

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

Parliamentary Report July/August 2021

Published 20th September 2021



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In this Parliamentary Report I wanted to update you on my work and:

- share with you how I'm going about my work as MP
- hear from you if you agree with how I'm approaching things and
- what further issues you think I should be addressing.

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

Haniel Hamman

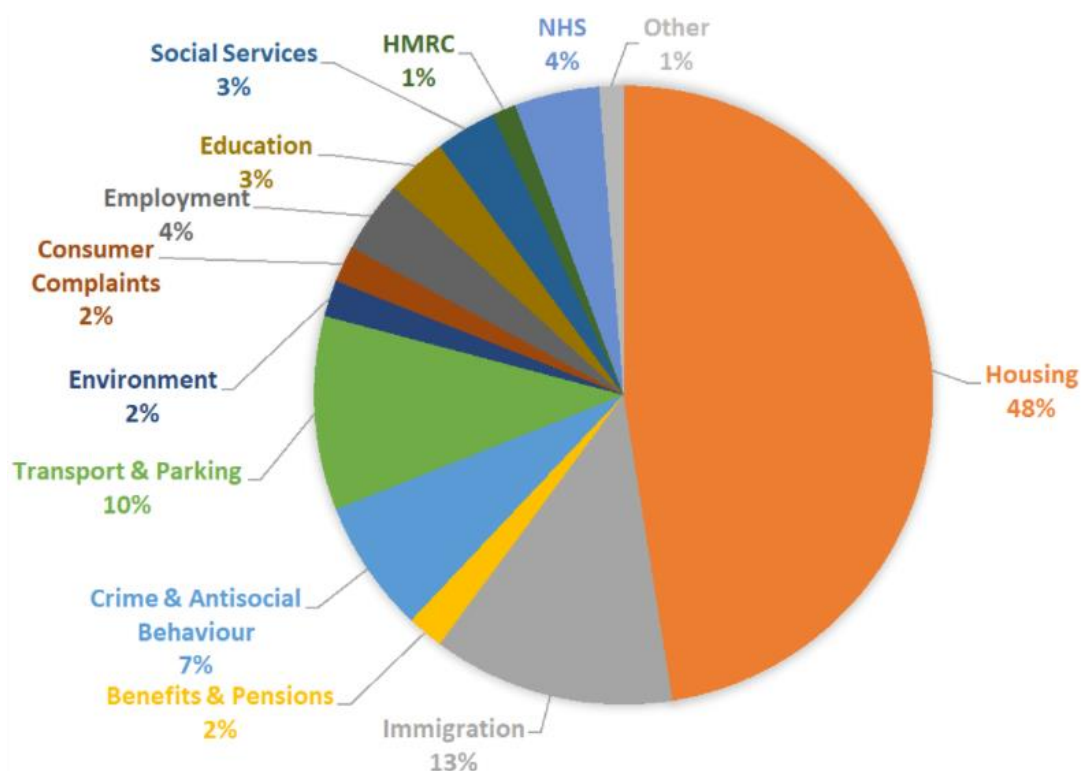
Constituency problems – update

My casework team continue to deal with pre-existing problems, ongoing Covid-19 issues and more recently the issues caused by the terrible crisis in Afghanistan. There is a continued increase in the number of constituents seeking my help.

I took action on a total of 1,344 cases in July and August (816 in July and 528 in August).

Since the start of 2021 I have recouped £39,050.03 for constituents who have requested my assistance. This includes underpaid benefit payments, Coronavirus business grants for local business owners, waived HMRC penalties and compensation for errors and delays from housing associations and the Home Office.

New cases breakdown July 2021



July case summaries

- A woman from Peckham contacted me because she had been the victim of a phishing scam and had lost £3,476.76. She was struggling to resolve her concerns with the Police and Lloyds Bank and she asked for my help. Lloyds Bank told her that because she had willingly provided her information to the scammer, she would be ineligible for a refund. I wrote to Chief Superintendent Wingrove, Police Borough Commander for Southwark and Lambeth to make him aware of her situation and to Lloyds Banking Group to ask them to provide an immediate refund. The bank responded to confirm that they would refund the stolen amount and pay compensation for the poor customer service.
- A woman contacted me to ask for help because her 86-year-old grandmother, living in a Southwark Council property for 50 years, had been without hot water for over four weeks. She was very worried about her because she was carrying boiling hot water from her kitchen to her bathroom upstairs so she could wash. I wrote urgently to Southwark Council who installed a new hot water cylinder at the property.
- There was grave concern for the wellbeing of her grandmother especially as she was having to carry boiling hot water from her kettle to the bathroom upstairs so she could wash. Her grandmother had been a tenant of the property for 50 years and was upset that she had been without hot water for so long. I wrote urgently to Southwark Council who installed a new hot water cylinder at the property.
- A constituent contacted me because he was having difficulty booking a COVID-19 vaccination online. The NHS booking website stated their details could not be found. I wrote urgently to NHS South East London Clinical Commissioning Group who informed me that the constituent's name was spelt incorrectly on his GP surgery records and therefore the National Booking Service did not recognise his details. This error was corrected immediately and he has now received both doses of the COVID vaccination.
- A Southwark Council tenant informed me of ongoing issues of disrepair at his property, including flooding and a lack of hot water. Following the death of several family members he was living on his own in a 4-bedroom property which he could not afford to upkeep. I wrote to Southwark Council to ask if he could be moved to a more suitable property. Southwark Council responded to confirm that the constituent has since moved into a 1-bedroom council property.
- A single mother, pregnant with her second child, asked for my help after the Council told her that she was going to be rehoused in Stratford. She wanted to stay in Southwark, to remain near her family and support network and because her son attends Ivydale Primary School. I wrote to Southwark Council as a matter of urgency to ask if they would reconsider rehousing her in Southwark before she was due to give birth. The family have now been rehoused in North Bermondsey and her son can continue to attend Ivydale Primary school.
- A woman living in Rye Lane ward contacted me because she had been without heating and hot water for several weeks. She explained that Council contractors had been scheduled to attend her property to sort the problem out, but they did

not turn up. I wrote to Southwark Council and they sent contactors to resolve the problem as a matter of urgency and have apologized for the missed appointment

- A former Rye Lane resident currently residing in Brazil wrote to me requesting my help because the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) had stopped crediting his state pension into his bank account. He is undergoing treatment for prostate cancer and lymphoma and was struggling to afford his medicines. I contacted the DWP on his behalf and they told me that an incorrect tax code was logged on their system because of his move to Brazil which led to his pension being suspended. The DWP have corrected this mistake and paid him the money he is owed.
- I was contacted by a Champion Hill man who sought my assistance with his asylum application in the UK. He is an ethnic Kurd seeking asylum from Iran because of his unfair treatment by the Iranian Government. The decision by the Home Office was delayed by almost a year. I wrote urgently to the Home Office to ask them to expedite their response. He has since been granted asylum in the UK and Leave to Remain until June 2026.
- A key worker from Old Kent Road contacted me because her car was regularly being blocked in by a neighbour who had acted aggressively towards her in the shared car park. As a result, she had not been able to use her car to get to work for a year. She told me that she had contacted her housing association, Wandle, for assistance but without success. I wrote to Wandle Housing Association on her behalf and they have now implemented a parking control system for the car park.
- I was contacted by a leaseholder who had been experiencing targeted abuse and harassment from a Southwark Council tenant in the flat above her for a number of years. The council tenant had been convicted of harassment but still had access to the building and the shared hallway. I wrote urgently to the Metropolitan Police and Southwark Council regarding this matter, and they have now been able to 'close' the flat and the Southwark Council tenant has been moved away.
- I was contacted by a vulnerable Peabody social tenant of Galleria Court following a period of bad weather in early July. The torrential rainfall caused terrible flooding in the basement of the block causing disruption and contamination of the water supply. She informed me that she had been without running water for several days. I urgently contacted Blocsphere, the managing agents appointed by the leaseholders, Peabody Housing, Thames Water and the buildings insurers to find out what steps were being taken to ensure the reinstatement a safe water supply to all residents in the block. Because of important safety concerns the water had to be tested in a laboratory before it could be safely reinstated. During the water outage tenants were advised to move to hotels and that they would be reimbursed for their stay. However, the constituent who contacted me was unable to move to a hotel because it was not suitable for her needs and



Harriet Harman @HarrietHarman · Aug 3

Urgently working on behalf of residents [#GalleriaCourt](#) [#Peckham](#) to deal with water cut off, sewage contamination, alternative accommodation & compensation. [@thameswater](#) [@blocsphere](#) [@Barrattplc](#) [@PeabodyLDN](#) [@BarrieHargrove](#) [@JohnsonSitu](#) [@CleoSoanes](#) [@lb_southwark](#)

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20



Policy Issues in July

- Help fix our plastic crisis
- Calls for more financial support for unpaid carers – I signed a letter calling on the Health Secretary, Sajid Javid to prioritise carers for booster jabs this autumn
- Opposing Government cuts in aid to Syria which will cost lives
- Support the amendment to reverse cuts to the UK Aid budget ahead of the G7 Summit
- "Rolling back girls" - Plan International campaign to support the rights of girls all over the world
- Stop the cuts to Higher Education Arts Courses
- The Government must step up and STOP the practice of Fire and Rehire
- Sign EDM 4: Protests in Colombia
- Please support pubs and help cut beer duty
- Stop the Government's plan to sell Channel 4
- Concern about ISDS in the UK-Australia trade agreement
- Vote against health and care bill second reading



My action on casework in August was dominated by the crisis in Afghanistan. You can read my special report [here](#).

I am currently assisting 72 constituents who are seeking help for 401 of their relatives trapped in Afghanistan. I have raised their cases with Government Ministers to ensure everything possible is being done to help them evacuate.

- A man from St Giles ward contacted me to request that I refer his Peabody Housing repairs complaint to the Housing Ombudsman. The roof of his flat had been leaking for the past four years and Peabody, his landlord, had not fixed it.

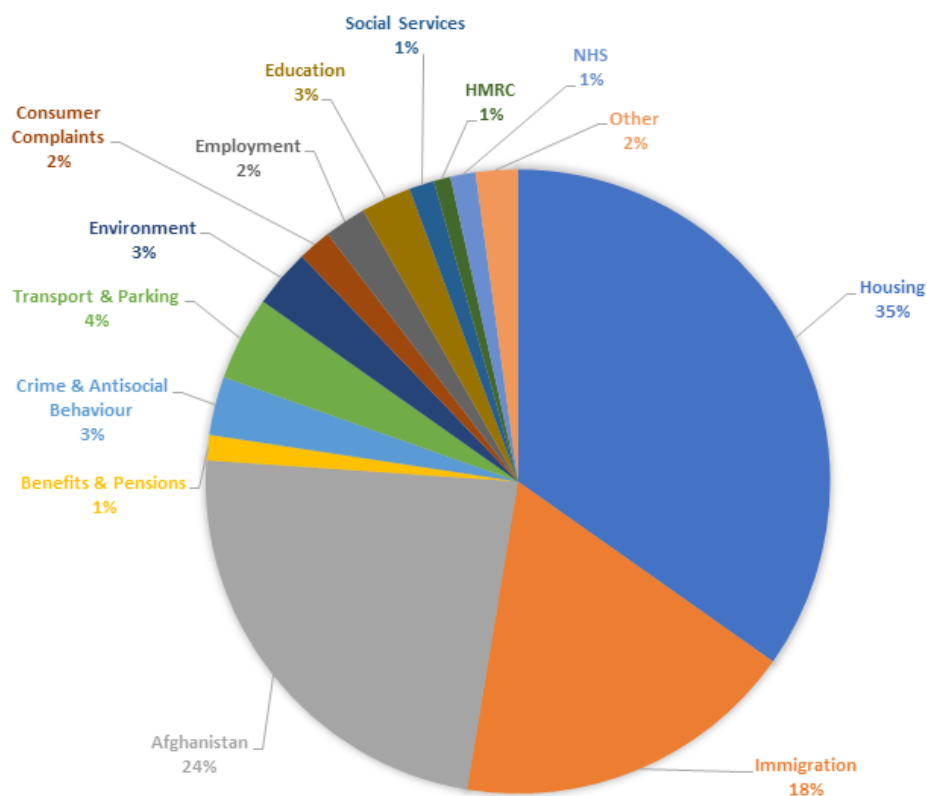
He had exhausted the internal complaints procedure. I referred his case to the Housing Ombudsman who decided that there had been service failure and maladministration by Peabody. They ordered that the roof should be repaired within 28 days of the ruling, and that £1,200 in compensation should be paid.

- A Southwark Council tenant from Camberwell Green asked for my assistance because her landlord, Southwark Council, had not taken adequate action to resolve water leaks in her property, concentrated mainly in her bedroom. She was unable to sleep in her bed for over a week and had been without electricity for this period for safety reasons. I wrote urgently to Southwark Council to request that the leaks be investigated and fixed and the issue has now been resolved.
- A self-employed Peckham man living in a one-bedroom flat with his wife and their four children contacted me for help because his bidding account had been suspended by Southwark Council without explanation. He was fearful that his family would be made homeless. I wrote urgently to Southwark Council to request an explanation. Southwark Council explained that his bidding had been temporarily suspended so that his information could be updated following a change of circumstances request. His Homeseach Account has now been reactivated and his bidding account has reopened.
- The American wife of a constituent from Peckham asked for my help regarding her UK Spouse Visa. The couple had not received any correspondence from the Home Office for 30 working days after their Biometrics Appointment. The wife who was still in New York, USA, informed me that her husband suffers with depression and anxiety which was being made worse because of the delay and their ongoing separation. I wrote to UKVI to ask for an update on the progress of their application and received confirmation that the constituent's wife had been granted Entry Clearance as a spouse. The constituent's wife has now travelled safely from New York to the UK and she has been reunited with her husband.
- A Togolese man with Leave to Remain in the UK, who has lived in Walworth for 18 years, asked for my help with his application for a Togolese passport. I wrote to the Togolese embassy and they explained that his application had been rejected due to an error. The Togolese Embassy have now contacted him to apologise and his application for a Togolese passport is being processed.
- A single father of three contacted me for my help because he had been served an eviction notice from his private landlord. He had been made redundant during the Coronavirus pandemic and was unable to afford his rent in Peckham. He told me that he had approached Southwark Council for assistance but that they could only provide limited help. I wrote to Southwark Council on his behalf and through their self-help scheme they assisted him being rehoused in private rented accommodation within his budget.
- A 19-year-old woman from Peckham asked for my help because she had recently been moved by Southwark Council into temporary accommodation. She reported that property was unsuitable for her and that there was a high presence of crime and anti-social behaviour which was making her PTSD condition worse and which she was undergoing treatment for. I wrote to

Southwark Council and they moved her to a more suitable temporary accommodation while she waits for permanent accommodation.

- I was contacted by a Peckham woman because there was a terrible smell of sewage on her street which was making her feel unwell. I wrote to Southwark Council and Thames Water and Thames Water reported that the smell was coming from a blocked drain. Works to unblock the drain are now complete and the issue resolved.

New cases breakdown August 2021



Policy issues in August

In August 1,038 Camberwell and Peckham residents wrote to me about policy issues.

- Secure Kabul airport and begin evacuations from Afghanistan immediately
- Campaign to protect food standards
- Make sure PM keeps his promise and fix social care
- Campaign against Breed Specific Legislation for dangerous dogs
- Support for Kept Animals Bill; primates as pets, live exports, and ending puppy imports
- Defend the electoral Commission; concern about the Government's plans to remove prosecutorial powers from the Electoral Commission
- Support for NHS pay rise
- Campaign against UK aid cut
- Campaign against offshore detention and Nationality and Borders Bill
- Call on the Boris Johnson to reject the proposed Cambo oil field west of Shetland



Universal Credit cuts in Camberwell and Peckham

In August 2021 there were 8,025 Universal Credit claimants in Camberwell and Peckham (8% of the constituency population aged 16-64. The equivalent UK rate is 5.2%).

Of these UC claimants 1,130 were aged 18-24 (11% of the constituency population. The UK equivalent rate is 6.8%)

If these cruel plans go ahead on the 6 October the cut will hit nearly 6 million people on Universal Credit nationally. More than a third (38%) of those who'll see their income hit are already in employment, while one in six (16%) are under 25. Latest figures show roughly 1.9 million families with children will see their benefits cut.

London and the North East are the regions that will see the biggest proportion of their residents hit by the cut.

Camberwell and Peckham constit. group	Per person weekly loss	Per person yearly loss	Total yearly loss
All claimants (8,025 in August 2021)	£20	£1,040	£8,346,000
Aged 18-24 (1,130)	£20	£1,040	£1,175,200

Camberwell and Peckham Constituents will lose £8.3million a year if the Universal Credit cut goes ahead on 6 October 2021



Harriet Harman @HarrietHarman

Govt cutting Universal Credit £20 a week for 8,025 low income Camb & Peck residents. I'm voting against the cut tonight as it's more hardship for hard-up families & a blow to the area as £8.5m cut from local spending. #CancelTheCut



1:54 PM · Sep 15, 2021 · Twitter Web App

End-to-end Rape Review 21 June 2021 – Ministerial Statement

I spoke in the End-to-end Rape Review Statement and asked the Justice Secretary, Robert Buckland QC MP if he will ensure that a defendants' previous sexual history is only ever brought up in court when there has been a previous application to the judge, who has ruled that it is relevant to the particular issue on trial.

Click the image to hear my question.

My question in full and the Justice Secretary's response:

Harriet Harman



Harriet Harman @HarrietHarman · Jun 21

Rape victims are put in the dock with her prev sex history dragged out in court in 1/3 of cases. Need legal change to stop this now. My question to Lord Chancellor @RobertBuckland



34.9K views 0:18 / 1:05

I welcome the fact that the Justice Secretary has acknowledged the woeful failure of the justice system to protect women and girls from the abhorrent crime of rape. Will he recognise that one of the things that deters victims from supporting a prosecution is that, when it comes to trial, it is they who are put in the dock by having their sexual history being dragged out and being made the focus of the trial, instead of the focus being on the defendant and what he actually did? Will he address this by backing the new clauses that have been put forward on a cross-party basis to the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill, which will ensure that the defendants' previous sexual history is only ever brought up in court when there has been a previous application to the judge, who has ruled that it is relevant to the particular issue on trial?

Robert Buckland

May I pay tribute to the right hon. and learned Lady for her tireless work in this area? Indeed, she and I have regular dialogue about these issues and have done in the past. I will say several things in response. First, it is vital that existing protections are properly policed and used by the courts when it comes to restrictions on wholly inappropriate cross-examination. I have in particular asked the Law Commission to look at the whole issue about the trial process, and the rape myth issue that is still a real concern for many people who end up taking part in this process. But I will say this to her: I think it begins much earlier. I think the undue focus on the victim begins right from the initial investigation, and I think that that is wrong. I think that the proper emphasis in this report is about looking at the person who is alleged to have done it, rather than constantly focusing, as she rightly says, on irrelevant previous sexual matters that have nothing to do with the case and are an unwarranted intrusion into the private life of victims.



Harriet Harman @HarrietHarman · Jun 21

I know there are many in Lords who'll listen to you on this and press for Police Bill to be the opportunity for closing cruel loophole that allows victims to be humiliated in court.



Dr Baroness Newlove LLD (hc) @baronessnewlove · Jun 21

Well said @HarrietHarman I sadly have met too many victims put through this very issue [twitter.com/HarrietHarman/...](https://twitter.com/HarrietHarman/)



You Retweeted



Victims' Commissioner London @LDNVictimsComm · Jun 22

Very grateful for @HarrietHarman raising this again & pushing for its inclusion in PCSC Bill. In 2016, I worked with @LSRPlaid on a rape shield bill to cover exactly these issues & stop the cross examination of rape victims on their past sexual history - bills.parliament.uk/bills/1958

You Retweeted



Victims' Commissioner London @LDNVictimsComm · Jun 30

Really pleased that this work is being supported by @HarrietHarman Having worked with many rape survivors who were cross examined on their sexual history & having drafted Rape Shield Bill in 2017 with @LSRPlaid, I hope there will be no more delays in Govt taking this forward.



Harriet Harman @HarrietHarman · Jun 30

Today hosting roundtable w/ MPs Peers & orgs re New Clauses for #PoliceBill to stop use of complainants' sex history in rape trials. This is a big problem. Must stop victim being put on trial in rape cases. @VeraBaird @jessphillips @baronessnewlove @womensaid @LDNVictimsComm

[Show this thread](#)



CLOSE THE LOOPHOLES TO PROTECT RAPE VICTIMS

Published 7th July



'In practice, as the Victim's Commissioner has said, rape has been decriminalised'

Last year 342 rapes in Southwark were reported to the police. It is a horrific crime. But the government has acknowledged, and even apologised, for its woeful failure to ensure justice for victims of rape, writes Harriet Harman.

If you report a drug offence there is a 20.9 per cent chance of someone being charged. But for rape allegations, only 1.4 per cent end up with the suspect being charged.



Harriet Harman @HarrietHarman · Jun 21

Look at charging rate of rape compared w/ other crimes. 📢 Problem is not women's lack of confidence as @MaxHillQC said on @BBCWomansHour, it's the criminal justice system. Until DPP understands, this will not be sorted.

bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m0...

In practice, as the Victim's Commissioner has said, rape has been "decriminalised".

The government has promised to try and sort out this problem which, though always bad, has got worse since the Conservatives took power in 2010.

And while there are many changes that need to be made, there's one improvement the government should make right away.

For decades it's been recognised that the criminal justice process is an ordeal for a rape victim.

Many victims feel shame and embarrassment to report a sexual experience. It's awful for a victim who's been raped by a stranger in an attack, for example in a park, to endure his defence that she consented to sex with someone she'd never met before.

And defendants will habitually claim that she consented, dragging her sexual history into court.

They want to make her abandon the prosecution rather than face all her previous sexual activity being spoken about in court.

They seek to tarnish her reputation with the jury claiming, for example, that she'd previously committed adultery and therefore must be the sort of person who would have agreed to sex with the defendant.

It's been acknowledged since the 1990s that it's wrong for him to try and prove she consented to sex with him because she'd had sex with other men before.

Yet research shows that this is exactly what happens in a third of all rape trials.

In one recent case the complainant was distraught to hear the defence, without warning, give evidence that she'd previously had an abortion.

Her parents who'd come to court to support her had no idea about the abortion till her medical records were read out.

Report:Charging

- Drug offences: 20.9%
- Robbery offences: 7.8%
- Violence against the person: 6.9%
- Criminal damage and arson: 5.5%
- Rape: 1.4%

The law prohibits the naming of complainants of sex offences. That is a longstanding rule which had to be brought in because otherwise complainants were not prepared to go to court because of the fear of their "dirty linen being washed in public".

But while that rule could be relied on to protect complainants when it was a matter of experienced journalists reporting cases, it doesn't work in the same way in this era of social media.

Anything said in court, and heard by people sitting in the public gallery, can instantly go out on social media.

The anonymity of Twitter users means it is effectively impossible to police the right to anonymity of rape complainants. So, what happens in court is more important than ever.

With the backing of MPs from all parties I've proposed a way to tighten the law to make it work in the way parliament has always intended.

The defendant will still get a fair trial but the complainant's right to privacy will be protected. The government says it agrees that there's a problem but has referred it for consideration by the Law Commission which might take years to report.

This has been a problem for years. We don't want many more to go by before we get justice for rape victims.

The government can and must close this loophole now.

Parliament's intention to ban rough sex gone wrong defence isn't working - it's getting worse!

I wrote to the Director of Public Prosecutions Max Hill QC to bring to his attention two recent cases in which the CPS accepted the "rough sex gone wrong" defence in domestic homicide. In each case the offender intended the acts which caused her death but in each case he faced not a charge of murder but only manslaughter.

You can read my letter in full here:

14 July 2021

Dear Max,

Re: "Rough sex gone wrong" defence

I'm writing to you about 2 recent cases in which the CPS accepted the "rough sex gone wrong" defence in domestic homicide.

In each case the offender intended the acts which caused her death. In each case he faced not a charge of murder but only manslaughter.

 **Harriet Harman** @Harrietharman · Jul 9
"Yes, I killed her but it was what she wanted". Defence of "rough sex gone wrong" & once again prosecution drop murder charge. I'm writing to DPP. Why Man pleads guilty to killing lover by choking her to death | Daily Mail Online



[dailymail.co.uk](https://www.dailymail.co.uk)
Man pleads guilty to killing lover by choking her to death
Sam Pybus, 31, admitted killing Sophie Moss, 33, who was found in a critical condition following an incident at a property in Darlington in ...

In the case of R -v - Warren Martin Coulton (sentenced 5 May 2021 at Mold Crown Court), Claire Wright was killed by his putting a sock in her mouth and tying her hands behind her back. She was a 38 year old much loved mother of 2 children. The Judge said to the offender "true it is that you and Claire Wright were both keen on restraint and bondage." Claire was dead and was unable to speak at the trial and say whether that was actually the case. And in any event she clearly did not consent to being killed.

The other case is R - v - Sam Pybus (plea entered 9 July 2021 at Teesside Crown Court). Pybus killed Sophie Moss aged 33 by strangling her. The prosecution accepted his plea of guilty of manslaughter on the basis that she consented to "hand pressure that she and Sam Pybus were engaging in and she had done so previously." She, of course, was not there to give evidence as to whether she did, on that occasion or indeed previously, freely give her consent.

My concern is that we are in a situation where any man can kill his partner and then claim that she consented. It was not his fault that she died. It was hers because they were doing sex the way she wanted. The fact that he had inflicted similar injuries on her previously is used by the defence to prove that she consented when of course it proves nothing of the sort. Now the patterns of behaviour and coercion in domestic violence cases are widely understood. The fact that it has been done before does not prove that it was consensual either on the occasion that was fatal or previously.

Hearing the judge blithely rule that she was "keen on restraint and bondage" is awful. The Judge cannot know because she cannot tell him.

The paradox is that this is a sinister use, by the defendant against the victim, of the culture of acknowledgment of women's sexual empowerment. In decades past it would have been impossible to put the argument that she loved sex which resulted in injuries. Now with women asserting their right to their sexual identity, that is regarded as a perfectly reasonable proposition. And "Fifty Shades of Grey" reinforces that notion. So the irony is that something which is part of women's liberation from the idea that women are just permissive, passive sexual objects and that men are the sexual beings, is used to justify homicide, the ultimate domestic violence.

But even accepting that it was consensual, which I don't think it's possible to do when she's unable to give evidence because she's dead, there is in my view a problem with intent. It is clear in these cases that he did intend the actions which killed her. Warren Coulton did intend to put the sock in her mouth which interrupted her breathing and did intend to tie her hands behind her back which prevented her saving herself. Sam Pybus did intend to put his hands round her neck and interrupt her breathing. That is the point at which intention should be judged, not whether he intended to kill her or cause her serious harm. When she dies it is because he has taken the risk of doing something which might, and did, kill her. It is not acceptable for him to be able to turn round and say that he didn't mean her to die. She did die and he should take the responsibility for that, not shift it onto her by way of asserting her enjoyment of rough sex.

There are a number of serious problems with this:

- it is the ultimate victim blaming*
- he shifts responsibility for his actions to her*
- any man can kill his partner and say afterwards that it's what she wanted*
- it lets men who commit domestic homicide get away with murder.*

You and I have discussed this in the past and you have argued that everything is as it should be. I would ask you to:

- *review the prosecution decisions in these two cases and inform me whether you think they were the right decisions*
- *let me know whether, in the light of these two cases, you are concerned at this growing culture of victim blaming*
- *let me know whether you are content with how the interpretation of intent is being used by men to evade responsibility for murder.*

If you share any of my concerns would you join me in backing a reference to the Law Commission of this specific issue?


Parliament clearly intended to end the "rough sex gone wrong" defence with section 71 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 yet the problem, as is evident in these two cases, remains and is getting worse.

We cannot sleepwalk into a situation where, if the victim is their sexual partner, men literally get away with murder.

Yours sincerely,

Harriet Harman QC MP

You can read Max Hill QCs, Director of Public Prosecutions, response by clicking the image below:


Harriet Harman 
@HarrietHarman

Letter from @MaxHillQC & my response to him re “rough sex gone wrong” defence 📌 Clear evidence that defence is still used despite law changes. I look forward to meeting with @MaxHillQC @Laura_Farris to discuss further how to end use of this defence for good.

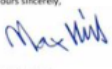
with the Code for Crown Prosecutors and the law.

Prosecuting those who commit these offences builds public confidence in the ability of the Police, the CPS and the Courts to bring perpetrators of these extremely serious and troubling offences to justice.

Rather than considering the outcome of the two cases as a collective failure on the part of the prosecution to secure a conviction for murder, the prosecutions of Warren Coulton at Mold Crown Court and Sam Pybus at Teesside Crown Court represent positive outcomes. They show how crown prosecutors use the full range of criminal offences available to them by building robust cases that properly address and reflect the factual and legal complexities that exist.


Crown Prosecution Service, 9th Floor, Zone A, 102 Petty France, London SW1H 9EA, DX: 161330
Westminster 11
Web: www.cps.gov.uk

of the corrosive and pernicious effect of not prosecuting domestic abuse in all its forms, and to that end I, and indeed all crown prosecutors, remain focussed on our task to ensure that the right offender is charged with the right offence. This is and will remain an important priority for us in the years ahead.

Yours sincerely,

MAX HILL QC
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS


I am satisfied that in considering the evidence in this case, the prosecutor properly applied the Code for Crown Prosecutors and correctly applied the facts in the case to the relevant law. The case was also considered at a National Case Management Panel and had the benefit of advice from Leading Counsel, Ms Caroline Rees QC.

In the case of Sam Pybus, which is listed for sentence in September 2021, the prosecution did not proceed with the charge of the murder of Sophie Moss because there was insufficient evidence to prove that the defendant intended to kill Ms Moss or cause her grievous bodily harm. The defendant was originally charged with murder on the threshold test under the Code for Crown Prosecutors.

The threshold test is usually applied in circumstances when the suspect is in custody, the investigating officer is seeking to charge before all the evidence is available and there is a need to apply to the Court for a remand in custody.

A prosecutor can authorise a charge on the threshold test if they are satisfied there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a person has committed the offence and a number of other conditions are satisfied. In most cases, the prosecutor would subsequently apply the Full Code Test decision upon receipt of the full file of papers from the Police.

Following the threshold test decision to charge Sam Pybus with the murder of Sophie Moss, the prosecutor subsequently received and reviewed further evidence from the Home Office Pathologist


MAX HILL QC
Director of Public Prosecutions
Crown Prosecution Service
9th Floor, Zone A
102 Petty France
London
SW1H 9EA
5th August 2021

Dear Ms,

Re: “Rough sex gone wrong” defence

Thank you for your reply of 28 July to my letter to you of 14 July.

In reference to the case of R v Warren Coulton I note that you say in your letter that the prosecution’s case



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Rt Hon Michael Ellis QC MP
Attorney General
Attorney General's Office
5 - 8 The Sanctuary
London
SW1P 3JS

8th September 2021

Dear Michael,

Re: Unduly Lenient Sentence Referral
R – v – Sam Pybus - Manslaughter Sentence
Teesside Crown Court, 7th September 2021
Sentence: 4 years 8 months

Sam Pybus was yesterday sentenced to 4 years and 8 months for killing Sophie Moss, aged 33, by strangling her. Pybus, who was drunk at the time, admitted that he must have strangled her because his hands were hurting, but after pleading guilty to manslaughter in mitigation he sought to shift the responsibility for Sophie's death from himself to her, claiming that she both encouraged and enjoyed his placing pressure on her neck. She, of course, was not there to give evidence as to whether she did, on the occasion of her death or previously, give her consent.

It is clear that Pybus did intend the actions which killed Sophie Moss. He did intend to put his hands round her neck and interrupt her breathing. And yet he only received a sentence of 4 years and 8 months.

This sentence fails to reflect the gravity of the crime, the impact of her death on her family including her two young children, his sole culpability for her death, his cynical shifting of the responsibility from himself to her and sends out the message that killing your girlfriend during sex is a minor matter.

I'd be grateful if you would refer this case for the Court of Appeal as I believe this is an Unduly Lenient Sentence.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes,

Harriet Harman QC MP



Replying to @HarrietHarman @Michael_Ellis and 7 others

. Thank you for your tweet. We will be considering this case under the Unduly Lenient Sentence scheme. The Law Officers have 28 days from sentencing to consider the case and make a decision on whether to refer Sam Pybus' sentence to the Court of Appeal.

2:47 PM · Sep 8, 2021 · Twitter Web App



'Unduly lenient' jail term for killing during sex considered for appeal

Harriet Harman has written to attorney general to say Sam Pybus 'sentence fails to reflect gravity of crime'



▲ Sophie Moss. Harman said sentence 'sends out the message that killing your girlfriend during sex is a minor matter'. Photograph: Durham Police/PA

The attorney general's office is considering whether to appeal against the jail term of four years and eight months handed to a man who choked his lover to death during sex.

Labour's Harriet Harman, who chairs parliament's joint committee on human rights, wrote to the attorney general to complain about the "unduly lenient" sentence handed on Tuesday to Sam Pybus for the manslaughter of Sophie Moss, a vulnerable 33-year-old.

The problems for people who own high rise flats are going from bad to worse because of the cladding debacle.

The problems for people who own high rise flats are going from bad to worse because of the cladding debacle. Grenfell was a disaster because of unsafe cladding and so obviously it was right for all high-rise buildings to be checked and dangerous cladding replaced.

But years later the problems are far from solved and many local people have had their lives put on hold as they are unable to move out of their flats because they can't sell them as they can't get the certificate that is required to show that their cladding is safe.



There aren't enough technical experts to do the assessments so there's a long waiting list for certification. Without the certification, buyers can't go ahead with a purchase as banks and mortgage companies won't lend.

If people need to move it is hugely problematic to be stuck. They might need to move because they are taking up a new job, or because they've had another child and are overcrowded or for many other reasons.

But they are in limbo without any idea of when they'll be able to sell their flat and when they'll be able to move.

Then there's the problem for those where the cladding replacement has been done and the costs amounting to thousands of pounds are passed on to the leaseholders who are just not in a position to pay.

Getting on to the property ladder for a first-time buyer involves a big financial stretch for most people. They just don't have thousands of pounds left over to pay a hefty bill which they could not possibly have expected at the time of the purchase.

The costs for leaseholders have increased in multiple other ways.

Blocks awaiting cladding replacement often use fire wardens to patrol the building on a 24/7 "waking watch". Often that is demanded by the building's insurers. But that is another unanticipated expense.

And the costs of insurance shoot up as insurance companies insist on higher premiums and vast "excess" payments before they'll agree to insure blocks with cladding issues.

If you buy a new car and then there's a fault, you can be confident that the manufacturer will take it back and either repair it, give you a refund or a new one.

You, as the purchaser, don't have to foot the bill. Yet when it comes to faulty cladding the cost falls not on the developer or the freehold owner but on the leaseholder who has done nothing to contribute to the problem and who is the last person who's caused it.

This, in economic parlance, is "market failure". The situation is penalising innocent leaseholders and causing massive problems and unfairness.

If there's a market failure, the last resort to sort it out is the Government. And so far, despite early promises which raised leaseholders' hopes, they have failed to deal with it.

They must do so urgently. It's gone on far too long and for many, including in Camberwell and Peckham, that dream of owning their first home has turned into a nightmare.



London Cladding Action Group @LondonCAG · Aug 18
Thank you @HarrietHarman MP Camberwell & Peckham

If there's a market failure, the last resort to sort it out is the Government. And so far, despite early promises which raised leaseholders' hopes, they have failed to deal with it [#endourcladdingscandal](#)



In My View: Harriet Harman, MP for Camberwell and Peckham
Grenfell was a disaster because of unsafe cladding and so obviously it was right for all high rise buildings to be checked and dangerous ...
londonnewsonline.co.uk

Amending the Human Rights Act could constitute a risk to the UK's constitutional settlement and to the enforcement of our human rights, warns the Joint Committee on Human Rights.

The positive impact of the Act, which incorporated the European Convention on Human Rights into UK law, should be welcomed and protected, say MPs and peers in a new report from the Joint Committee: The Government's Independent Review of the Human Rights Act.

Prompted by the Government's Independent Review into the Human Rights Act 1998, the Committee has produced a report setting out their views on the key topics.

The report considers the terms of reference set for the independent review and concludes that there is no case for amending the Act.

As a result of the Human Rights Act, human rights cases are now heard first by UK judges in UK courts. Cases are heard sooner; court action is less prohibitively costly and UK judges are able to take better account of the UK's national context. The report says that as a result, the enforcement and accessibility of human rights in the UK has improved.

Parliamentary sovereignty is kept intact by the Act as courts cannot overturn primary legislation even if they find it incompatible with ECHR obligations. Public authorities must act compatibly with ECHR rights, embedding human rights in the delivery of public services. The Act is also a central part of the devolution settlement in the UK.

The Government's Independent Human Rights Act Review Panel was appointed in January 2021 following the Government's manifesto commitment to "update the Human Rights Act and administrative law to ensure that there is a proper balance between the rights of individuals, our vital national security and effective government." It is expected to report later this year.

The Chair of the Committee, Harriet Harman MP, said:

"Against the background of the pandemic, the human rights and protections afforded by the Human Rights Act have come to the fore. For example, in responding to the pandemic, Ministers have had to respect our rights to a family life, to privacy, to associate with others, to protest and sadly, the right to life itself.

The Government made a manifesto commitment to update the Human Rights Act. Based on the evidence we have heard, we have come to the conclusion that there is absolutely no justification for any changes along the lines mooted. The Act both respects parliament and makes our courts powerful in enforcing human rights. The Government must not make change which would at one and the same time, make it



House of Commons
House of Lords

Joint Committee on Human
Rights

The Government's Independent Review of the Human Rights Act

Third Report of Session 2021–22

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

harder for people to enforce their human rights and expose the government and agencies to more judgments against them in the European Court of Human Rights.”

- [Read the report summary](#)
- [Read the conclusions and recommendations](#)
- [Read the full report: The Government’s Independent Review of the Human Rights Act](#)

Voter ID law must be shown to be necessary and proportionate

The Government’s Elections Bill will require voters to produce photographic ID at the polling station. Whilst the Government’s list of acceptable forms of ID has been widely drawn, it is estimated that over 2 million people will not have an acceptable form of ID and so will have to apply for a free voter card or lose the ability to vote at the polling station. These proposals are aiming to reduce fraud at polling stations, however the recorded instances of such fraud are rare.

The impact of the proposals may fall disproportionately on some groups with protected characteristics under human rights law. Older people and disabled people are less likely to have photo ID and some groups such as Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities may be hesitant to apply for the Voter Card. The Committee calls on the Cabinet Office to produce clear research setting out whether mandatory ID at the polling station could create barriers to taking part in elections for some groups and how they plan to mitigate this risk effectively.

The Committee also calls on the Government to consider introducing automatic voter registration to ensure those who are entitled to vote can do so.

More detail is needed on how the proposed Voter Card will operate in practice. The Committee calls on the Government to ensure that the document is easily obtainable by anyone who wants one. It must avoid any incidental costs or other barriers, such as a requirement to attend issuing offices in person. The Government must also work with the Electoral Commission to produce detailed plans for how they will promote the Voter Card scheme and encourage individuals to take part, including specific focus on marginalised groups.

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



House of Commons
House of Lords
Joint Committee on Human Rights

Legislative Scrutiny: Elections Bill

Fifth Report of Session 2021–22

Report, together with formal minutes relating to the report

Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed 21 July 2021

Ordered by the House of Lords to be printed 21 July 2021

The Government has a duty to ensure everyone can vote and no one prevented from voting by discrimination and also that elections are free from fraud. However current proposals which would prohibit voting without Voter ID may deny the right to vote from large numbers of electors, and could have a discriminatory impact. The Government must explain how these measures are both necessary and proportionate given the low numbers of recorded instances of fraud at polling stations.

The Government must prove that the need for people to get a Voter ID card does not act as a deterrent to voting. In particular they must demonstrate an understanding, so far lacking, of the impact of these measures on marginalised groups and show how they plan to ensure access to the ballot box for all.

Chair of the Human Rights Committee, Rt Hon Harriet Harman MP

Michael Faraday School – Burnett News Club awards – July 2021

Huge congratulations to pupils and teachers at Michael Faraday School for winning the Burnett News Club 'School of the Year' award and for the 3 brilliant 'Outstanding Students of the Year' awards. Well done and thank you for inviting me to your ceremony!



FOOTBALLERS ARE AS ENTITLED TO HAVE POLITICAL VIEWS AS ANYONE ELSE

Published 4 August 2021



'Our team didn't win, but showed great promise for the future and conducted themselves in a way that set an outstanding example to young people'

People across Southwark have had particular reason to be caught up in two massive sporting events this summer, writes Camberwell and Peckham MP Harriet Harman...

Last month, the nation was gripped watching the Euros and we all felt such pride as England's young side fought their way to the final. Our team didn't win, but showed great promise for the future and conducted themselves in a way that set an outstanding example to young people.

The players braved controversy when they 'took the knee' before matches to protest racial inequality. They were doing it as a team. Both those black players who had been subjected to racial abuse on and off the pitch and their white teammates who – though not having been subjected to it themselves – deplored racism directed at any of the players and wanted to show solidarity with those who had.

It was deplorable that some of the England fans booed their team's taking the knee and I, along with many other politicians, loudly denounced the booing. Some people took to social media to condemn the taking of the knee, complaining it was 'political'. Footballers are no less entitled than anyone else to have political views and to express their opinions in whatever way they want. This is a democracy and people have freedom of speech and thought. Democratic politics is how this country is run and should be celebrated not swept under the carpet.

But it was particularly objectionable that some people chose to complain that footballers were protesting about racism. This country is still not equal. Black people are still subjected to discrimination and it is right to protest about this. It completely proved the England team's point when some people took to social media to pour vile racist abuse on the young black England players. The racist social media posts proved the point that the protests were, sadly, very much necessary.



There was an outpouring of support for the young black England footballers and I was delighted that Southwark Council decided to celebrate and support Jadon Sancho, who was born in Camberwell and played for Southwark at youth level, awarding him the highest municipal honour of Freedom of the London Borough of Southwark.

The spotlight fell again on Southwark's sporting talent with the stunning performance of Kye Whyte from Peckham in the Men's BMX racing event winning a Silver medal in the Tokyo Olympics. This is a relatively new sport for the Olympics and it has rightly astonished people. You have to see the videos of Kye Whyte racing to appreciate the incredible strength, courage and skill that it involves. His medal is a testament to his years of dedication to training and of the unstinting support for him by his parents.

Kye is still only 21-years-old but he's shown professionalism and persistence that mean that he's assured of success for the future not only in his sport but in whatever path he chooses. He was fortunate to have exceptional parents prepared to sacrifice whatever it took to support his training and competing.



Harriet Harman @HarrietHarman · Jul 30

Huge congratulations! Whole of UK bursting with pride! Especially Peckham!



Kye Whyte @kye969 · Jul 30

History was made today @bethanyshriever is @olympics champ and I am a silver medalist. We're history makers 🙌🏆 @ Tokyo Japan [instagram.com/p/CR8KIVe9rE/...](https://www.instagram.com/p/CR8KIVe9rE/)

Kye's triumph is not only a cause for celebration but also puts the spotlight on how much more the government should do to ensure that local youngsters can enjoy and excel in sports without the family having to sacrifice. Too many youngsters don't get the chance to participate and compete. Kye's medal is a strong reminder that sports opportunities should be there in every locality for talented young people.

Huge congratulations to all of Camberwell and Peckham's sporting heroes this summer but a special mention for:



Harriet Harman @HarrietHarman · Jul 14

We are all so proud of you, Jadon Sancho!



Cllr Kieron Williams @kieronjwilliams · Jul 14

Delighted to announce our intention to give @England star, national hero & former Camberwell resident Jadon Sancho Freedom of the @lb_southwark

Here he is in his 2011 Team Southwark strip! 📌

What a journey he's been on since 🍌🍌🍌🍌🍌

@Sanchooo10 #eng #ThreeLions



Harriet Harman @HarrietHarman · Aug 6

Huge congrats to @ImaniLara ! Peckham is winning the Olympics!!



Imani-Lara Lansiquot @ImaniLara · Aug 6

Little me from Peckham. 🇬🇧🏆🌟



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Government schemes for those seeking to leave Afghanistan

The Government have 3 schemes for those seeking to come to the UK from Afghanistan

*Repatriation of UK nationals and their families

*The ARAP (Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy) scheme is for bringing to the UK those Afghan citizens who worked directly for the UK government

*The Afghanistan Citizens' Resettlement Scheme which aims to resettle Afghan nationals who have been displaced from their homes due to the recent crisis and will prioritise women, girls, children and those most in need, who are likely to face human rights abuses and dehumanising treatment by the Taliban. This scheme is limited to 5,000 this year and 5,000 per year for each of the next 4 years.

Support and resources for British and non-British nationals who have been affected by the situation in Afghanistan from August 2021. Please click on link to information and advice:

- **Support for British and non-British nationals in Afghanistan**
- **Afghan citizens' resettlement scheme**
- **Afghanistan - Foreign travel advice**
- **Support for veterans**

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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Let me know your views at harriet.harman.mp@parliament.uk