

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

Parliamentary Annual Report 2020/2021

12th July 2021



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Introduction

This annual report describes my work as MP for Camberwell and Peckham at a time like no other. Nothing has been unaffected by the Covid pandemic. The problems with poor housing and insufficient income have been exacerbated by Covid and its lockdowns. Health and income inequalities have widened.

It has been important as never before to hold the government to account as they make decisions which affect not just people's livelihoods but also their lives. Yet Westminster was closed for many months and though re-opened is still far from normal. Remote questioning of Ministers and speaking in debates renders parliament a pale shadow of its usual self.

So as my ability to hold the government to account, to strive for my constituents and represent them has been restrained as never before, I and my team have found, in the pandemic, new ways to be an MP and new issues to contend with.

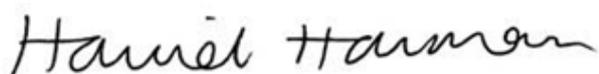
As the pandemic hit dozens of my constituents found themselves thousands of miles from home, stranded and unable to get back their families. My casework team, working from their bedrooms at home and I had to badger High Commissions in different parts of the world and chastise airlines who by doubling their fares prevented my constituents getting home.

My contact with schools, residents of housing estates, the police, local hospitals and the council have all had to go online. Getting vaccinations into my constituents and getting cash help into local businesses have been new priorities.

As have getting Personal Protective Equipment to care homes, the police, health and transport workers. And the Joint Committee on Human Rights which I chair has protested about the government's failure to be clear about the new legal restrictions clear and their determination sought to sideline parliament. We are far from out the woods yet with the pandemic. And I foresee that my next annual report will cover the attempts to narrow the widening income and health gaps exposed and exacerbated by the pandemic.

Stopping things getting worse and making the future better has never been harder, or more important.

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



Helping constituents with their problems

A major part of my work as MP for Camberwell and Peckham is helping constituents with a wide range of problems.

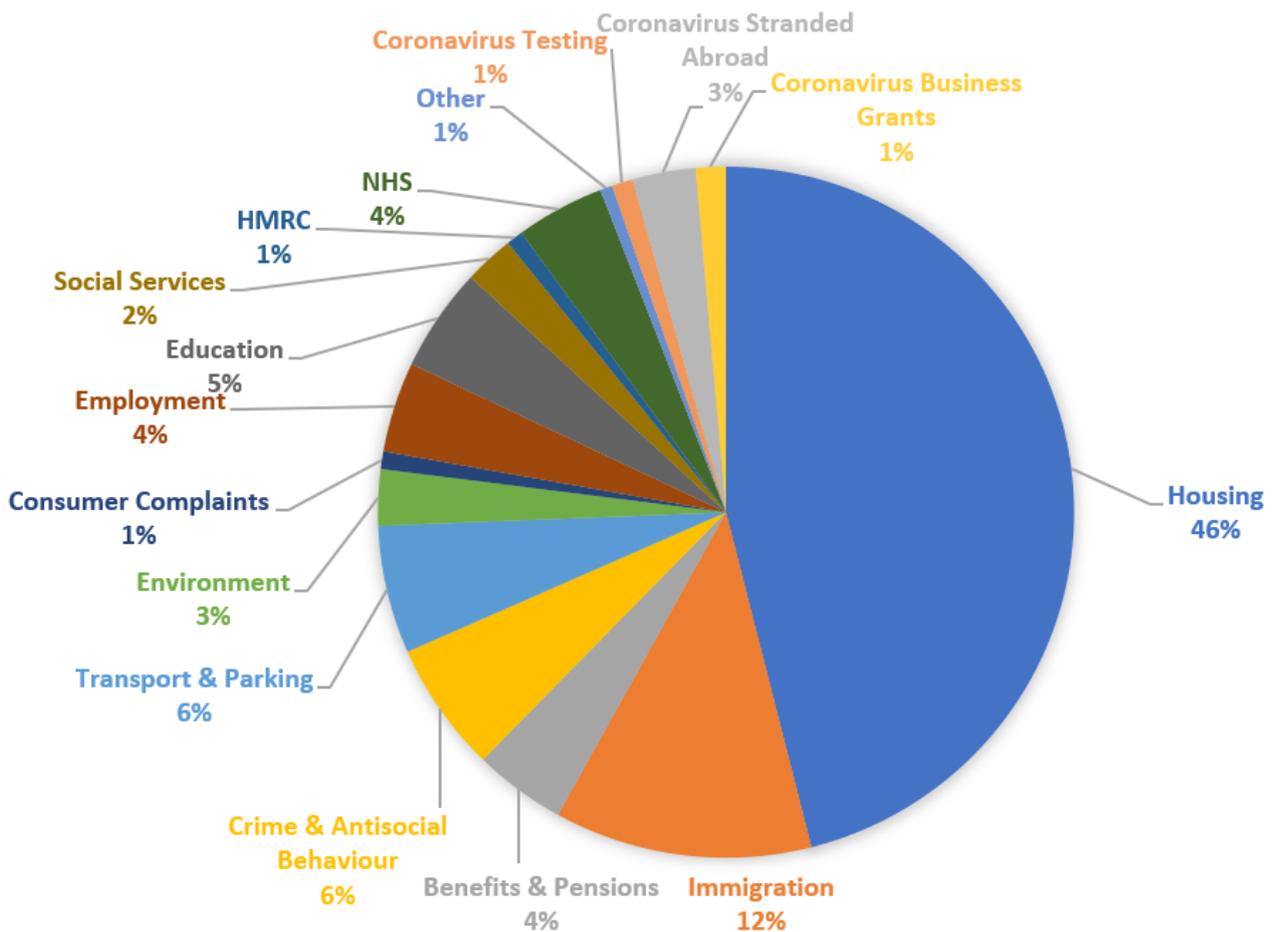
Since January 2020 to June 2021, I have, with my small but dedicated team, helped **9,881** people, in large part due to the Covid-19 crisis.

Year	Time period	Action on	Increase in casework
2020	January 1 st to December 31 st (12 months)	5756 cases	Up 45% *On same 12-month period in 2019
2021	January 1 st to June 30 th (6 months)	4125 cases	Up 64% *On same 6-month period in 2020

Casework Issues

People seek my help for many different reasons including housing problems, immigration and visa problems and getting the benefits they're entitled to:

Casework issues by category Jan 2020 to June 2021



Often, I am able to cut through red tape, challenge an injustice and make progress for a constituent. Here are some examples of people I've helped this year:

Constituents with housing problems

- A married couple homeless in Peckham contacted me for help because their immigration status did not allow them recourse to public funds. They have health issues that mean they are at greater risk of COVID-19, are extremely vulnerable and were staying in a local Church. I asked Southwark Council to house the couple so they can safely self-isolate and 5 days later they had been housed.
- 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 a constituent regarding his request to take over his late mother's council property in Nunhead. I wrote to Southwark Council explaining that the case was complicated as the tenants had been moved recently to Nunhead from the Aylesbury Estate to facilitate the Aylesbury regeneration. After assessing the circumstances, the Council have now approved the succession request.
- A lone mother living in Camberwell wrote to me for help with outstanding repairs issues in her home. She informed me that she was waiting for Southwark Council to deal with her heating and the damage caused by a leak. I wrote to Southwark Council who agreed to carry out the repairs and gave her a compensation payment of £350.
- A Nunhead man contacted me as he had been trying since January 2020 to get repairs carried out to his property after a leak. He had been in contact with his Housing Association, Habinteg, but the repairs had still not been carried out. I wrote to Habinteg and received a response soon after stating that the repairs had been scheduled and my constituent had been offered £100 as a goodwill payment.
- An NHS keyworker living in Peckham contacted me to ask for help to be rehoused because she was living in a one-bed home with 3 children. A council officer had visited her in November 2019 to inspect their home and was due to alter her housing application to a 3-bedroom need but by June 2020 this had still not happened. I wrote to Southwark Council who are now fast-tracking her housing application.

Constituents with immigration and visa problems

- A Rye Lane resident contacted me as he had accrued over £3000 in fines from HMRC after failing to pay tax that he had not been informed he owed. I wrote

to HMRC and asked that their discretion be used in this case to waive the fines and the fines were waived shortly thereafter.

- A father from Sierra Leone whose son had been selected to represent Great Britain in an international tennis tournament contacted me concerned he would be unable to attend as his British citizenship application had yet to be approved by the Home Office. I wrote to UK Visas and Immigration and asked for his the case to be expedited. My constituent's son was granted citizenship 5 days later and he was able to attend play in the tournament.
- I was contacted by a British woman originally from Camberwell and Peckham but currently living in Hong Kong. She had applied to renew her British Passport before it was due to expire, so she could update her Hong Kong work visa. She was about to adopt a child in Hong Kong and needed proof of residency in order to complete the adoption. However, due to the lockdown in the UK, there was a long delay in the renewal of her passport. I asked the Home Office to expedite her passport renewal and a couple of days later she got her passport.
- A nurse living in Nunhead wrote to me as she had applied to the Home Office to extend her visa, as part of the free scheme for NHS workers during the Covid19 pandemic but had not yet received a decision. I wrote to UK Visas and Immigration to ask that the case be expedited.
- 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 to ask for them to expedite their response and he has been granted Leave to Remain until 2023.
- 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.
- I was contacted by a Peckham man originally from Ghana whose 2017 immigration application on grounds of 'Family and Private Life' was refused by the Home office in 2018. Following the refusal, he submitted an appeal but received no response. I contacted the Home Office; his appeal was allowed and he was granted stay in the UK
- I was contacted by a young Sierra Leonean woman who travelled to the UK as a child in 2010. When she turned 18 the humanitarian organisation that previously assisted her immigration affairs were no longer able to help due to

funding constraints. She had applied for Indefinite Leave to Remain a year ago but was yet to receive a response. I asked UKVI to expedite their decision and she has now been granted Indefinite Leave to Remain.

Constituents experiencing issues with medical treatment

- A woman from Peckham with a respiratory condition asked for my help because she was having problems getting her medication during the COVID-19 pandemic. She was told there would be a delay in getting her prescription but not how long she would have to wait. She waited 10 days with no news and one of her medications ran out. When she called the online pharmacy, they said her order would be dispatched urgently, but when she checked the next day, the order hadn't been dispatched. The pharmacy told her there was an issue with her payment, but then later told her it was a technical issue their side. I asked the pharmacy to sort it out urgently and she now has the medication she needs.
- A constituent expecting her first child wrote to me concerned about the Covid19 visiting restrictions in place at Kings maternity service. The constituent wanted her partner present throughout the birth of their child. I wrote to Kings College Hospital and received updated guidance confirming that my constituent's partner could be present throughout the labour and birth.
- A concerned father-to-be contacted me as he had been told that he would not be able to be at his wife's side during the birth of their second child at King's College Hospital due to Coronavirus. I wrote to King's to clarify their position on this matter and received a response the next day that fathers are welcome at their children's birth and have been throughout the pandemic.
- A Camberwell woman contacted me on behalf of her elderly mother who had been staying with her throughout the lockdown period. She was unable to get her COVID-19 vaccine because she is only temporarily registered with a local GP surgery. She did not wish to permanently change her address. I wrote to the GP to explain the circumstances and to NHS South East London Clinical Commissioning Group. The constituent's mother has now received her vaccination.

Helping constituents who have been victims of crime and anti-social behaviour

- A Camberwell resident contacted me complaining of anti-social behaviour in Burgess Park. He said the police are often called up to three times a night due to noise which sometimes includes parties into the early hours with sound systems. Despite an increased police presence, the situation had not improved. I wrote to Southwark Council and the Police and received responses stating that they were working together to address the anti-social behaviour.
- A woman from Peckham Rye contacted me as an alarm going off at a local reservoir had been disturbing residents for several weeks. She said she had contacted both Southwark Council and Thames Water to ask for the alarm to be

turned off but had received no response. I wrote to Southwark Council and received a response soon after, stating that the alarm was coming from a mast located on land rented out by Thames Water. They had spoken to the company and they would ensure the alarm was deactivated as soon as possible.

Helping constituents get the money they are entitled to

Between January 2020 until 30 June 2021 my team and I have helped get Camberwell and Peckham constituents **£109,375.88** in backdated disability benefits, written off rent arrears, heating and hot water refunds/compensation. What lies behind this sum is hardship and struggle for local people wrongly denied the money to which they are entitled.

Covid support grant cases

- A local sports organisation wrote to me about their application for a Coronavirus Business Support Grant. They had been awarded £10,000 in June but the money had not been received. I wrote to Southwark Council to request that the payment be expedited and shortly after the grant payment was made.
- The owner of a nursery in Peckham Rye contacted me as they had submitted an application for a cash grant to support them through the Covid-19 pandemic. But a number of weeks later they still had not received a response. I wrote to Southwark Council on their behalf and the grant, worth £10,000, was paid shortly afterwards.
- The owner of a clothing boutique in Peckham contacted me because they had applied for a grant to support them through the Covid-19 pandemic. But they had not received a decision 3 weeks after applying. I wrote to Southwark Council and they got their £10,000 grant 3 days later.

Covid cases and other cases to note

- 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 one. I wrote to Southwark Council and the constituent was refunded the £165 overpayment.
- 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.
- 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.

- A Camberwell woman had booked a trip to New York in Spring 2020. Due to the coronavirus crisis her flights were cancelled. She wrote to Virgin on three occasions to request a refund but received no response. I wrote to Virgin to and she has since received a full refund.
- I was contacted by the friend of Peckham residents who had travelled to Dominica to attend the funeral of his late mother. Due to COVID-19 restrictions the family had been quarantined even though they had received several negative test results. They asked for my assistance because they were told they were expected to pay for their additional room and board during the quarantine period and were worried that they would miss their mother’s funeral. I contacted the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and was then contacted by the Consulate for Domenica (which is in Bridgetown, Barbados) who informed me that the family had been offered consular assistance and had been released from quarantine in time to attend their mother’s funeral.

Helping constituents stranded overseas during Covid-19

Camberwell and Peckham is a constituency with many young people who travel widely and with many who’ve come to live in the UK from overseas who regularly travel back to their country of origin. So, when the global lockdown was suddenly imposed in March 2020 many of my constituents found themselves stranded overseas.



Harriet Harman @HarrietHarman · 18 May

Sorry to hear that you are stranded! Please email more details to Harriet.harman.mp@parliament.uk inc full name and UK address and I will get on to the [@foreignoffice](#) to help you.



Robyn Hodson @JTPJetgirl · 14 May

@HarrietHarman I live in Camberwell but I am currently stuck in South Africa with 1000s of other British Citizens who have not yet been repatriated. Please can more attention be given to our situation here as we have had so little news from [@ukinsouthafrica](#) or from

70 constituents contacted me about being stranded abroad in 19 countries. They found it hard to get through to the British consular officials and when they did were simply told to contact their airline. They found that either there were no flights, or they were offered tickets at exorbitant prices.

Algeria	Argentina	Australia	Bangladesh	Cape Verde
France	Ghana	Honduras	India	Jamaica
Morocco	New Zealand	Nigeria	Peru	Sierra Leone
South Africa	South Africa	Uganda	Vietnam	

My team and I pressed the Foreign Office every day until everyone got the help they needed and got home safely.



Harriet Harman @HarrietHarman · 31 Mar

Thanks [@PennyMordaunt](#) for conf call of MPs & for taking forward concerns about FCO communicating with indiv stranded abroad to keep up their morale/confidence while they await [@foreignoffice](#) & [@transportgovuk](#) solution [#COVID19](#)



Harriet Harman @HarrietHarman · 24 Apr

So pleased he's back home safe. And thanks too to @fco & my dedicated casework team!



Revd Sandra Schloss @sandra87834437 · 24 Apr

With thanks to @HarrietHarman true to her word and did indeed contact the FCO to get my son back from Uganda, chasing them up when they failed to respond. Also thanks to the Dutch Embassy, whose flight was more reasonable cost than Qatar airlines, extortion my son is back home.

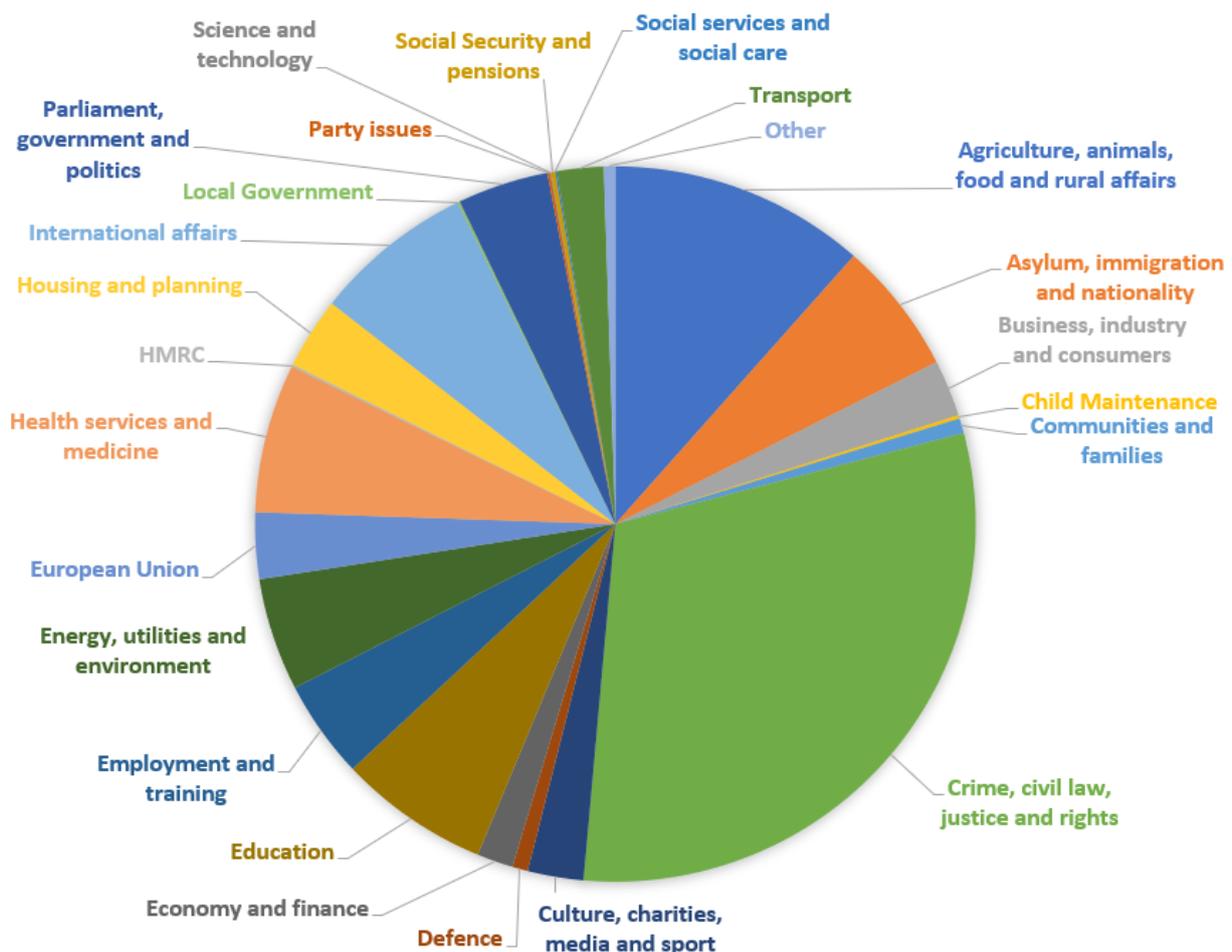
Representations from constituents in Camberwell and Peckham

The letters and emails I have received from constituents over the past year and a half cover a wide range of issues. In 2020 alone I received **12,231** policy enquiries, up **12%** on 2019, in large part due to the Covid-19 crisis.

Year	Time period	Received
2020	January 1 st to 30 th June	6,764
	July 1 st to 31 st December	5,467
2021	January 1 st to June 30 th	4,184

Policy representations by category

January 2020 to June 2021



Pre pandemic local matters in January & February 2020

At the beginning of 2020, before the pandemic hit, I announced that the NHS would continue to be my constituency priority. I began the year visiting the emergency department at King's to hear from patients and meeting with the Chief Executive, Dr Clive Kay and Clinical Director of A & E, Emer Sutherland.



Parents have to wait longer in A & E and the shortage of beds at the Maudsley Hospital means that patients in a mental health crisis can often end up in Kings A & E. The Maudsley must have sufficient beds and resources to be able to admit people for emergency care. Thanks to the expert [Redthread](#) youth work team at King's College Hospital for their vital work to intervene to help victims of knife crime & domestic violence out of the cycle of violence. I will be continuing my support of the work of the APPG on Knife Crime pressing the Government to fund more child and adolescent mental health services, youth clubs, police & more housing to help keep young people safe.



King's has been in the front line of caring for patients with Coronavirus and I asked Dr Clive Kay about their preparedness for it when we met on 11th February 2020. Everyone is hugely grateful to them for their dedication and commitment and concerned that, as they strive to give the best possible care, they are themselves able to stay safe. King's was among the first hospitals to report they were caring for patients with COVID-19 and amongst the first to have to report deaths.

People need dignity in old age - social care must be universal public service

A growing number of people in Camberwell and Peckham contact me because they can't get the quality social care their older relatives need. A decade of Tory cuts to local council budgets and more people needing care has strained care services to the limit.

Adult Social Care

EDM 64: tabled on 15 January 2020

everyone gets the support they need and can live with dignity with their disabilities or in their old age. We are also pressing Ministers to invest in the people who work in social care. Carers play a vital role in our society, yet they are underpaid and often unappreciated. [Read my Southwark News article here.](#)

This is a priority for Labour. I co-signed Helen Hayes MP's Early Day Motion in January 2020 to demand the Government urgently brings forward proposals to Parliament to ensure



Demanding equal pay for women at work

I was pleased to speak at the Fawcett Society Equal Pay event in Parliament in January 2020. Pay discrimination is about more than the money, unequal pay is a daily insult to women at work. Women need unions to fight for this. The national



gender pay gap (17.3%) is a disgrace. But the union I'm a member of, Unite, has a gender pay gap of 28.5%. What does that say to their women members? All respect to Samira Ahmed, Carrie Gracie and the other BBC women who campaigned for equal pay. It's never easy to take an equal pay case. But it's even harder when your employer is a powerful national institution as the BBC is. I am a passionate believer in the vital role of the BBC. But there are loud voices in government who are totally opposed to the notion of a public service broadcaster. The new Director General must get the BBC house in order on this. [Read my Evening Standard article here.](#)

Constituency visits in January and February 2020

Comber Grove Primary Visit

So impressed with the pupils at Comber Grove Primary who told me about their great work to make life environmentally sustainable at school. And good to meet parents and staff too!



Holocaust Memorial Day

Auschwitz is not ancient history. Its survivors still bear witness to it. Nor is it in some faraway place. And the hatred that fuelled this horror still lurks. Never forget.



Tackling the housing crisis

Great to visit the site at Meeting House Lane on the Acorn Estate to see the start of 29 new council homes being built by Southwark Council. Much needed new homes for local people. Thanks to Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, Deputy Mayor for Housing, Tom Copley and council leader Peter John for their support.



Southwark Peace Garden

A remarkable symbol of peace. Pleased to attend the unveiling of the dove sculpture in the new Southwark Peace Garden at Walworth Methodist Church. Made from knives seized by Southwark Police, it represents the local community's determination to tackle knife crime.



Government staff deserve fair pay & conditions

A constituent working in Facilities Management at the Foreign Office asked for my help because his team have been in dispute with their employer Interserve for months and are on strike. They are asking for sick pay, trade union recognition and a return to monthly salaries not daily pay. All things civil servants they work alongside are entitled to. I've co-signed an EDM calling for Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab, to urgently meet with staff and the employer to bring an end to this dispute and ensure all workers in Government are treated fairly.



Demanding Peckham road safety & cycle extension

Meeting at City Hall with the Mayor's Walking & Cycling Commissioner Will Norman and TfL to press for safety measure at Peckham High Street after 4 tragic pedestrian deaths and for more Santander bike hire ports. It's bad enough Peckham has no tube but we have no bike ports either!



I joined over 150 MPs in writing to the Home Secretary, Priti Patel, to urge government to pause the deportation of 50 UK residents to Jamaica on 11th February, until the Windrush Lessons Learned Review is complete. [Read our letter here.](#)

Coronavirus Crisis 2020

In my first coronavirus crisis report in April 2020 I explained how as MPs we found ourselves needing to rethink our work to best effect our constituents during these unprecedented times.

Literally everything we did and how we are doing it needed to be reconsidered.

As the pandemic unfolded my approach was to help constituents with particular problems. To raise the issues with the appropriate agencies or with the Government if they did not appear to have them on their agenda. Where they were aware of problems but appeared to be taking too long to solve them, I joined those pressuring the Government to act more swiftly.

Constituency problems

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought many new problems. Far from there being a fall in the number of complaints about the usual range of issues which my constituents approach me about, and which are handled by my dedicated constituency casework team, there has been an increase in constituents contacting me and asking for help. Those who are in overcrowded or unsuitable homes feel it even more keenly when they are confined to those homes and their problems become more pressing. Those who already had financial problems find 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.

Throughout the pandemic I have called on the Government, agencies and companies to take action on many issues affecting people locally.

- I pressed the Chancellor to **help the self-employed**. There are over 15,000 self-employed people in Camberwell and Peckham. They work in many different occupations many in the creative industries. But many of them were unable to benefit from either the employed or the self-employed schemes as they have until recently been employed and do not have the tax history to qualify for the self-employed scheme, or they are part employed and part-self-employed.
- I joined over 100 MPs calling for **prescriptions** to be made free during COVID-19
- Called for vital **bereavement services** as people were struggling to come to terms with not being able to visit loved ones when their relative was dying.
- I joined MPs calling for a financial support scheme for **charities** as they struggled to cope with increased demand and faced a considerable drop in charitable giving caused by the affects of charity shops needing to close and individual incomes facing collapse as covid hit.
- I wrote to the 10 major **supermarkets** with one or more stores in Camberwell and Peckham to ask what reassurances they could offer local people about the steps they were taking to ensure shelves remain stocked with food and essential supplies throughout the unprecedented Covid-19 pandemic.
- I urged all of those supermarkets to prioritise **vulnerable and elderly people** for online deliveries. All credit goes to those working so hard in the stores providing an essential service and responding to my requests for individual people who asked for help.

- There are 8 **care homes** in Camberwell and Peckham providing for some of our most vulnerable residents. They too were hit by staff shortages. And the inadequate supplies of **Personal Protective Equipment** were particularly worrying for those whose work requires them to have close contact with those they care for. I contacted all the care homes in Camberwell and Peckham and have been taking up their concerns with the relevant authorities.
- It has been evident that the police have a very difficult but important job **policing the new laws and regulations** about public behaviour. They too were affected by officers and staff being absent on self-isolation or because of sickness. They also didn't have **adequate supplies** of Personal Protective Equipment. Through the Commander for MPS Lambeth and Southwark, Chief Supt Colin Wingrove, I asked for my thanks to be conveyed to all the police officers in Camberwell and Peckham for the essential work they have been doing.
- I was particularly concerned about those **women and children** who are vulnerable because they are in lockdown with an abusive partner. Chief Supt Wingrove has assured me that the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment discussions including the council, the health services, and other services are continuing to take place daily to review each case of a family they know are at risk but they are conducting the reviews online instead of in person.
- I called on the Government to give our brilliant frontline **postal workers** the PPE they needed to do their jobs safely. They worked harder than ever throughout the crisis to keep our vital postal services going.
- I wrote to the Chancellor to ask him to address the gaps in **economic support** the Government has made available in the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure no one is left behind.
- I wrote to the Chancellor urging him to close gaps in financial support that leave **pregnant women** and new parents vulnerable during COVID19.
- I raised the issue of the lack of financial support for **self-employed dentists** with the Chancellor and urged him to work with the British Dental Association to ensure these vital health services survive this crisis.
- I pressed the Government to include people with Motor Neurone Disease to be included on the Government's **extremely vulnerable** person list and that they be supported properly throughout the COVID-19 crisis.
- I backed Keir Starmer's call on the Government in April 2020 to publish their **Covid-19 Exit Strategy**. I didn't accept the argument that if there was a discussion of measures post lockdown that it would undermine lockdown.
- I called on the Government to close the loophole in the **job retention schemes** by allowing small limited company directors to claim for 80% of filed average earnings, including dividends. I co-signed EDM 351 demanding more support.
- I called on the Government to provide more support for people who have been made **redundant** during the crisis and cannot find more work.
- I urged the Chancellor to resolve the delays in the **Business Interruption Loans** and to give councils the money they need to help local businesses.
- I wrote to the Prime Minister to make good on his promise that government will cover the **full costs to councils** of supporting people through COVID-19, and ensure that Southwark Council has the future resources necessary to put the borough back on the path to security and prosperity for all its residents.
- I pressed the Chancellor to create a special **fund for nurseries**. I have written to every nursery that has had to close in Camberwell and Peckham to find out whether they are confident that they will be able to re-open at the end of the lockdown and to offer my support for getting them the help they need.

- I wrote to the **British Airways** CEO Alex Cruz urging him to do all it can to **protect jobs**. It was wrong to use the COVID crisis as an opportunity to undermine the terms and conditions of longstanding staff.
- I called on the PM urging the Government to issue clear guidance to employers on how to treat **pregnant employees** who have been told they should not be at work for health reasons.
- With MPs across Parliament I urged the government to end the unfair treatment of **Maternity Allowance in Universal Credit**. This leaves low income women on Maternity Allowance who claim Universal Credit up to £550 per month worse off - a difference of £5,000 over 39 weeks of maternity leave - compared to women in the same circumstances who qualify for Statutory Maternity Pay. I co-signed Debbie Abrahams MP's Early Day Motion demanding the Government fix this.
- In June 2020 I called for the Care sector to be properly funded and reprioritized. This crisis has shown we must change the way we care for vulnerable older people, show greater respect for those who work in the **social care sector**, properly fund these vital service and help more people to stay in their own homes in the future. Social care must be Cinderella services no more!
- As more people are bereaved, unemployment increases and more women and children are subjected to domestic violence, there will inevitably be an increase in **mental health** problems. I asked the Maudsley to develop services and guides to help people cope with bereavement and anxiety, and to ensure staff get the support they need coping with the unprecedented tragedy and stress.
- It is especially important that **young people** are guaranteed training and jobs. Under 25s are twice as likely to be furloughed or made redundant. Currently 1 in 4 under 25s in the UK are furloughed and at risk of long-term unemployment. I along with 60 MPs wrote to the Prime Minister urging him to introduce income and training guarantees to support the one million young people who face unemployment.
- Together with 90 MPs I called on the Government to **reopen beauty salons**. There are 370,000 workers in the industry, most of whom are women.
- I opposed government **ending free travel for Under 18s** in London. The Government planned to end free travel for children on London buses and tubes. This would have created hardship for low-income families, many of whom are already hard pressed because of the Coronavirus crisis. I worked with MPs across the House to urge the government to change course and have written to the Secretary of State for Transport.
- The diaspora communities in Camberwell and Peckham provide huge support for families and communities in Africa. They are the hidden heroes of international development. **UK remittances** are a lifeline in developing countries and key to tackling poverty. The Government must make sending money back easier and more transparent in the COVID19 crisis.
- I pressed the Government to urgently fix the **Covid testing** fiasco. 6 months after the pandemic started we were still without a proper functioning Test and Trace programme due to the government's incompetence.
- I co-signed a letter to the Foreign Secretary, Dominic Raab with 59 other MPs urging the UK government immediately to call on President Buhari and his security forces to stop killing protesters and condemn the violence against protesters in Lagos on the 20 October 2020. We also asked that he urgently report what discussions he had with Nigerian representatives regarding the **SARS protests and the massacre in Lagos**.
- **Dulwich Hamlet Football Club** - Distribution of the £10 million in National Lottery funding. Together with 6 MPs who also represent football clubs in the

National League I wrote to Brian Barwick, the Chairman of the National League to urge him to appoint an independent review panel to assess the process for distributing the lottery funds and to ensure it is carried out as fairly as possible. The National League is planning to distribute lottery money according to a club's league position and not according to their average gate receipt. This is unfair and contradicts the reason the money was originally provided.

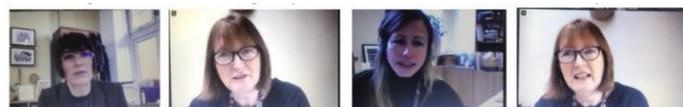
- I backed the British Pregnancy Advisory Services' campaign to call on the Health Secretary, Matt Hancock MP to "stop the clock", as delays caused by the Covid-19 pandemic mean **fertility patients** face falling outside age criteria required for NHS funded care.
- I backed Stella Creasy MPs' **Equal Pay** Implementation and Claims (EPIC) Bill 2020 on 20 October. This Bill will make access to this essential information easier by giving women the legal right to request pay data relating to male colleagues. Equal pay for equal work was made a legal right 50 years ago in the Equal Pay Act 1970, but pay discrimination continues.
- Supported 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'.

Please click on my [previous reports](#) to see full details of all the issues constituents have raised with me since January 2020.

Regular meetings and briefings with NHS services, Public Health England, Southwark Police, Southwark Council and schools

Throughout the pandemic I have met regularly online with all of the vital services that are supporting and caring for our local community during these unprecedented times.

I have met with Professor Clive Kay, Chief Executive, and his team at Kings College Hospital. There are many challenges facing the staff and critical care and I am continuing to support them.



Headteacher **Susannah Bellingham**
Brunswick Park Primary School

Head Teacher **Catherine Warland**
St John the Divine Church of England
Primary School



Executive Headteacher **Tim Mills**
Annet Oak Academics

Headteacher **Helen Ingham**
Ivydale Primary School and Children's Centre

Schools are continuing to do their absolute best during these Covid times. I've thanked them for their extraordinary work and have talked to them about the individual challenges and issues facing their schools.

I've met with the 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.



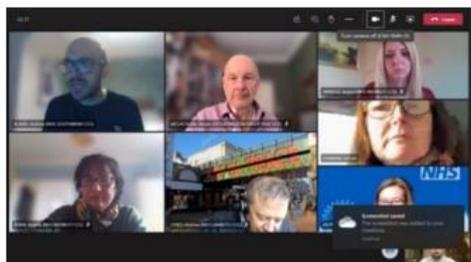
Meeting with Leader of Southwark Council – Cllr Kieron Williams

It is impossible to overstate how important it is to people in Camberwell and Peckham, especially those who are struggling, that they have a strong, progressive Labour council on their side. I have total confidence that the new leader of Southwark Council, Kieron Williams, and indeed all our Labour councillors will do everything they can to support people and implement progressive measures despite the vindictiveness of the Tory government towards councils in general and Labour councils in particular. It is not an easy time to be leading a council with mounting need and when the Tory Government is cutting funds for vital services. I for my part will be working closely with the borough's 2 other Labour MPs to support the council, applauding the strides they are able to make despite the constraints they are under.



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

I've attended important briefings hosted by the South East London CCG on the plans for the mass rollout of the vaccination program. Key message has been to urge that their communication is clear in to all people have access and opportunity to get the vaccine when their turn comes.



Vaccinations are progressing well but Southwark is behind Southeast London as a whole in terms of the percentage of its population that have been vaccinated.

- There is also low rate of vaccine uptake amongst local BAME communities and we discussed what more can be done to reach everyone who is eligible

for the vaccine.

- What we can be done to combat misleading and dangerous anti-vaccination information.
- The importance of bringing vaccination hubs to all parts of the constituency, rather than relying on hospitals as the main location for vaccine delivery. This includes using local community centres, pharmacies and places of worship as vaccine centres for everyone to access and introducing incentives to encourage people to get their vaccine.

Public Health England Vaccination rollout out MP briefing

Along with other London MPs I've attended briefings by Professor Kevin Fenton, Regional Director for London for Public Health England briefings on the rollout of the Covid-19 vaccination program. 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.

Click the image below to [read my full article](#) on the importance of a robust vaccination program.

The vaccination against Covid is the only way out of this pandemic.



January 2021

I wrote to Professor Kevin Fenton, Public Health England London Regional Director about the target for the BAME uptake of vaccine.

Dear Professor Fenton,

Re: Target for BAME uptake of vaccine I am writing following the briefing held on Thursday 21 January for London MPs regarding the vaccine rollout in our local areas.

Thank you for taking the time to meet with us. The delivery of the vaccine is hugely promising and I want to pay tribute to everyone who is working so hard to ensure a rapid rollout. However, as you made clear, you are aware there has been concern at the lower rate of uptake amongst people from BAME communities, due to a number of factors.

If the current differential rate persists it will leave people from BAME communities more exposed to ill health and death, further exacerbate health inequalities and fuel racism. During the call, it was confirmed that there was a target for uptake of the vaccine amongst BAME people, as part of the effort to close the vaccination gap between the BAME and non BAME communities. Could you please confirm what the target is?

Could you also please let me know:

- what proportion of BAME people who have been tested returned positive results, and the corresponding proportion for non-BAME people, in London; and*
- what proportion of those currently being treated for Covid-19 in hospital are BAME, in London?*

I strongly support the work that is being led by Southwark Cllr Evelyn Akoto, Cabinet Member for Public Health & Community Safety in partnership with Kings College Hospital, councillors in Lambeth and Lewisham, and many black nurses and doctors providing care locally to encourage greater uptake. Is there a possibility of your supporting her work by doing pop up vaccination centres in one of Southwark's mosques and one of our local churches? I will continue to strongly support her work and that of others, to help ensure that everyone understands the importance of receiving the vaccine.

Best wishes, Rt. Hon. Harriet Harman MP

Government funding for local COVID-19 vaccine advice

Along with Cllr Kieron Williams, Leader of Southwark Council, Cllr Evelyn Akoto, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Southwark MPs, Neil Coyle and Helen Hayes I have written to the Secretary of State for Housing and Communities and Local Government, Robert Jenrick to protest that Southwark Council was not invited to bid for any of the £23 million funding for local authorities to expand their vital work in supporting communities the most at risk from Covid-19. Full text below:

Dear Robert Jenrick,

RE: Government funding for local COVID-19 vaccine advice

We are writing to you as a matter of urgency to seek clarification as to why Southwark was not invited to bid for any of the £23 million funding for local authorities expand their vital work to support communities most at risk from Covid-19.

Southwark has been at the forefront of supporting vulnerable residents to access accurate and timely information to help keep them safe through the pandemic. The creation of our Health Ambassadors has enabled us to create a network of trusted local members of our communities to be a channel of reassuring information, but there is much more work that is needed, particularly on vaccine hesitancy among our Black and ethnic minority residents.

We understand boroughs were chosen based on a set of criteria, which it would be really helpful to see, as it's hard to understand how one of the most diverse boroughs in the country wasn't invited to bid for this much-needed funding. In Southwark, over 120 languages are spoken, 25% of residents identify as Black, and almost 50% of young people are Black or minority ethnic. There is no question that, with vaccine hesitancy rates highest in younger age groups, we have a ticking time bomb on our hands.

Although the vaccine rollout is being managed at a national level, and via the NHS, Southwark Council has anticipated the challenge ahead and has been planning for it since the vaccine rollout was announced in December. We are working closely with other boroughs in south east London, and with our CCG partners, to fully understand our residents' concerns, and deliver comprehensive plans to engage and communicate with them. This work is complex and resource-heavy. Whilst assets shared with us by the lucky recipients of the funding might be helpful in the future, they won't help us staff the hundreds of sessions we need to run for our community groups, to hear their concerns, answer their questions, and allay their fears.

We also know, from local research, that communities want to hear from local trusted



voices: local health professionals, faith leaders, community champions. We have all these routes into our communities at our fingertips after months of close working throughout the pandemic, but capturing their voices in video, photographs, stories, takes time and money.

To be clear, after spending £57.7 million on our Covid response to support our communities through the last year, and losing £42.3m of income, we are already facing a budget gap of £13 million before we even begin this work in earnest.

Our Black and ethnic minority communities have been disproportionately affected by this virus, are more likely 15 to become seriously ill and more likely to die, and are the very communities research shows are least likely to take up the vaccine. It is essential that we all play our part in addressing this injustice. In Southwark we are determined to do that, including by working with our Black, Asian and ethnic minority communities to reassure them that taking the vaccine is the right choice for them. We can't afford to be complacent, but nor can your government. It is unthinkable that the national strategy for vaccine rollout ignores or neglects the concerns of the very people most affected by COVID-19.

Southwark needs that funding as much as Lewisham, Greenwich, Hillingdon or Birmingham.

We ask that you immediately announce another round of funding, open to all boroughs to bid for in an open process, to support councils with this crucial and life saving work.

Yours sincerely,

Cllr Kieron Williams, Leader of Southwark Council

Cllr Evelyn Akoto, Cabinet Member for Public Health & Community Safety

Rt Hon Harriet Harman QC MP for Camberwell & Peckham

Neil Coyle MP for Bermondsey & Old Southwark

Helen Hayes MP for Dulwich & West Norwood

Along with 23 London MPs I wrote to Matt Hancock, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care about access to information about vaccination roll out.

Vaccination rates in London have been amongst the lowest in the country, and whilst not every region will proceed at exactly the same pace, I wrote to inform the Secretary of State for Health that we feel strongly that we must see local and comparative data on a regular basis in order to monitor progress and to be able to ask questions about variations. We also raised:

- The urgent need for a strategy for our street homeless population.
- Updated details of the strategy for vaccinating the housebound.
- Concern that a large proportion of London's vaccine supply is being allocated to the teaching hospitals in central London.

I also submitted parliamentary questions to Department for Health and Social Care and the Cabinet Office on the issue of vaccination:

Coronavirus: Vaccination

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps the Covid-19 Operations Committee is taking to ensure that local authorities are adequately resourced to tackle covid-19 vaccine safety concerns. [Click here to see the response.](#)

Coronavirus: Screening

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people identifying as (a) BAME and (b) non-BAME have (i) been tested for coronavirus and (ii) tested positive for coronavirus in (A) Southwark, (B) London and (C) the UK. [Click here to see the response.](#)

[Click here to see a full list of Parliamentary Questions that I have tabled during the last 18 months.](#)



Charing Parliament's Select Committee on Human Rights



Following the December 2019 General Election, I was re-elected as the Chair of the Joint Committee on Human Rights on the 5th March 2020.

"The right not to be unfairly detained, the right to free speech, the right to family life, the right to privacy - these are all basic human rights and Parliament's Human Rights Committee is there to ensure that those rights are there for everyone and are respected by all, including Government.

We'll make sure that, even with their 80 strong majority, the Government is not tempted to trample on people's rights.

It is a privilege to be re-elected as Chair of Parliament's Human Rights Committee.

It is easy to feel complacent about the country in which we live and feel that human rights abuses are not an issue here.

I look forward to working with MPs and peers in all parties to scrutinise legislation and Government action, ensuring that every individual's rights are upheld."

Harriet Harman QC MP

The Government's response to COVID-19: human rights implications

At the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic I immediately called for an enquiry into the Government's response to Covid-19 and its impact on human rights.

"Times of national crisis call for strong and decisive leadership. However, at this time, it is also vitally important that checks and balances are in place to ensure that human rights are not disregarded, and that people remain fully protected under the law.

The Committee will be thoroughly scrutinising the measures taken and any proposed legislation. The government needs to protect the right to life and at the same time

consider the impact on human rights as it strives to protect the country in this unprecedented time."

Harriet Harman QC MP

The enquiry:

The Government needed to take unprecedented powers to keep us safe in the coronavirus epidemic. However, they also needed to take into account the implications for a whole range of Human Rights issues; from our right to life through to the right to demonstrate, freedom of belief, the right not to be discriminated against, the right to family life and more.

The Committee called for evidence on three main areas:

- What steps need to be taken to ensure that measures taken by the Government to address the COVID-19 pandemic are human rights compliant?
- What will the impact of specific measure taken by Government to address the COVID-19 pandemic be on human rights in the UK?
- Which groups will be disproportionately affected by measures taken by the Government to address COVID-19 pandemic?

The report:

The Joint Committee on Human Rights' report found that Government must urgently address a number of issues to ensure that its handling of the Coronavirus pandemic is human rights compliant.

Within the Report, the Committee made recommendations on the following:

1. Lockdown regulations
2. Test & Trace
3. Rights of people in detention
4. Access to justice
5. School closures
6. A swift lessons-learned review and a public inquiry
7. The use of emergency powers



House of Commons
House of Lords

Joint Committee on Human
Rights

The Government's response to COVID-19: human rights implications

Seventh Report of Session 2019–21

You can read the full report [here](#) or click the report image.

"The scale of this crisis is unlike anything many of us will see again in our lifetime. Disruption to our normal way of life and human rights are sometimes necessary in order to lead the country through any significant emergency, but this must always be done in a way that is proportionate and justifiable in accordance with the balancing act that is protecting our human rights.

As we approach the Coronavirus Act's six-month review, there are a number of concerns that the Government must urgently address. Confusion over what is law and what is merely guidance has left citizens open to disproportionate and unequal levels of punishment for breaking the rules, and unfortunately, it seems that once again, this is overtly affecting BAME individuals. The Government must learn from these mistakes to ensure that any additional lockdowns do not unfairly impact specific groups.

Several times now we have expressed our dismay over the Government's treatment of people in detention, and once again we must impress on the Government the urgency of resuming visits as soon as possible. We cannot know how long coronavirus will impact us, but we heard how devastating being separated from one's family can be for those in care homes, in prison and detained in mental health facilities and this cannot continue for much longer. Blanket bans on visits are not justifiable.

*Parliament and the public must be kept appropriately and promptly informed about changes in policy, especially when the human rights of so many are affected in such a wide variety of ways. This is an unprecedented and uncertain time for everyone, and the Government must act in a justifiable, fair and proportionate way".
Harriet Harman QC MP*

The Committee questioned the Lord Chancellor, Robert Buckland MP on human rights issues including:

- Whether police action in supporting social distancing respected human rights or overstepped the mark;
- Whether in order to protect the right to family life for children of mothers in prison he would institute early release for non-violent women offenders in prison;
- What measures would be put in place to protect privacy if a tracing app is introduced;
- How he was protecting the right of young people with autism and/or learning disabilities detained in institutions not to be subjected to inhuman and degrading treatment when parents are prevented from visiting and inspections suspended; and
- What monitoring of human rights is he undertaking particularly of prosecutions of people for breaching the new lockdown regulations.

It then followed this by hearing evidence and publishing reports on each of the following important issues:

- [Human Rights and the Government's Response to Covid-19: Digital Contact Tracing](#)
- [Human Rights and the Government's response to Covid-19: the detention of young people who are autistic and/or have learning disabilities](#)
- [Human Rights and the Government's response to Covid-19: children whose mothers are in prison](#)

Click report image to read the reports and recommendations.



House of Commons
House of Lords
Joint Committee on Human Rights

Human Rights and the Government's response to COVID-19: children whose mothers are in prison

Sixth Report of Session 2019–21

"Assurances from Ministers about privacy are not enough. The Government has given assurances about protection of privacy so they should have no objection to those assurances being enshrined in law.

The contact tracing app involves unprecedented data gathering. There must be robust legal protection for individuals about what that data will be used for, who will have access to it and how it will be safeguarded from hacking.

Parliament was able quickly to agree to give the Government sweeping powers. It is perfectly possible for parliament to do the same for legislation to protect privacy."

Harriet Harman QC MP



House of Commons
House of Lords
Joint Committee on Human Rights

Human Rights and the Government's response to COVID-19: The detention of young people who are autistic and/or have learning disabilities

Fifth Report of Session 2019–21

"Even in normal circumstances there is not sufficient protection against abuse of young people with autism and/or who have learning disabilities are at risk of abuse. But the risk is even greater under lockdown with parental visits banned in some institutions and without routine inspections.

The JCHR is telling the government that protecting these young people is urgent and makes tough recommendations including ensuring parental visits are permitted discharging as many of the young people as possible into the community and a telephone hotline for reporting abuse. There's always a danger to vulnerable people in closed institutions. The COVID-19 lockdown increases that danger and the government must recognise it and take action"

Harriet Harman QC MP



House of Commons
House of Lords
Joint Committee on Human Rights

Human Rights and the Government's Response to Covid-19: Digital Contact Tracing

Third Report of Session 2019–21

"One of the fundamental human rights is the right to family life. It is children for whom this right is most important. Yet when the government banned children from visiting their mother in prison they trampled over that right.

They can put that right now by early release for those mothers who can safely go back home with their children and re-instating visits for the rest. COVID-19 causes lasting injury. But so does separating a child from its mother. The way to protect public health is not to damage children but to release low risk mothers and reinstate socially distanced visits.

Also, in May 2020 the Joint Committee on Human Rights drafted a Bill to protect personal privacy of data gathered by COVID-19 Contact Tracing App and called on Secretary of State Matt Hancock to adopt it as a Government Bill and bring it to Parliament.

Digital Contact Tracing (Data Protection) Bill

1

A

BILL

TO

Make provision for the regulation of the processing of information in respect of contact tracing for Covid-19; and for connected purposes.

BE IT ENACTED by the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

However, in his response the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care gave the Joint Committee on Human Rights assurances about personal privacy protection in the data collected by the Contact Tracing App. The committee called for those assurance to be put into law. You can see a full copy of the draft Bill [here](#).

The Joint Committee on Human Rights, which I chair, published their report "Black People, Racism and Human Rights" – 11 November 2020

The report concludes that the Government must urgently take action to protect the human rights of black people, including within healthcare, criminal justice, nationality and immigration and democracy.

- [Read the report summary](#)
- [Read the conclusions and recommendations](#)
- [Read the full report](#)

"The whole point about human rights is that they are supposed to be universal. Yet here in the UK it is clear that black people are in no doubt that the protection of their rights are inferior to those of white people.

We urge the government to take specific actions which will ensure black people have equal human rights. Commissioning reports and apologising is not enough."

Against the backdrop of Black Lives Matter protests and the Government's announcement of the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities, the JCHR launched an enquiry in July.

The Committee commissioned [ClearView Research](#) to undertake a survey into black people's perceptions of whether their human rights are equally protected compared to white people. The research found that:

- The majority (over 75%) of black people in the UK do not believe their human rights are equally protected compared to white people;



House of Commons
House of Lords

Joint Committee on Human
Rights

Black people, racism and human rights

Eleventh Report of Session 2019–21

*Report, together with formal minutes relating
to the report*

*Ordered by the House of Commons
to be printed 4 November 2020*

*Ordered by the House of Lords to be
printed 4 November 2020*

- The vast majority (85%) of black people in the UK are not confident that they would be treated the same as a white person by the police; and
- The majority of black people (over 60%) in the UK do not believe their health is as equally protected by the NHS compared to white people.

The Committee concluded that the Government, NHS and police must now take action to end the stark inequalities in the protection of human rights of the black community, including:

1. The Government should set out a comprehensive cross-Government race equality strategy which has at its heart improved data collection on racial inequality, specifically on health, criminal justice, nationality and immigration, and democracy.
2. The NHS must set a target to end the maternal mortality gap whereby Black women are more than 5 times as likely to die in pregnancy or childbirth than white women.
3. The lessons learned review or public inquiry into the Government's response to Covid-19 must prioritise consideration of the unequal impact on Black people.
4. In view of the fact that 85 percent of Black people are not confident that they would be treated the same as a white person by the police, the police must Set a target to build the confidence of the Black community and undertake and publish polling on Black people's confidence in the police. The recommendations from the Lammy Review and the Angiolini Review of deaths in custody must be acted upon as a matter of urgency.
5. The Government must fulfil its promise to implement the recommendations from the Windrush Lessons Learned Review, in full, as a matter of urgency. The Home Office needs to embed the culture change needed to ensure that people are treated with humanity
6. 25 per cent of Black voters in Great Britain are not registered to vote compared to a 17 per cent average across the population. The Government should consult on the introduction of automatic voter registration to tackle the unequal franchise.
7. The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has been unable to adequately provide leadership and gain trust in tackling racial inequality in the protection and promotion of human rights. There should be a highly visible national organisation to champion and press for progress on ending race inequality. For the EHRC to be, and be seen to be,

"A damning parliamentary report on racism makes it clear: the system isn't working"



A damning parliamentary report on racism makes it clear: the system isn't working | Nasa... theguardian.com

10:41 · 13/11/2020 · Twitter Web App



We are committed to solidarity with Black communities, which face forms of structural racism with centuries-old roots. We commend this report by the @HumanRightsCtte. Full statement by Vice-President @AmandaBoDVP: bod.org.uk/board-of-deput...

"The Board of Deputies of British Jews is committed to solidarity with Black communities, which face forms of structural racism with centuries-old roots. In that spirit we commend the work of the Joint Committee on Human Rights in its investigation into the major inequalities faced by Black people in health, criminal justice, nationality and immigration, and democracy. The Board of Deputies has endorsed the social justice manifesto from the Jewish Council for Racial Equality (SCORE), including calls on Government to protect the Race Disparity Unit, which monitors the extent of racial inequality in Britain, and to provide funding for a permanent memorial to the victims of the transatlantic slave trade. Now, we further endorse the recommendations of the Joint Committee, in particular that the lessons learned from previous reviews under successive governments must, finally, be acted upon; the Equality and Human Rights Commission ought to be further empowered in its independent work, by Government increasing its funding and strengthening its enforcement powers; and that the Government should consider whether changes are required to equality legislation to make it more effective as a tool to enforce Black people's human rights. With the backdrop of the killing of George Floyd, it is of the utmost importance that these changes are implemented so that Black people in Britain have their human rights fully protected with no caveat."

effective, it needs more resources, Stronger enforcement powers and must include Black commissioners.

Black History Month 2020

As we mark Black History Month this year, we must reflect honestly on the explosion of anger at the murder of George Floyd both here and in the States. And propose meaningful action to make real progress. This is not only about the appalling police brutality in the States, but also the inequality, prejudice and discrimination still faced by black people here. We have to show solidarity to those in the US and also recognise that here in the UK, too, there is inequality, prejudice and discrimination.

As Chair of Parliament's Human Rights Select Committee, I'm leading a #BlackLivesMatter inquiry looking at the extent to which human rights of non-black people are protected. Specifically, the Committee is looking at the over-representation of black people in prison and deaths in police custody; the Windrush scandal; and the greater likelihood of black mothers to die in childbirth.

Human rights are supposed to be universal, for every human being. Yet when the Human Rights Committee conducted the biggest ever polling of black people with black-led polling company, Clearview, three in four black brits told us they don't believe they have the same human rights as white people. And the majority of black people in UK believe they are not treated equally by the NHS. Black women especially feel unequally treated by the health service.

These findings are stark, especially as so many black people work in the NHS yet still feel that it does not value their lives equally. The fact that this is most strongly felt by black women perhaps reflects women's greater role in caring for children and older relatives.

The results pose a major challenge to the health service, and senior figures cannot sweep them under the carpet. The state has a duty to protect life and not to discriminate. They have a duty to protect the lives of black and non-black people equally. Black women are 5x more likely to die in childbirth than white women. I am demanding the NHS set a target to reduce the racial maternal mortality gap.

In the UK, you are still 9 times more likely to be stopped and searched if you are black than if you are white. It is hard to see how this can change until we have equal numbers of non-white officers at all levels of the Met including right at the top. And we are a long way off that. I am demanding the police set a target to increase the number of black officers and publish the percentage of black police in every



Harriet Harman @Har... · 30/09/2020

And the Dept of Health don't even have a target to reduce the gap between maternal mortality of black and white women. NHS works on targets. They have targets for everything important. Why not this !



Jane Merrick @j... · 30/09/2020

Ahead of Black History Month Keir Starmer raises the shocking statistic that black women in the UK are five times more likely to die in pregnancy and childbirth than white women #p...



UK Parliament Human Rights Committee @HumanRight... · 20 Jul

1/2 @HarrietHarman asks why Black women have a 5X greater risk of dying in pregnancy than white women
@TeamCMidO says certain health conditions are more likely to be found in Black women which can contribute to inequity experienced by Black women when accessing maternal services



force by seniority. I am also urging the police to establish regular polling of the black community's perception of policing and set a numerical target to increase confidence.

Justified anger needs recognition and demands change. Everyday experiences of racism need to be recognised as fact. And there needs to be concrete change to stop it.

A succession of reports in recent years have found structural racial inequalities in our institutions, from the Home Office treatment of the Windrush Generation to David Lammy's 2017 report on the disproportionately high numbers of black people in the Youth Justice System. The Human Rights Committee will report in the next couple of weeks and will be demanding the government implement the findings of these previous reports. Commissioning reports and failing to implement them only intensifies the lack of confidence in government on race issues.

We were appalled to hear there are no black commissioners on the Equality and Human Rights Commission. At the national level there is no black-led organisation whose responsibility it is to champion race equality and lead the drive for progress. The government must sort this urgently.

The history of Southwark, and of Britain, is a history of migration. Yet fewer than 10% of students learn this at school. This must change. Our understanding of history informs our national identity. Teaching black history one month a year is not enough. We need to embed the celebration of the immense contribution of Black Britons to this country in our school syllabus and accurately reflect our history to help ensure that injustices like the Windrush scandal can never happen again.

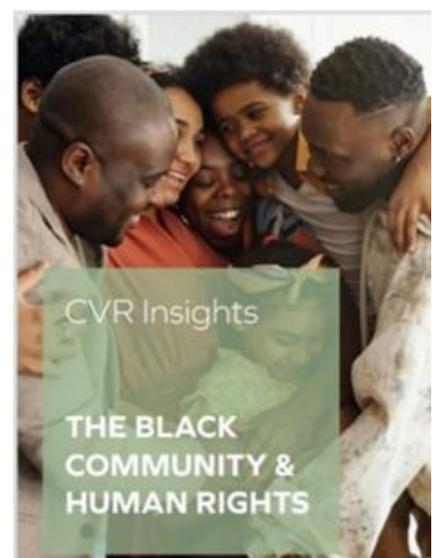
The Joint Committee on Human Rights published research on whether black people feel their human rights are protected as part of the Inquiry: Black people, racism and human rights

The Committee commissioned ClearView Research to conduct polling about black people's experiences in the UK in relation to whether they feel their human rights are equally protected.

You can read the report by Clearview Research [here](#).

The research found, amongst other things, that:

- The majority (over 75%) of black people in the UK do not believe their human rights are equally protected compared to white people;
- The vast majority (85%) of black people in the UK are not confident that they would be treated the same as a white person by the police; and
- The majority of black people (over 60%) in the UK do not believe their health is as equally protected by the NHS compared to white people.



Southwark Police has been unable to confirm the exact number of black police officers and their rank working the borough, or share data from public opinion polling, despite 'years' of questioning by Harriet Harman.

The Camberwell and Peckham MP, and chair of the House of Commons' human rights committee, called on the borough commander to take immediate action to share full data on the number of black officers at every level, and explain how opinion polls were being conducted.

She argued that the radio silence from the force over her repeated requests was 'inexplicable'.

Currently, details on the ethnic make-up of the force and diversity at every level of seniority are only available for the Met as a whole and not borough-by-borough.

In her letter to the Southwark and Lambeth commander, Chief Superintendent Colin Wingrove, Harman said without receiving these figures it will be 'impossible' to monitor progress in both staffing and community relations amid ongoing Black Lives Matter protests.

Black people in the UK are nine times more likely to be stopped and searched than white people. Harman believes this will continue until the Met has more diversity among its ranks including at the highest levels.

Available government data show that at the end of March 2019, across 43 police forces in England and Wales, 93.1 per cent of police officers were 'white', with just 6.9 per cent from other ethnic groups.

Four per cent of 'senior officers' were from Asian, black, 'mixed' or 'other' backgrounds.

Last year the Met recorded the highest number of officers from BAME backgrounds – fifteen per cent. But the majority of these were not from black backgrounds, who account for just 3.5 per cent of officers.

Across the force as a whole, the percentage of officers who are black has increased from 1.1 per cent to 1.2 per cent in twelve years despite recruitment drives. A starting salary for an officer is around £30,000.

More than 60 per cent of people living in Southwark are from black or other minority backgrounds. Harman says one primary school teacher from Peckham told her that by the end of year six pupils are already beginning to lose faith in the police.

"For decades the police have been promising that they would increase the number of black officers, but progress has been pitifully slow and we need to

'NO JUSTIFICATION': HARRIET HARMAN SLAMS 'INEXPLICABLE' LACK OF BOROUGH-LEVEL DATA ON BLACK POLICE OFFICER NUMBERS



Harriet Harman 
@HarrietHarman

When engagement important as never before, v disappointing
[@MPSSouthwark](#) refusing MPs request to publish data re % Black police by seniority & benchmark relationship between police & Black people by local polling. [@helenhayes_](#)
[@FloEshalomi](#) [@BellRibeiroAddy](#)
[#BLM](#) [@metpoliceuk](#)

be sure not only that there are more black police officers but that they are serving at every level of seniority," Harman explained.

"There is absolutely no justification for keeping this information secret. This is public money being spent on a public service and the public are entitled to know. The police won't be able to face up to the depth of the problem of their relationship with the black community unless they do proper polling and get a benchmark in order to be able to measure progress year on year."

Chief Superintendent Wingrove told the News that although full data on police officer diversity is published for the Met as a whole, more detailed information at basic command unit level (i.e. for Southwark and Lambeth) was simply not yet fully available. He denied his unit was 'refusing' to hand over the statistics, saying more detailed information would be shared as soon as possible.

Independent surveys into public confidence, at borough level, were conducted on a quarterly basis, he confirmed, along with regular surveys of victims of crime, with data recorded by ethnicity.

Government response to Joint Committee on Human Rights Report on Black people, racism and human rights

The Joint Committee on Human Rights has published the Government response to the Committee's report on Black people, racism and human rights.

You can read the Government Response [here](#).

UK government accused of 'dragging heels' on racism

The Guardian - Maya Wolfe-Robinson

The committee chair, Harriet Harman, said the government response shows 'they accept the arguments, but they reject the solutions'.

The government is still "dragging its heels" on racism, according to MPs and race equality campaigners critical of its response to a damning parliamentary report on Black people and human rights.

The government's official response to the human rights select committee's report was published on Thursday and rejected the majority of the parliamentarians' 22 recommendations.



House of Commons
House of Lords
Joint Committee on
Human Rights

**Black people, racism
and human rights:
Government Response
to the Committee's
Eleventh Report of
Session 2019-21**

Fourth Special Report of
Session 2019-21

Ordered by the House of Commons
to be printed 10 February 2021



Maya Wolfe-Robinson @mwolferobinson · Feb 11

The gov published its response to a v damning parliamentary report on black people and human rights today. @HarrietHarman, chair of the JCHR who published the report, said the gov had accepted the arguments, but not the solutions



UK government accused of 'dragging heels' in response to racism report
Rejection of select committee's recommendations on Black people and human rights prompts criticism
[theguardian.com](#)

2

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11



Maya Wolfe-Robinson @mwolferobinson · Feb 11

@DavidLammy said the gov's assertion that it had implemented 33 of 35 of the recommendations in his criminal justice review was "deeply misleading".

@Halima_Begum warned that the gov seems "intent on dragging us back to the 1970s in terms of race relations"

The cross-bench group of MPs and peers, headed by Harriet Harman, published their report in November with the aim of “overcoming the seeming inability for government to act” in the face of several reviews showing evidence of racism in Britain.

The report revealed that more than three-quarters of Black people in the UK do not believe their human rights are protected in the same way as white people’s. It also highlighted that the death rate for Black women in childbirth is five times higher than for white women and that more than 60% of Black people in the UK do not believe their health is equally protected by the NHS compared with white people.

“The government response shows they accept the arguments but they reject the solutions,” Harman said.

The report urged the government to implement the recommendations of previous reviews into racial inequality, including David Lammy’s into racism in the criminal justice system in 2016, the Angiolini review of deaths in custody in 2017 and the Windrush Lessons Learned review in 2020.

Defending itself against “any assertion of inaction” from the select committee, the government said it had implemented 33 out of 35 of the Lammy review recommendations.

Lammy, however, said the claim was deeply misleading and that the government had implemented “just a handful” of the recommendations in full. He said: “Instead of sticking its head in the sand and pretending structural racism does not exist, the government must act now to implement all 35 of my recommendations, as well as the countless other reviews, commissions and reports on race.”

The response highlighted the government’s commission on race and ethnic disparities, which was established in the summer, and it defended the Equalities and Human Rights Commission, which the committee had castigated for failing to adequately provide leadership and gain trust in tackling racial inequality.

The committee also urged the government to implement a comprehensive race equality strategy and to create a new body to look at race. This idea, however, was rejected. “The government does not agree that race should be treated differently from other protected characteristics in the Equality Act,” the response said.

Halima Begum, the director of the Runnymede Trust, dismissed the response as more “denial and dismissal from a government that’s failing to take the action necessary to combat racial inequality”. She pointed out that the government’s commission had already lost the trust of the race equality sector and said ministers were dragging their feet. “It seems intent on dragging us back to the 1970s in terms of race relations,” she said.



Begum also said the government had ignored vital recommendations on health inequalities during the Covid-19 pandemic, pointing to the vaccine policy, which centres on age as a risk factor but not ethnicity.

Harman also criticised the government for not collecting ethnicity data at the point of vaccination. She said its response had talked of the importance of monitoring, gathering data, and inequality in healthcare, but it had “clearly made a decision not to collect this information ... And that leaves a huge gaping hole in their ability to tackle the racial disparity in vaccination.”

The government said the UK had made “significant progress over the years in tackling racism” and pointed to manifesto commitments to tackle prejudice and discrimination. It said it would not be appropriate to pre-empt the findings of its commission, which will “submit its findings to the prime minister in due course”.

It takes a team to care for an older person in residential care: dedicated staff in the home and loving family visiting.



It's time we changed the law to guarantee that.

For many families, the move of a relative into residential care is the cause of great anguish. Even when it's obvious that a young adult with autism or learning difficulties needs to move out of the family home, or when it's clear that an older person can no longer manage in their own home, it can still leave the family with regrets that they've had to move out and worry as to whether their relative is in the place that's genuinely best for them.

As they worry, relatives reassure themselves that at least they can visit regularly. To show that those bonds of family still matter and provide the link to home. But when, at the start of the pandemic last year, older people with Covid were discharged from hospitals into care homes at the start of the pandemic, a dreadful death toll began in residential care. And figures have now emerged that show that people with disabilities have been far more likely to die of Covid.

As care homes locked down hard to tackle Covid, they banned family visits in an understandable response to the health threat to residents. But this has had a terrible impact on residents and their relatives. As the lockdown was eased in the summer and testing became more widespread, some homes made great efforts to resume visits. Gazebos were put up to enable visits outside where it's safer and family were invited to come and see their relatives through a window. But in many homes the blanket ban on relatives persisted.

It's shone a spotlight on just how much families matter to a relative in residential care, both to the relative and to the visitor. Relatives of older care home residents know their visits are the precious connection with memories which will otherwise fade and provide vital stimulation which helps slow the advance of dementia. Families worry that if visits are denied for too long, by the time they get to see their relative it will be too late and they will no longer recognise them. Those unique threads to the past will have been broken and isolation deepened.

Family visits are also important reassurance about care standards. No one looks more closely to see if nails are cut, hair is brushed and there are no unexplained bruises.

Parents of a young person in residential care are desperate to ensure that their son or daughter knows they are still loved and valued as a member of the family. Not being able to see parents can cause a young person distress and anguish and mean their problems deteriorate.

Some homes have restored visits safely but it needs to be all care homes, not just some. By law, everyone has the right to family life is enshrined in law and a ban, where it is not even considered whether a visit can be allowed safely, breaches the Human Rights Act.

Some other countries are tackling this better, like Canada, where the law guarantees visits for a relative who is the "designated care-giver", provided they test negative before each visit.

It takes a team to care for an older person in residential care: dedicated staff in the home and loving family visiting. It's time we changed the law to guarantee that.

Parliament's Human Rights Committee, which I chair, has drafted Regulations which could be put into law in just a couple of days. We've presented these to the Health Secretary and urged him to bring them into the House of Commons. For those in residential care, there's no time to wait.

The Joint Committee on Human Rights have written to Matt Hancock, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, and Lucy Frazer, Prisons Minister, on the impact of long lockdown to those in care homes, hospitals and prisons.

In January the Joint Committee on Human Rights heard from witnesses whose right to a family life (Article 8 ECHR) had been personally affected by the long lockdown in these settings.

The Committee heard how families had been separated and the immense difficulties that this has had on both those within these settings and their loved ones.

I wrote as Chair of the Committee pressing for immediate action.

- Read the letter: [to Secretary of State for Health and Social Care](#)



Important, this from @EHRC. You don't forfeit your human rights when you go into residential care. You still have rights incl right to family life. Blanket visit bans are cruel and govt must stop them now!

EHRC @EHRC · 03/02/2021
MPs have called on ministers to legislate against blanket bans on care home visits in England.
Everyone has the right to a family life and we...



- Read the letter: [to Prisons Minister](#)

New Regulations drafted to end the blanket ban on family visits in residential care homes

As tens of thousands of fragile older and disabled people in residential care are prevented from being visited by their closest relative, the Joint Committee on Human Rights have drafted a new law which would end the blanket bans of relative's visits.

It would also require residential care homes to allow visits unless, after individualised assessment, a face-to-face visit is not possible for safety reasons.

Relatives remain an essential part of care for so many older and disabled people in care homes. It helps to keep their memories alive, it keeps them in touch with the world outside the home, and it reassures them of their continued place in the family and of the love of their family.

Blanket bans are in breach of the legal right to family life. The Government has issued guidance saying visits should resume and be individually assessed, but that needs to be enforced by law to make sure it happens in all homes.

The Joint Committee on Human Rights has drafted new regulations which they have asked the Secretary of State to put into law right away. Click image to review them.



STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

2021 No. xxxx

NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE, ENGLAND

SOCIAL CARE, ENGLAND

PUBLIC HEALTH, ENGLAND

The Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) (Amendment) Regulations 2021

Made xx February 2021

Coming into force in accordance with regulation 1

The Secretary of State makes the following Regulations in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 8, 20(1) to (5A), 35, 86(2) and (4), 87(1) and (2) and 161(3) and (4) of the Health and Social Care Act 2008⁽¹⁾.

In accordance with section 20(8) of that Act, the Secretary of State has consulted such persons as the Secretary of State considers appropriate.

A draft of these Regulations was laid before Parliament in accordance with section 162(3) of the Health and Social Care Act 2008, and was approved by a resolution of each House of Parliament.

Citation and commencement

1.—(1) These Regulations may be cited as the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) (Amendment) Regulations 2021.

(2) These Regulations come into force on the day after the day on which these Regulations are made.

Amendment of Regulation 9

2.—(1) Regulation 9 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014 is amended as follows.

(2) After Regulation 9, paragraph (3), sub-paragraph (i), insert —

¹ 2008 c. 14. Section 20 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 ("the 2008 Act") was amended by section 81 of the Care Act 2014 (c. 23). Section 161(3) of the 2008 Act was amended by section 294(4) of the Health and Social Care Act 2017 (c. 7).

"(j) facilitating face to face contact between the service user and persons significant to the service user so as to meet the service user's needs and preferences, having particular regard to their emotional and psychological needs;

(k) where the registered person determines following an individualised risk assessment that unrestricted face to face contact between significant persons and the service user is not possible, facilitating face to face contact with the significant person or persons whom the registered person reasonably believes best meets the needs and preferences of the service user;

(l) where the registered person determines following an individualised risk assessment that no face to face contact between any significant persons and the service user is possible, facilitating contact with significant persons in such other ways as best meets the needs and preferences of the service user and is in accordance with the individualised risk assessment."

(4) After Regulation 9, paragraph (6), insert —

"(7) In this regulation —

"face to face contact" means contact without fixed physical barriers between the service user and the significant person, but includes contact where the service user and/or relevant person or persons are wearing appropriate personal protective equipment if such is required to prevent or control the spread of infections, including those that are health care associated;

"an individualised risk assessment" means a risk assessment which considers:

(a) The risks to the health and well-being of the service user both of having and not having face to face to contact with either two or more significant persons (for purposes of paragraph 3, sub-paragraph (k)) or one relevant person (for purposes of paragraph 3, sub-paragraph (l));

(b) The risks to the health and well-being of other service users arising from the registered person facilitating face to face contact between the service user and a person or persons significant to that service user; and

(c) The risks to the health and well-being of the service user (and to other service users) of alternative options for contact to minimise the risks identified in (a) and (b).

"significant person" means any person falling within section 4(7) sub-paragraphs (a) to (d) of the 2005 Act (whether or not the service user lacks capacity for purposes of the 2005 Act to decide whether or not to have face to face contact with them) and "person significant to the service user" is to be read accordingly.

Signed by the authority of the Secretary of State for Health.

xxx
Minister of State,
Department of Health

xxx February 2021

Government must urgently change the law to end blanket ban on care home visits

People don't forfeit their human rights when they go into care. They must not be denied the right to face-to-face visits from significant family and friends during the pandemic.

The situation in care homes and mental health hospitals where relatives are unable to visit their loved ones is urgent. Face-to-face visits for those in care – whether they are older people in care, disabled adults, or younger people with autism and/or learning difficulties – are critical to the well-being of residents and their family members alike.

It is important that those in care do not feel they have been abandoned, and that they feel reassured that they are still loved and valued as part of the family. For those with dementia, family visits are particularly crucial in keeping memories alive. Without face-to-face visits many deteriorate, and some sadly die without seeing their loved ones, causing huge pain and heartbreak.

Government guidance is that unless there is an outbreak in the care home, visits should be allowed subject to individualised risk assessments where necessary. That policy is not being enforced. The cross-party Joint Committee on Human Rights, which I chair, has heard many examples of people being denied meaningful visits, where these might be safely facilitated.

Just one example was John, whose wife has dementia and is in a care home. He told us that he has only been able to have restricted visits taking place with a glass partition between them: "I could see how she looked and that was about it. They were not meaningful visits".

The Joint Committee on Human Rights believes there is now an urgent need for legislation which would require individualised risk assessments be carried out in relation to each resident or patient. We have looked at how family visits have been enabled in Ontario, Canada, where they have changed the law to allow access to care homes for a relative who is a designated care-giver, provided they test negative before each visit. This acknowledges that it takes a team to care for someone; dedicated staff in the home or hospital and loving family visiting.

Our Committee has drafted regulations to ensure that nobody in a care home is denied face-to-face visits without a carefully thought-through individualised risk assessment and have presented them to the health and social care secretary. Our legislation would require individual risk assessments for face-to-face contact, where possible, with family and friends whose support is significant to a resident in a care home or hospital setting. Where the risks posed by face-to-face contact are too great, careful thought must be given to alternatives to meet residents' needs.



Government must urgently change the law to end blanket ban on care home visits



It is important that those in care do not feel they have been abandoned, writes Harriet Harman MP. | PA Images



Harriet Harman MP
@harrietharman



Harriet Harman
@HarrietHarman

But @Helen_Whately Gov Guidance updated in Jan says visits should be allowed. Has Gov policy changed now so no visits til after all residents & all staff have had 2nd jab? No scientific justification but will cause despair for relatives & residents alike. @HumanRightsCtte



Helen Whately
@Helen_Whately · Feb 3

Writing in @Daily_Express today on the support we're giving to care homes to help them through some of the darkest days of the pandemic. There are good reasons to be optimistic, but the fight isn't over yet.

WE SET out to offer jobs to all care homes for older people by the end of January, and I'm proud to say we met that target. Everyone involved in our vaccination programme, from the scientists who developed the vaccines, to the NHS, local authorities and care homes themselves – they have all done an incredible job. GPs in NHS Primary Care Networks have worked



can regularly test staff and residents. The fight isn't over yet. I know relatives are desperate for normal visiting and I

The need here is great, and there is a moral imperative for the government to act to enforce their own guidance. We have drafted a law to ensure this is done, and we call on the government to bring it to parliament now before more people are unnecessary harmed and heartbreak is caused.

Giles Sheldrick @ExpressGilo · Feb 1
 Excl: @RuthieHenshall lays bare the 'guilt & unbearable pain' of knowing her mum is dying of #dementia but is unable to see her as @HarrietHarman & @rightsforresid2 demand urgent law change to end the care home access scandal which is a 'breach of human rights' #coronavirus



9 51 107

Eleanor Hayward @eleanorhayward

EXC: Draft regulations will be published tomorrow to outlaw blanket bans on care home visits. The legislation drawn up by @HarrietHarman and Joint Committee on Human Rights would enshrine the right of family members to be treated as essential carers. mol.im/a/9211891



Giles Sheldrick @ExpressGilo · Feb 9
 Excl: @leicesterliz rightly describes the continuing blanket ban on care home visits as one of the 'greatest scandals of the Covid crisis' & demands loved ones are finally let in @rightsforresid2 @JohnCampaign @NCFCareForum @age_uk @HumanRightsCtte @HarrietHarman @RuthieHenshall



10 59 95

Hurstynicky @lanztocon

Ban on care home visits could be ILLEGAL! About time. Almost a year since Care Homes locked our families inside. Thank you very much @HarrietHarman @leicesterliz @rightsforresid2 🌞🌞🌞



Ban on care home visits could be ILLEGAL
 Legislation has been drafted to stop families being torn apart. [dailymail.co.uk](https://www.dailymail.co.uk)

Harriet Harman @HarrietHarman · Feb 3

MPs draft law to restart care home visits and set two-week deadline for government to act | The Independent



MPs draft law to restart care home visits and set deadline for governme...
 Canada-style legislation would enshrine rights for vulnerable loved ones feeling 'abandoned by their families' [independent.co.uk](https://www.independent.co.uk)

Harriet Harman @HarrietHarman · Feb 3

MPs call for Covid ban on care home visits in England to be made illegal | World news | The Guardian



MPs call for Covid ban on care home visits in England to be made illegal
 Matt Hancock urged to allow visits as relatives say blanket coronavirus rule is causing deaths [theguardian.com](https://www.theguardian.com)

22 38 85

I have also tabled a Parliamentary Early Day Motion and have asked all eligible Members of Parliament to sign and show their support for allowing visits to people in residential care during the covid-19 pandemic.



The screenshot shows the UK Parliament logo at the top left. Below it is the heading 'Early Day Motions'. A breadcrumb trail reads 'UK Parliament > Early Day Motions > Visiting in care homes and hospitals during the covid-19 outbreak'. The main title is 'Visiting in care homes and hospitals during the covid-19 outbreak'. Below the title, it says 'EDM 1496: tabled on 11 February 2021' and 'Tabled in the 2019-21 session.'

The motion reads:

[EDM 1496](#): *That this House notes the [letter](#) from the Chair of the Joint Committee on Human Rights to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care on the matter of visits to people in care homes and hospitals during the covid-19 outbreak; is deeply concerned about the acute distress many older and disabled people and younger people in residential care and their families are experiencing by being prevented from visiting; recognises that a failure to adopt an individualised approach to the safety of visits risks breaching the right of patients, residents and their families to family life (Article 8 ECHR); further recognises that this must be balanced with the duty to protect the right to life (Article 2 ECHR) for those living and working in care homes and hospitals by preventing infection within these settings; further notes the Committee’s proposals in the draft regulations using powers in the Health and Social Care Act 2008, which they published alongside their letter; and calls on the Government to legislate to ensure that visits are able to take place subject to individualised risk assessments.*

I continue to stay in close touch with the residential care homes in Camberwell and Peckham.

In Parliament

‘Rough sex defence’ is banned as government adds new clause to the Domestic Abuse Bill – men can no longer blame women for their deaths

The Government have changed the law to prevent men claiming in court that the fatal injuries they inflicted on a woman were at her request during “rough sex”.

This was the culmination of a campaign that started when I saw a tweet from the Kidderminster Express & Star of their report of the trial of John9 Broadhurst for killing Natalie Connolly.

It was all about his lurid evidence of what he claimed was her sexual proclivities. She was covered in bruises, had over 40 injuries and bled to death from an object he inserted into her. But it was, he said, at her request. She of course was unable to say

'Rough sex defence' will be outlawed after MPs back Harriet Harman's campaign - Southwark News



'Rough sex defence' will be outlawed after MPs back ...
Not a single member of parliament disputed amendment to the Domestic Abuse Bill at its final vo...
southwarknews.co.uk

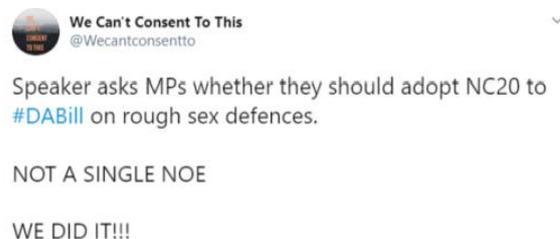
anything because he had killed her. I imagined the torture for her bereaved relatives sitting in court listening to him blaming her for her death at his hands. He got just 3 years for manslaughter.

The Government had already promised to bring forward a Domestic Abuse Bill so Natalie Connolly's local MP Mark Garnier and I decided to try and use that bill to get the law changed to ban the rough sex defence. A group of young women seeing this on social media started an online campaign under the title "We Can't Consent To This" and began research which discovered this was not just one case, there was a widespread problem.

Mark Garnier and I tabled amendments which were backed by 80 MPs from 7 parties. And the government listened to our cross-party campaign. The new Bill is now law and it will send a powerful message to men that they have to take responsibility for their actions and cannot blame their victim. It will tell women that the law is there to protect them.



Alan Andrews, Natalie Connolly's dad said: "There is no way that a man should be able to bat away brutal sex violence as just an accident and pave the way to get away with it. To cope with her private life being explored in intricate detail on top of the grief of losing her has been unimaginably hard for the whole family. Natalie is no longer here to tell us what he did to her or why he left her where he did. One thing is for certain; Natalie didn't fantasise about being killed or leaving her daughter without a mum that night."



Read my Telegraph piece on why this is so important [here](#).

I am now urging the Director of Public Prosecutions to review all the sexual violence and rape cases that were dropped because of the rough sex defence. I am also asking him to issue new guidance to prosecutors on the law, to monitor how the law is operating and collect data on whether this defence is used and report within 12 months of the law being brought in.

The types of defence have changed, but men are still getting away with rape and murder under a misogynistic justice system

8th March 2021

How the criminal justice system treats men who kill their wives needs a thorough review and must be modernised in line with our understanding that there can be no excuses for domestic violence.

I've spent decades complaining about how the criminal justice is biased against women. And we still are because most of the old problems remain and new injustices have arisen.



Killing someone is the most heinous crime. But when it comes to domestic homicide, where the husband or boyfriend is the killer, the criminal justice system takes his side against her. That is made easier by the fact that she is not there to speak for herself. He admits that what he did, and intended to do, killed her. But then the courts resound with his excuses. It used to be the provocation defence, that though he killed her it was her fault rather than his as she had provoked him by having an affair, or failing to look after the house properly, or not respecting him.

In Scotland it was called the "infidelity" defence. Though he had killed her he would stand in the dock as the victim of her provocation. That used to reduce the charge of murder to manslaughter and often he'd walk from court with a suspended sentence. After decades of campaigning, that changed in 2009 when we abolished the provocation defence for jealous husbands.

But no sooner had one misogynous defence been ended, another raised its ugly head. A particularly perverse "modern" version of male excuses emerged in the "rough sex gone wrong" defence. He'd admit it was his actions that killed her, by strangulation or causing haemorrhaging from internal injuries. But he'd evade a murder charge by asserting that it was her fault because it was sex in the way she wanted it. That appalling defence which saw the dead victim's reputation trashed in court has just been abolished in the Domestic Abuse Bill 2020.

But we've still got a problem with the old common law defence of diminished responsibility, which, in cases of domestic violence, has got a grisly circularity. He claims that he can't have had responsibility for his actions otherwise he wouldn't have killed her. Her dead body is itself the proof that his responsibility was diminished. So once again it's manslaughter not murder, he escapes the life sentence and spends a couple of years in prison. That needs to be stopped. The whole issue of how the criminal justice system treats men who kill their wives needs a thorough review and needs to be modernised in line with our understanding that there can be no excuses for domestic violence.

Men used to get away with rape arguing that she was "asking for it" by wearing a short skirt or by getting drunk. We were invited to understand that when he heard her say "no" he thought she meant "yes". That can no longer be argued in court. But there are still so many cases where he exculpates himself by bringing up her previous sexual history on the basis that if she'd had sex with many other men she must have been prepared to have sex with him.

"She shouldn't have been wearing a short skirt" has been replaced with "she shouldn't have gone on an internet date or "she shouldn't have sent flirty texts".

The number of men prosecuted for rape has fallen to the lowest level since records began. While rapes increase, prosecutions and convictions in England and Wales have more than halved. So that needs a thorough review to sort it out too.

The police service who investigate is male dominated. As is the prosecution service which takes the case to court and the judiciary which hears the trial. We need to change the laws but we also need our criminal justice agencies to be led by a team of women and men working together to ensure we make progress.

Unimaginable grief for the family of Sarah Everard

The news that we all dreaded came on Friday 12 March with the police announcing that the remains found in Kent were Sarah Everard.

There's been sadness, revulsion and outrage. Especially from women. Sarah was snatched from the street as she walked home in the dark. The police sought to reassure women that abduction and murder is extremely rare. But women know that it's just the worst end of a continuum of behaviour that they endure every day.

It's the minority of men who do it. But it's the majority of women who experience it. Just about every girl and woman walks under the threat of male violence, men who follow you, film you, try and get your number, try and get you in their car, and won't take no for an answer.

Women go to great lengths to make themselves safe, to keep their keys in their hands, to take the busy route home rather than the quickest one, to stay in after dark. But what about schoolgirls going home alone in the dark, or women going home from work or after a night out. Why should they be in fear. Women are now talking about this. And demanding action.

It's a crime to kerb crawl in your car if you're looking to pay for sex. But not if you're harassing a girl on her way home from school. Let's start with making kerb-crawling a crime if you're harassing a schoolgirl. And let the penalty be losing your driving license.

Let's come down on street harassment like a ton of bricks. We've put up with it for too long.

This International Women's Day debate comes in the shadow of the menace of male violence against women.

My International Women's Day Debate Speech 2021:

I thank the right hon. Member for Basingstoke (Mrs Miller) for securing the debate, and I agree with every single word that she said in her excellent speech.

This International Women's Day debate comes in the shadow of the menace of male violence against women. I am sure we all feel the same as the Home Secretary, who said that she is "deeply saddened" by the developments in the Sarah Everard investigation, and we all hope against hope that we will not hear the news that we all dread. But at the same



International Women's Day Flag raising ceremony at the House of Commons

L-R, Deputy Speaker Dame Rosie Winterton MP, Chi Onwurah MP, Shadow Leader of The House, Valerie Vaz MP, Caroline Nokes, Chair of the Women & Equalities Committee and Deputy Speaker Dame Eleanor Laing.

time as the sadness, there is real anger among women at the threat that they face on a daily basis. That is not to spread alarm; it is to spell out the reality.

Here we are, in the 21st century, in a country where women and men expect to be equal, but we are not. Women, particularly young women, are terrified of the threat of male violence on the streets—men who try to get them to get in their car, who try to get their number, who follow them, who film them, who will not take no for an answer. Every young woman, every day, walks under this threat, so they adopt myriad strategies just to get home from work in the dark choosing the busiest route, even if it is longer; keeping their keys in their hand; trying to go with someone rather than alone; getting a friend or their partner to map their location on a phone app; phoning on the way home so that they know they are expected.

Women will find no reassurance at all in the Metropolitan Police Commissioner's statement that it is "incredibly rare for a woman to be abducted from our streets."

Women know that abduction and murder is just the worst end of a spectrum of everyday male threat to women. When the police advise women not to go out at night on their own, women ask why they have to be subjected to an informal curfew. It is not women who are the problem here; it is men.

The criminal justice system fails women and lets men off the hook. Whether it is rape or domestic homicide, women are judged and blamed—"Why was she on a dating app?" "Why was she out late at night?" "Why had she been drinking?" "What are those flirty messages on her phone?"—and men find excuses, raking up her previous sexual history in court to try to tarnish her character and prejudice the jury. Let us hear no more false reassurances; let us have action.

Next Monday, we will be debating in this House the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill. That is the chance for the Government to banish the culture of male excuses from the criminal justice system and, instead of blaming women, start protecting them.

Criminalising street harassment and kerb crawling is a much needed first step to keep women and girls safe



On Saturday the first all-female operation came together in Lambeth & Southwark to tackle violent crime.

A/Insp Perkins said "It was important for me to bring together lots of different women from various departments to truly showcase our capabilities."

#InternationalWomensDay ♀



Politics.co.uk @Polit

WATCH: @HarrietHar equality at the Comm

"No more false reassurances. Let's have action."



Click image to listen to my speech



Currently it's not a criminal offence for a man in a vehicle to follow a woman or girl; call out to her, film her, try to get her into the vehicle, pester her. That is terrifying and should be an offence punishable by taking away his driving licence.

"She was just walking home" are the 5 words that have come to sum up the horror at the appalling killing of Sarah Everard. It was a tragedy which so many women can relate to because they experience daily intimidation and threats from men on the streets, particularly when they are on their own and after dark.

The outpouring of women sharing their everyday experiences on social media has created an unstoppable momentum which is challenging the impunity of men who harass women and girls.

Harassment of women on the streets by men following them, or kerb-crawling them in their cars is not new. There were protests in the 1970s when women objected to being told to stay home after a spate of brutal murders in Leeds. But the protests of women went nowhere. The men in the corridors of power didn't listen. It never even reached the political agenda let alone precipitated change. But now we have social media to amplify women's experiences, there is an expectation among women that their concerns will be acted on. There are now women in those corridors of power whose duty it is to deliver.

We should introduce new criminal offences so that the criminal law gives women and girls protection and sends a strong message to men. Currently kerb-crawling is a criminal offence if the man is seeking a prostitute. But it's not an offence for a man in a van to kerb-crawl following a lone schoolgirl on her way home after dark; calling out to her, filming her, trying to get her into the van, pestering her. That is terrifying and should be an offence punishable by taking away his driving licence.

Currently harassment is only a crime if a man persistently harasses a woman with a threatening "course of conduct". But all harassment of women and girls should be a crime, even if it's the first time. The criminal justice system too readily blames the woman and lets the man off the hook. That's evident in trials for rape and sexual assault where the defendant drags out the victim's previous sexual history to try and prejudice the jury and undermine her confidence. It ends up feeling like it's her in the dock not him.

Harriet Harman
@HarrietHarman

Kerb crawling schoolgirls isn't. It should be and we can do that in Police Bill coming to @UKParliament on Monday. @OurStreetsNow @fawcettsociety @Wecantconsentton

ITV News Politics
@ITVNewsPolitics · Mar 12

'Curb crawling is an offence if its being done by a man seeking a prostitute... but its not an offence to curb crawl a school girl on her way home from school'

@HarrietHarman says the government should 'extend the offence of curb crawling' to apply to men harassing school girls

22.1K views 0:09 / 1:06

Victims' Commissioner for England & Wales
@VictimsComm

Completely agree with @HarrietHarman's comments on #BBCWATO. Alongside sadness, there is real anger. Until CJS stops giving space for men's excuses, why would women feel like the system is on their side - and why would men think that they need to look at their own behaviour? 1/2

1:51 PM · Mar 11, 2021 · Twitter Web App

No wonder so many rape victims don't report the crime or have the courage to see through a prosecution. Using previous sexual history in evidence should have been banned from 1999, but it still happens so the law needs toughening up.

There's a great deal of cross-party support for these measures. I've tabled amendments to the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill with the backing of Caroline Nokes, chair of the Women and Equalities Committee, and Sir Peter Bottomley, Father of the House along with over 45 MPs from 6 parties. The home secretary has made it clear that she'll look seriously at new law.

LBC @LBC
 Mother of the House of Commons Harriet Harman calls on Government to make kerb crawling a criminal offence, with offenders having their driving licenses revoked.

@AndrewCastle63 | @HarrietHarman



'Predatory' kerb crawling must be made illegal, demands mother of House of Commons. The mother of the House of Commons has called for kerb crawling to be made illegal with perpetrators having their driving licenses revoked.
 @lbc.co.uk

Plan International UK @PlanUK
 There needs to be legal change for girls and women to begin to feel safe in public spaces.

Girls in the UK are facing harassment every day. They're being followed, shouted at, touched & groped and they want it to stop. #CrimeNotCompliment @HarrietHarman



'Kerb crawling' of school girls should be illegal, says Harriet Harman MP | ITV News
 'Kerb crawling' of school girls should be outlawed by the Government in next week's police bill, Harriet Harman MP has told ITV News.
 @itv.com

The Prime Minister says that we need culture change. But

Southwark News @Southwark_News · Mar 18
 Comments come amid public debate over how to make our streets safer for women
 @HarrietHarman @ReclaimTS #ReclaimTheseStreets @helenhayes_ @MayorofLondon @kieronjwilliams



Harriet Harman calls for tougher action on kerb crawlers - Southwark News
 Comments come amid public debate over how to make our streets safer for women
 @southwarknews.co.uk

that shouldn't let the government off the hook. Culture change is led by government action. Tough laws against men menacing women on the street will drive that culture change.

Let's have less talk by men of their concerns that women "feel" unsafe on the streets. It's not subjective. It's a fact. Women are not safe from men acting in a predatory way. Let's not put this down to women's feelings or their frailty. This is about men's awful, menacing behaviour and it's time it stopped.

I tabled New Clauses 1 & 2 in the Police, Crime, Courts and Sentencing Bill to outlaw street harassment & kerb crawling:

NC 1 Harassment in a public place

2 Public Bill Committee: 23 March 2021
 Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill, continued

Ms Harriet Harman
 Caroline Nokes
 Sir Peter Bottomley
 Wera Hobhouse
 Janet Daby
 Caroline Lucas

Liz Saville Roberts	Stella Creasy	Julie Elliott
Taiwo Owatemi	Maria Eagle	Helen Hayes
Dane Dina Johnson	Emma Hardy	Rosie Cooper
Roshanara Ali	Tonia Antoniazzi	Rosie Duffield
Yvonne Forvargne	Bell Ribeiro-Addy	Barbara Keeley
Anne Marie Morris	Mohammad Yasin	Andrew Gwynne
Lilian Greenwood	Karin Smyth	Tracy Brabin
Paul Blomfield	Debbie Abrahams	Dane Margaret Hodge
Sir Mark Hendrick	Kevin Brennan	Mr Andrew Mitchell
Clive Efford	Mr Virendra Sharma	Clive Lewis
Sarah Champion	Clare Hanna	Florence Ebalomji
Simon Hoare	Naveendu Mishra	Chris Bryant
Kim Johnson	Catherine McKinnell	Geraint Davies
Claudia Webbe	Paula Barker	Darren Jones
Mr David Davis	Janie Stone	Ed Davey
Jackie Doyle-Price	Derek Twigg	Yvette Cooper
Christina Rees	Apsana Begun	

To move the following Clause— NC1

- "Harassment in a public place"**
- (1) A person must not engage in any conduct in a public place—
 - (a) which amounts to harassment of another, and
 - (b) which he knows or ought to know amounts to harassment of the other.
 - (2) For the purposes of this section, the person whose conduct is in question ought to know that it amounts to harassment of another if a reasonable person would think the conduct amounted to harassment of the other.
 - (3) For the purposes of this section—

"conduct" includes speech;

"harassment" of a person includes causing the person alarm or distress.
 - (4) Subsection (1) does not apply to conduct if the person can show—
 - (a) that it was for the purpose of preventing or detecting crime,
 - (b) that it was under any enactment or rule of law or to comply with any condition or requirement imposed by any person under any enactment, or
 - (c) that in the particular circumstances it was reasonable.
 - (5) A person who engages in any conduct in breach of subsection (1) is guilty of an offence.
 - (6) A person guilty of an offence under this section is liable on summary conviction to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months, or a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale, or both.

NC 2 Kerb-crawling

2 Public Bill Committee: 23 March 2021
 Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill, continued

Ms Harriet Harman
 Caroline Nokes
 Sir Peter Bottomley
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Liz Saville Roberts	Stella Creasy	Julie Elliott
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Paul Blomfield	Debbie Abrahams	Dane Margaret Hodge
Sir Mark Hendrick	Kevin Brennan	Mr Andrew Mitchell
Clive Efford	Mr Virendra Sharma	Clive Lewis
Sarah Champion	Clare Hanna	Florence Ebalomji
Simon Hoare	Naveendu Mishra	Chris Bryant
Kim Johnson	Catherine McKinnell	Geraint Davies
Claudia Webbe	Paula Barker	Darren Jones
Mr David Davis	Janie Stone	Ed Davey
Jackie Doyle-Price	Derek Twigg	Yvette Cooper
Christina Rees	Apsana Begun	

To move the following Clause— NC2

- "Harassment in a public place"**
- (1) A person must not engage in any conduct in a public place—
 - (a) which amounts to harassment of another, and
 - (b) which he knows or ought to know amounts to harassment of the other.
 - (2) For the purposes of this section, the person whose conduct is in question ought to know that it amounts to harassment of another if a reasonable person would think the conduct amounted to harassment of the other.
 - (3) For the purposes of this section—

"conduct" includes speech;

"harassment" of a person includes causing the person alarm or distress.
 - (4) Subsection (1) does not apply to conduct if the person can show—
 - (a) that it was for the purpose of preventing or detecting crime,
 - (b) that it was under any enactment or rule of law or to comply with any condition or requirement imposed by any person under any enactment, or
 - (c) that in the particular circumstances it was reasonable.
 - (5) A person who engages in any conduct in breach of subsection (1) is guilty of an offence.
 - (6) A person guilty of an offence under this section is liable on summary conviction to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months, or a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale, or both.

#Reclaim These Streets Vigil for Sarah Everard

Sarah Everard's vigil 'woefully mishandled by the police'

The Joint Committee on Human Rights, which I chair has urged the Government to put the right to protest in England during the lockdown on the same footing as the right to picket and the right to take part in communal worship.

The law on the right to protest during the pandemic has been a mess and the right to protest has not been protected.

While the Government has rightly protected the right to assemble for religion, they have not properly protected the right to protest.

The right to protests should have no less protection than the right to religious assembly. The right to protest is important and should be allowed, like other current exemptions, if it is carried out in a safe way.

When people have to go to Court to establish whether their actions are lawful or criminal, as has happened most recently in the Reclaim These Streets Clapham vigil, it's clear that the law is in a mess.

The Joint Committee called for evidence on the human rights consequences of lockdown, including the right to protest, in November last year and heard evidence on protests in February.

The events at the Sarah Everard vigil show clearly how the lack of clarity and level of uncertainty in the law is unacceptable and must be remedied as a matter of urgency.

You Retweeted



Cathy Newman
@cathynewman

Mother of House @HarrietHarman recalls going on #reclaimthenight protests in the 70s but says little changed because women weren't in power. Now she says it's different & she and others from across @UKParliament plan to seize the day. WATCH



Labour MP Harriet Harman says Everard's vigil 'woefully mishandled by the poli... We spoke to Labour MP Harriet Harman, who is chair of the Joint Committee on Human Rights and is planning an amendment to the Police, Crime, Sentencing ... @channel4.com

9:19 PM · Mar 14, 2021 · Twitter for iPhone



Harriet Harman
@HarrietHarman

Lockdown laws on protest 'a mess' – human rights committee report | Evening Standard



Lockdown laws on protest 'a mess' – human rights committee report

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In memory of Sarah Everard, Clapham Common Bandstand – Sunday 14 March 2021

This can be done right away as the Joint Committee on Human Rights has drafted the Regulations. The Government just needs to put them into law. Click here to read the report.

Government must now agree to work cross-party to make new laws to keep women safe.

My letter to the Home Secretary, Priti Patel and Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice, Robert Buckland about new laws to protect women and girls:

ITV This Morning

'There is an opportunity for change, the Government must listen following the clashes at the Sarah Everard Vigil'

Monday 15 March



Govt must now agree to work cross-party to make new laws to keep women safe. My letter to @pritipatel Home Sec and @RobertBuckland Justice Sec #SarahEverard #ReclaimTheseStreets



4:04 PM · Mar 14, 2021 · Twitter for iPhone



Home Secretary, Priti Patel, Statement following the police clashes at Sarah Everard vigil – Home Secretary 15 March 2021

Policing and Prevention of Violence against Women
Volume 691: debated on Monday 15 March 2021

I would like to pay my deepest sympathy and respects to the family of Sarah Everard and her many dismayed and grieving friends. I welcome the reopening of the violence against women and girls



The law on protest in pandemic is a muddle. @HumanRightsCtte says new Regs needed to clarify right to safe protest. To be published later this week. I ask home sec @pritipatel to consider them carefully & then back them. 🙌



6:19 PM · Mar 15, 2021 · Twitter Web App

consultation. It is evident that the Home Secretary recognises the genuine and justified strength of feeling about women's safety that lay behind the vigil on Clapham common, so surely it was just wrong of the Metropolitan Police Commissioner to refuse to reach agreement with the organisers and find a way so that the vigil could go ahead safely.

Does the Home Secretary agree with the Joint Committee on Human Rights that the law on protest during the covid pandemic needs to be clarified so that protests can go ahead, but do so safely?

The Joint Committee has drafted regulations that will be published with our report later this week. Will she undertake to consider them seriously with a view to laying them before the House?

Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill

Government Bill

Women don't want us to sympathise, they want action. My speech in 2nd Reading of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill:

I very much agree with what the hon. Member for North Wiltshire (James Gray) said. The terrible outcome of the police ban on the Clapham common vigil in the wake of the tragic killing of Sarah Everard shows how wrong the Government are to try in this Bill to curb the right to demonstrate, so I hope they will think again about that. The anger of the vigil was about women demanding to be able to walk the streets without fear, and we must listen to those demands and act on them now in the Bill. This demand is not new. Along with women up and down the country, I joined the "Reclaim the Night" protests in the 1970s, but then women's demands were not listened to by the men in the corridors of power. Now there are women in government, in the Home Office and in the Cabinet. There are women in all parties in Parliament. We are in the corridors of power, so we must use our power to deliver for women.

We all argued it would make a difference if we were here as women in Parliament. Now we had better prove it. We can in this Bill make it a crime to do what men do to women on the street every day and which makes their lives a misery. Kerb crawling is terrifying for a woman or a girl on her own, especially after dark. A man has no right to do it, so let us make it an offence punishable by taking away his driving licence. Following a woman on the street, filming her, trying to get her number and not taking no for an answer are harassment. Why should women and girls have to put up with it? Let us make that a criminal offence. I have tabled two new clauses, which have the backing of Members from all parties, and not just women, but men, too. I hope that the Government will accept them.



Harriet Harman @HarrietHarman

Women don't want us to sympathise, they want action. I'm tabling New Clauses w/cross party support to make kerb-crawling and street harassment criminal offences. @ReclaimTS #SarahEverard My speech in parl't today



9:18 PM · Mar 15, 2021 · Twitter Web App

View Tweet activity

Click image to watch my speech

Too often when a woman is the victim of a sexual offence, all her previous sexual history is dragged up in court and it ends up as though she is in the dock, not the man. That is not supposed to happen, but it does, so we need to stop it. I have new clauses with cross-party backing to do that, too, which I hope the Government will back. Women do not want us to sympathise; they want action, and that is what we should do.

Changing the law to restrict the use of complainants' previous sexual activity in rape trials

Once again, we need to address the problem of rape trials turning into a trial of the complainant rather than the defendant. This is the issue of the trial focusing not on what the defendant did, but on the complainant's previous sexual history. It is based on the outdated notion that this is relevant evidence because if a woman had had sex with numerous men in the past, it would be likely to mean that she had agreed to sex with the defendant. Her previous sexual history is also used to imply that if she is a woman of "loose morals" she is less likely to be telling the truth and that her complaint should not be believed. Neither of these notions are right and were rejected in 1999 when Parliament introduced the Youth, Justice and Criminal Evidence (YJCE) Act.

The YJCE Act limited the use of a complainant's previous sexual history to ensure it was only introduced in very exceptional cases and then only with the permission of a judge after hearing an application by the defence.

But research by Vera Baird QC – 'Seeing is Believing' - and by Limeculture shows that the use in evidence of a complainant's previous sexual history is commonplace. In a significant minority of rape trials the complainant's previous sexual history is used in evidence - sometimes without an application even having been made.

This is not what complainants should have to put up with and it is not what Parliament intended. And it is not a fair trial if prejudicial irrelevant evidence is allowed in.

The evidence of the scale and nature of the problem is now clear and we need a change in the law to ensure that trials are fair and that complainants do not face the ordeal of their sexual history being dragged through the courts. The forthcoming Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill presents an opportunity for legal change and there is a wide-ranging coalition to ensure that the process in court reflects what Parliament intended and what is fair to complainants.

Musician's Passport - Reciprocal visa-free touring for UK and EU musicians



Changing the law to restrict the use of complainants' previous sexual activity in rape trials

25th June 2021

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

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The Government shamefully abandoned our creative sector in its Brexit deal. As a result of leaving the EU, touring musicians and performers are no longer able to travel and work without restrictions in each of the 27 EU member states.

Instead they face individual visa regimes for each country. Some countries such as France continue to allow visa-free work for musicians, but others such as Spain or Italy require visas and work permits, which significantly increase the cost and bureaucracy of touring and makes it unviable for many artists, particularly those at the start of their careers.

The UK haulage industry, a key factor in large-scale touring, also faces significant restrictions on its operations. This is a significant issue. The music industry is a huge UK success story and contributes £5.8bn to the British economy, and it is estimated that 44% of musicians earn up to half of their earnings in the EU. Over 197,000 full-time jobs are sustained by the music industry, which is 4 times as many jobs as the steel and fisheries industries combined.



I am working with many MPs across all parties to get the Government to return to negotiations with the EU to agree reciprocal visa-free touring for UK and EU musicians. Last week I spoke at the hearing of the Petitions Committee in response to a petition by musician Tim Brennan that has received over 284,000 signatures and called on the Secretary of State to stand up for our music industry and secure a deal. Camberwell and Peckham was one of the constituencies with the highest numbers of signatories.

I have also written to him separately requesting a meeting with him to press him on this further I have tabled [an Early Day Motion](#) on the issue that can be viewed here.

Our creative professionals represent a major UK presence on the world stage, and I am proud that Camberwell and Peckham is home to so many of these talented individuals. They have already been badly hit by the covid-19 pandemic and we must make sure that this further major problem for their profession is sorted as soon as possible. 79 MPs have signed my parliamentary motion supporting visas for musicians in the EU.



The Motion reads:

'That this House applauds the over 100 musicians who wrote to The Times on 20 January 2021 and agrees that the UK Government must immediately seek supplementary agreement with the EU to secure the ability of all creative workers including musicians, performers, their equipment and others such as technicians to

travel and earn in Europe, ensuring the economic benefit of the creative industries to the UK economy and to protect the livelihoods and essential earning opportunities to prevent those musicians from being forced out of their profession, to protect the creative benefit of musicians and others working together across Europe and to protect the important role of our brilliant conservatoires, music departments and all performance venues; recognises the vital role that musicians play in the cultural and community life of the UK; and notes that the petition launched by Tim Brennan on that matter has now exceeded a quarter of a million signatures’.

My 10 point plan for reciprocal, bespoke EU-wide visa- and permit-free touring rights for musicians and performers

Read the 10 Point Plan to get there.

The UK is a hugely important venue for EU artists. With world -famous music festivals, orchestras, and concert halls, to list just a few, the UK is a central destination not just for performers but also audiences. 12.6 million tourists are drawn to the UK every year for festivals and gigs during the course of which they spend £4.7bn and sustain over 45,000 jobs in music tourism.

The restrictions in place upon EU musicians travelling and working effectively in the UK puts at risk the vibrancy of the UK music scene, as well as affecting all those who rely on the live music industry for their livelihoods. The visa requirements are bureaucratic and compared to those that EU musicians face elsewhere in Europe make travelling and performing here a much less appealing prospect.

By restricting those who can perform in the UK, inevitably what is on offer to audiences will be impoverished. Our arts and culture benefits from the cross fertilisation of the interaction between UK and EU artists, and EU artists enrich our own cultural environment. This is now at risk.

Petitions Committee session on arrangements for UK touring professionals and artists in the EU

In February 2021, the Petitions Committee hosted an evidence session after a petition calling on the Government to negotiate visa-free work permits for touring professionals and artists received over 282,000 signatures. The Committee revealed that 81% of respondents to a survey conducted in the industry say they are likely to stop touring Europe unless a solution is found. The survey which was sent to petitioners, and those working in the arts, to discover how post-Brexit changes will impact their careers and the industry, had more than 15,000 responses. You can watch

Visa- and Permit-Free Access to the EU for Touring

Musicians:

A necessity for the UK’s music sector

16 March 2021

Harriet Harman QC MP
Member of Parliament for Camberwell and Peckham
Mother of the House
House of Commons SW1A 0AA

Petitions Committee @HoCpetitions · Feb 8
Later today, MPs will discuss a petition on arrangements for UK touring professionals & artists in the EU, led by Chair @CatMcKinnell.

@cj_dinenage will respond for the Government.

Watch from 4.30pm: youtu.be/VsaAKoULWNs

Find out more: [committees.parliament.uk/committee/326/...](https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/326/)

WE HAVE SCHEDULED AN E-PETITION SESSION ON
Arrangements for touring professionals and artists in the EU
following a petition which has received over 280,000 signatures on Monday 8 February at 4.30pm

PETITIONS COMMITTEE

the whole session [here](#) or click the image to hear my contribution to this very important debate.

Dangerous cladding on high rise flats

Following the tragic fire at Grenfell Tower in June 2017, the Government established a Building Safety Programme with the aim of ensuring that residents of high-rise residential buildings in England are safe. Yet nearly four years later, around 700,000 people are still living in high-rise blocks with flammable cladding.

A House of Commons Public Accounts Committee report said progress on remediation has been “unacceptably slow”, with residents facing exorbitant costs of funding interim safety measures and many residents reporting worsening mental health as a result. Despite promises that cladding costs would not be passed onto leaseholders, Ministers have done little to help. In the meantime, leaseholders remain stuck in dangerous buildings facing ever increasing bills.

This issue effects not only high-rise buildings but can affect any building containing flats. Many constituents in Camberwell and Peckham have been unable to move or re-mortgage due to lenders requesting EWS1 forms for buildings below 18 metres. As these forms are not intended to apply for buildings under 18 metres high this leaves leaseholders stuck. It is vital for the Government to address this issue and provide updated guidance on fire safety requirements.

Labour is pushing for the Government to establish a National Cladding Taskforce to address unsafe cladding and protect leaseholders from the costs of remediation. The Taskforce should be underpinned with strong powers to establish the full extent of dangerous materials on buildings, prioritise them according to risk and ensure there is enforcement against those who refuse to undertake works. The Taskforce must be backed with up-front funding and include a legally enforceable deadline of 2022 to make all homes safe.

On February 1st 2021 Labour introduced a motion calling on the Government to protect leaseholders across the country living with unsafe cladding. I and all Labour MPs voted in favour of the motion (263-0), whilst the Government ordered its MPs to abstain on this crucial issue. It is unacceptable that leaseholders should have to shoulder the costs of unsafe buildings, and we will continue to push for the necessary support for all those affected.

The Government’s announcement on 10th February 2021 of funding for the removal of cladding on buildings taller than 18 metres I do not go anywhere near far enough. It is unacceptable that any leaseholder is told to pay for building safety issues that they were not responsible for.

The Fire Safety Bill the Government introduced in March 2020 as part of its response to the Grenfell tragedy didn’t include provisions to ensure that leaseholders are



Last week Boris Johnson promised he would announce support for leaseholders affected by the cladding scandal.

Yet this week, it turns out the Government has betrayed them.

This is a colossal injustice that Ministers have yet again failed to correct.



protected from unfair fire safety costs. I have signed the four Labour Amendments and five McPartland Smith Amendments that pressed for these provisions, and Labour will vote to give leaseholders greater protection when the Fire Safety Bill returns to the House of Commons. The Government must act to end this injustice.

In local news



January 2020 - 'People need dignity in their old age - families need support, social care must be a universal public service'

March 2020 - Coronavirus will not wait - govt must give NHS money it needs

April 2020 - Rota for parks would help families without gardens of their own

May 2020 - End 'confusion and uncertainty' over childcare

June 2020 - The outrage here in Southwark about the murder of George Floyd is an important moment. It is a moment for hearing the anger and determining to make change

July 2020 - £1.57 billion for the arts, but how will the funding process work?

August 2020 - Staggering maternal death rates among black women in racism inquiry

September 2020 - Push next year's GCSE and a level exams back to June to help students left behind in lockdown

October 2020 - We need concrete action to tackle structural racism

November 2020 - The virus doesn't recognise Christmas

December 2020 - Covid-19 has brought out the best in so many, here are some of the people I'd like to thank

January 2021 - The vaccination against COVID is the only way out of this pandemic.

February 2021 - Some care homes have restored visits safely – but this needs to be done by all

March 2021 - Time for the government to do a u-turn on nurses' pay

April & May – reporting restrictions – Local Elections 2021

June 2021 - We need a new law which protects women and girls from men, even if they don't know them

July 2021 – Close the loopholes to protect rape victims

April 2020 – 'Care homes cannot be left behind in our battle against Coronavirus'

November 2020 – 'Testing is of huge importance in the battle against Covid'

January 2021 - Covid infections are rapidly increasing in Southwark

April 2021 – Demonstrations and the right to protest during the pandemic

June 2021 - Calling for a public apology for, and a public inquiry into, the forced adoptions that took hundreds of thousands of babies from their teenage unmarried mothers in the UK of the 1960s and 1970s.

The Government road map and lifting restrictions

In compliance with changes in Covid -19 restrictions I have been able to resume some of my usual MP activities. I have visited schools TRAs, foodbanks, community projects and resumed local and national campaigning including in the by-election in Batley and Spen.



A note of thanks!

It's a difficult time to be a Labour councillor as the demand for local services grows and the Government cuts the resources to our local council. But there has never been a more important time to have a strong and caring local council and despite the cuts Southwark Council is innovative and determined.

It is an enormous privilege to represent Camberwell and Peckham and to work not only in parliament but as part of our local team.

My big thanks to our local councillors in Camberwell and Peckham:

Cllrs Barrie Hargrove, Cleo Soanes and Johnson Situ in Peckham, Cllrs Lorraine Lauder, Paul Fleming and Jack Buck in Faraday, Cllrs Dora Dixon-Fyle, Tom Flynn and Kieron Williams in Camberwell Green, Cllrs Richard Livingstone, Michael Situ and Evelyn Akoto in Old Kent Road, Cllrs Sunil Chopra, Gavin Edwards and Sandra Rhule in Nunhead & Queens Road, Cllrs Ian Wingfield, Radha Burgess and Jason Ochere in St Giles Ward, Cllrs Peter John and Sarah King in Champion Hill, Cllrs Jasmine Ali, Peter Babudu and Nick Dolezal in Rye Lane, and Cllrs Renata Hamvas and Vikki Mills in Peckham Rye.

I'd like to thank my fellow members of the Joint Committee on Human Rights: The Rt Hon. the Lord Brabazon of Tara DL, Joanna Cherry QC MP, The Lord Dubs, Florence Eshalomi MP, The Rt Hon. the Lord Henley, The Baroness Ludford, The Baroness Massey of Darwen, Angela Richardson MP, Dean Russell MP, David Simmonds MP, The Lord Singh of Wimbledon CBE.

And the committee staff:

Lucinda Maer, George Perry, Eleanor Hourigan, Alex Gask, Nick Taylor, Liam Evans, Busayo Esan, George Perry, Laura Ayres, Chloe Cockett and Miguel Boo Fraga.

Congratulations to Sadiq Khan – Mayor of London

Sadiq is determined to ensure that London is an even better city to live in after the pandemic than it was before. That means urgently tackling the increase in unemployment with a relentless focus on jobs, jobs, jobs. It means ensuring Londoners have more choice about where and how they work after the pandemic. And it means making London a greener, fairer and safer city.



Marina Ahmad – Elected Assembly member for Lambeth and Southwark.

So proud of Marina being elected as our Assembly Member for Lambeth and Southwark, I have high hopes for what she will do for people in Camberwell and Peckham and I look forward to working with you Marina. Congratulations!





Huge congratulations to Kim Leadbeater – MP for Batley and Spen

Batley and Spen have elected a truly remarkable woman. Hard to overstate how exceptional she is. Welcome to Parliament Kim!

Thank you to outgoing Council Leader, Cllr Peter John MBE, for his decade of dedication to Southwark residents

I want to convey our gratitude for Peter’s decade of delivery and for leading the council through some extraordinary times. Peter became Leader of the Council in 2010 and immediately faced unprecedented cuts from the new Coalition Government, whilst at the same time facing a dramatic rise in demand for help from people and organisations across our community as a result of the Government’s policies. Peter has more than risen to the challenges, including most recently staying in post to help manage our borough through the unique, painful circumstances of the coronavirus pandemic and the additional pressure it has brought. Peter’s ambition for our borough has never been diminished by the challenging period in which he has led. The new houses, jobs and apprenticeships are some of the policies most closely associated with his vision for Southwark. But equally the support for disadvantaged



young people to get to university, the free swim and gym policy, the new libraries, the free healthy primary school meals, the London Living Wage for all council staff, and the largest council housebuilding programme in the country, are all just as much Peter’s positive legacy for Southwark. As a Labour family, we are proud of Peter’s service to our community and to all the people in the borough who have benefitted from his leadership of the Council. Thank you Peter. And all the best to Cllr Kieron Williams for his future work in this role, in such tough times.



Working differently!

I and my staff team are continuing to work remotely. I remain enormously grateful to my dedicated team, Clare Gosbee, Papa Okyere-Asiedu, Rachel Wilbur, Ellen Stafford, Beatrice Forrester and Tom Pollard 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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