published a [bereavement support leaflet](#) to help those who have lost a loved one. The leaflet shares information to help bereaved families, friends, or next of kin make important decisions during this national emergency, sets out what to expect next, and signposts the extra help and support that is available.

Citizens Advice – Benefit advice:

- <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/coronavirus-check-what-benefits-you-can-get/>

Government business advice:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19>
- Government's Business Support Helpline on 0300 456 3565, Monday to Friday, 9am to 6pm.

HMRC:

- [helpline for businesses and self-employed people who are concerned about their tax](#) due to COVID-19.
- 08000 241222, Monday to Friday, 8am to 4pm.

Domestic violence help and support:

- [Solace Women's Aid](#) - Advice Line - 0808 802 5565
- Monday - Friday 10am - 4pm. Additional 6pm - 8pm on Tuesdays.
- Email: advice@solacewomensaid.org

Mental health help and support:

- [Lambeth and Southwark Mind](#)
07871 940 763 - 8am to 3pm Monday, Tuesday and Thursday
- [Samaritans](#) - 116 123 - 24/7

Legal advice

- [Southwark Law Centre](#)
- [Citizens Advice Southwark](#) has resumed drop-in sessions from 9.30 am to 4.00 pm 5 days a week at:
 - Peckham - 97 Peckham High Street, SE15 5RS
 - Bermondsey - 8 Market Place, Southwark Park Road, SE16 3UQ
 - Walworth - 6-8 Westmoreland Road, Walworth, SE17 2AY



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