

# Harriet Harman QC MP

Member of Parliament for  
Camberwell and Peckham



## Annual Report 2004

House of Commons

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## **Introduction**

This annual report is to

- Tell the residents of my constituency about my work as their Member of Parliament
- Tell them about my work in Government – as Solicitor General
- Set out the progress made on the priorities I identified in my last annual report and
- Look ahead to my priorities over the next 12 months.

### **The Constituency of Camberwell and Peckham.**

The constituency of Camberwell and Peckham is one of 659 parliamentary constituencies in the United Kingdom.

I have been Member of Parliament for 22 years. And in a parliament of 659, I am one of only 119 women [82% men, 18% women].

As well as Camberwell and Peckham, the constituency covers the neighbourhoods of Nunhead and parts of Walworth and the Old Kent Road. There are 63,455 registered electors (May 2004).

I am available to meet my constituents, hear their views and help with any problems at my advice surgeries which are held regularly at the Town Hall, Peckham Road, London SE5. They are on Friday mornings and Tuesday evenings. Please contact me if you would like details of my surgery programme.

Last year on average 55 constituents attended each of my surgeries – making a total of approximately 1,980 over the last 12 months. I also receive letters, phone calls and e-mails from my constituents.

### **Progress report on my 2003 priorities**

In my last annual report I identified 7 priorities for my constituency work – in addition to my advice surgeries and regular visits.

- Getting a children's centre in Peckham
- Setting up an after-school club in Oliver Goldsmiths School
- More police in Southwark
- Tackling the shortage of GPs
- Getting the Aylesbury Estate improved
- The restoration of Caroline Gardens Chapel for local residents
- Strengthening my links with my African Constituents and the African countries from which they come

This report explains what progress I am making on those priorities.



## Children's Centre in Peckham

One of the greatest complaints I get is that there's still not enough help for mothers with young children and not enough for older children to do after school hours and in school holidays. Peckham has a high percentage of young children and over recent years I have been campaigning for a flag-ship Children's Centre to be built in the heart of Peckham.

Most mothers now work, as well as caring for their children. Few have relatives living nearby who can help. So high quality, affordable childcare with flexible hours is really important – through nurseries and after-school clubs.



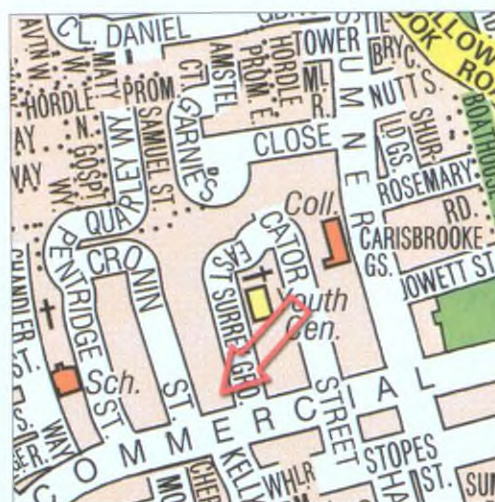
*Opening Oliver Goldsmith's After School Club.*

The **Oliver Goldsmith School After-School Club**, which I made a priority for last year, is now operating successfully – and is one of many new clubs. But there is still a need for more.

We have made real progress on the demand for a new children's centre in the heart of Peckham.

Thanks to a vigorous local campaign by the community and local councillors, it has been agreed that a brand new children's centre will be built on the land in front of the Cator street Education Centre and the car park next to it.

I expect work to start on the Centre by March 2005. I'd like to thank local Councillors Barrie Hargrove, Tayo Situ and Billy Kayada, local tenants representatives, particularly Ali Balli, Sabina Emmanuel and Eileen Ridgeway, local residents such as Maria Williams, Southwark Council Officers, particularly Dave Wallis, Sara Willis and Sam Eastrop, Southwark Childcare First and many others for their support for the centre.



I would also like to mention Debbie Welch who sadly passed away this year. Debbie had campaigned with me for the Children's Centre in Peckham for many years, and was a key figure in the community in Peckham who is greatly missed.

2+4=6  
4+1=5  
6+6=12  
MY TEACHER LC  
... She keeps putting this!



## More police in Southwark – Our Campaign for 1,000 police officers



**METROPOLITAN  
POLICE**

*Working for a safer London*

There is big concern locally about crime and a demand that there should be more police to make people feel safer.

Since 2002 I have led the campaign for more police in Southwark with the support of Southwark MPs, Tessa Jowell and Simon Hughes, the GLA member for Southwark, Val Shawcross, the Police Sector Working Groups, Cllr Ian Wingfield, Cllr Nick Stanton and Cllr Richard Porter. We have met regularly and I have pressed our demands with the Metropolitan Commissioner, Sir John Stevens, the Home Secretary and the Metropolitan Police Authority.

As a result of this campaign we have been successful in getting an increase in police in Southwark and more civilian staff to back them up.

Date	March 2002	Dec 2002	March 2003	Dec 2003	March 2004
<b>Police Officers</b>	775	799	808	850	850
<b>Civilian Staff</b>	176	165	157	164	170

We have made progress – but we still need to make more. People feel more secure if they see police on the beat and know that they are there to respond quickly to any calls.

I'm also fully backing the efforts of the Metropolitan Police to recruit more black and ethnic minority officers. Our police should reflect the community they serve.



*Discussing the Southwark Police 1000 Campaign at Camberwell Forum with Borough Commander Ian Thomas, Jim Carroll, Chair of the Forum, Ken Livingstone, Mayor of London, and Val Shawcross, GLA Representative.*



## Health Services: Shortage of GPs

There have been major improvements in Kings College Hospital – both in the building and with more nurses and doctors. But most people's most regular contact is with their GP and people want to be able to get an appointment quickly, see the same doctor each time and feel that their doctor has enough time for them.

What people don't want is to find that they can't get on the GPs list as it is "closed" and that when they do, they see a different GP each time and it takes days to get an appointment.

There have been problems in recruiting GPs in Southwark partly because of the high cost of housing and the pressure of work. I have worked closely with Southwark Primary Care Trust, who are responsible for all local primary and community care services, to ensure that more GPs are recruited and more is done to keep those we already have.

Some progress has been made and all surgeries in my constituency currently have open lists. But I am still keeping a close eye on the situation. If you have any problems getting a GP or getting an appointment with your GP contact me or Southwark Primary Care Trust at 6th Floor, Mabel Goldwin House, 49 Grange Walk London SE1 3DY, Tel: 020 7525 0400

## Aylesbury Estate

The Aylesbury estate used to be a place where people were proud to live – and invite their friends and relatives. But over the past years it has fallen into disrepair. In 1999 the government designated it a New Deal for the Communities Area – but since then despite the hard work of tenants representatives and local activists and despite much consultation and planning, the much needed improvements have yet to take place.

Now, at last, the work will start – next year. The work will start on the South West Quarter of the estate. The money secured will be for the estate and will not involve any "stock transfer" – people will remain council tenants. When the South West has been done the rest of the estate will be brought up to the same standard.

I'd like to thank Cllr Lorraine Lauder, Cllr Paul Bates, Cllr Abdul Mohamed, Jean Bartlett, Joan Amodio, Steve Pearce and the NDC Team, the NDC Board Members and the many other active residents for their hard work in making this possible.

*Right: At the launch of the Aylesbury Childminding Centre in June 2003 with Jean Bartlett & others.*





## **Caroline Gardens – restoring the chapel for community use**

Caroline Gardens is a beautiful nineteenth century development of former alms houses which are now 170 council homes for people over 50 years old. It is grade II listed and is an architectural jewel just off the Old Kent Road. Its residents are very community minded and, for the most part, active. They have an active residents committee but they have no community centre of their own in which to meet.

In the centre of Caroline Gardens is a beautiful chapel, which was previously used by artists but is now empty.

The building is deteriorating and the residents are not able to use it. The residents have been campaigning to take over the chapel and use it as a community resource, whilst also preserving it for future generations. I am strongly backing their campaign and have had numerous meetings with the Council and others over the past year. The residents and others from the local community, working with Southwark Council, are now forming a Trust and we are looking at the next steps for the restoration of the Chapel.



We have had an initial feasibility study done, and are now in the process of arranging an additional feasibility study for the Chapel, to clarify what it will be used for and how much the work will cost. The Trust aim to secure funding for the project by next summer – we have already had a meeting with representatives from many interested organisations including English Heritage, Architectural Heritage Fund, Southwark Heritage Association and The Peckham Society and plan to meet with the Heritage Lottery Fund, The Georgian Society and others soon. We hope that the work will start by autumn 2005.

## **Closer connections with Africa**

I had three important reasons to extend my connections with Africa

- Many of those who live in my constituency of Camberwell and Peckham and come from Africa. It is now estimated that over 30% of my constituents come from Africa, with some wards made up of almost 50% Africans. I have created strong links with my newly arrived African constituents. Visiting their continent of origin is an important step in strengthening those links still further.
- I share the government's strong commitment to the UK playing a leading role in promoting development and tackling poverty internationally – and in particular protecting children from becoming prey to human trafficking.
- The Prime Minister has asked all ministers to make a priority of working with Africa. He has himself set up the Commission for Africa, as detailed on the next page.



Many of my constituents are from Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Somalia, Ivory Coast, Uganda, Tanzania and other African countries. As well as liaising closely with African community organisations and churches in Southwark, I visited Sierra Leone in March 2004, am planning to go to Nigeria in autumn 2004 and to Ghana and the Ivory Coast in 2005.



*Children in Sierra Leone in March 2004*

I'd like to thank Cllr Tayo Situ, Cllr Alfred Banya, Cllr Abdul Mohamed, Richard and Gloria Taylor, Alice Ukoko of Women of Nigeria International, Modupe Debbie Ariyo of African's Unite Against Child Abuse, African Families Foundation, South London African Women's Organisation, Ugandan Aids Action Fund, Sierra Leone Refugee Association, Farassa, International Association of Sierra Leoneans Abroad, Needy Children of Sierra Leone, Ola Oyewumni, Donald Cole, Joseph Ochieno, Pearse Odunlami and Cllr Columba Blango amongst others for advising me on African community issues. I'd also like to thank Plan international, the charity that sponsored and organised my visit to Sierra Leone.

I am also working closely with the Prime Minister Tony Blair on the **Commission for Africa** which he launched in May. This is a commission of members of government of the UK, Europe and Africa whose task is to take a fresh look at the challenges Africa faces. I have established that Africans living in Southwark have a key role to play in advising our government on foreign and development policy towards Africa – on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2004 Hilary Benn MP, Secretary of State for International Development, will come to Southwark to hear the views of my African constituents.



*Above: With Tanzanian constituents and the Tanzanian High Commissioner in Westminster in July 2003.*



*Left: The Team at Women of Nigeria International.*



At my invitation, the Parliamentary Select Committee on International Development came to Southwark Town Hall as part of its enquiry into Development and Migration. The evidence given by those at the Town Hall has had a major impact on the final report – and this in turn will play a vital role in formulating UK government policy.

Please contact me if you'd like to see the evidence that was given by the panel of Sierra Leoneans or the final report of the Select Committee-or you can see it at [www.parliament.uk](http://www.parliament.uk)



*The Parliamentary International Development Committee meeting to hear the views of Southwark residents from Sierra Leone at Southwark Town Hall in April 2004.*

## **Continuing my work as Solicitor General – one of the Government's Law Officers**

I remain a member of the Government as Solicitor General – deputy to the Attorney General, Lord Goldsmith.

### **Stepping up efforts to tackle domestic violence**

Later this year strong new laws on domestic violence will come into effect. The Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act will:

- Give the police greater powers of arrest
- Give the courts greater power to protect victims of domestic violence – as well as to punish offenders
- Establish reviews after every domestic homicide – so that we can learn lessons on how to prevent these deaths. Two women every week are killed by their husband or partner – or ex-husband or partner.

The police, prosecutors and health services are also working more closely and effectively to step in and prevent domestic violence escalating.



## Domestic Violence in Southwark

Southwark has high levels of recorded domestic violence. In the year to March 31<sup>st</sup> 2003, Southwark Police had 4671 incidents which were recorded as domestic violence, an increase of 544 on the previous year. If you are being assaulted at home you should not put up with it or hope it will go away. Domestic violence usually gets worse unless something is done about it. And it always has a bad effect on children as well as the woman herself. There is much more help available than there used to be.

## Rape

New, clearer laws on rape and other sexual offences came into effect on May 1<sup>st</sup> and there are to be more new centres for rape victims like the pioneering Haven Centre attached to Kings College Hospital in Camberwell – which cares for the female (or male) victim's health needs and also collects forensic evidence to help catch the offender and ensure they are convicted.

If you have been forced to have sex or you are a victim of domestic violence you should report it and seek help:

In an emergency call 999  
Police Community Safety Unit: 020 7232 6160  
Police Sexual Offences Sapphire Team: 020 7232 6182  
Refuge 24 hour Helpline: 0870 599 5443  
Women's Aid Federation England: 0845 7023 468  
Victim Support Southwark Domestic Violence or Rape & Sexual Assault Worker:  
02073788886

## New opportunities to become a lawyer

The law is there on behalf of everyone – and should be fair to everyone. Justice should not only be done – but be seen to be done. But it is hard for people to believe that the law is fair when lawyers are mostly white and male and come from middle class families. The Crown Prosecution Service – for which I and the Attorney General are ministers – has now established the CPS Law Scholarship programme to enable CPS admin and clerical staff to become lawyers. The CPS pays 100% of their fees and gives them time off work for exams.



The CPS Law Scholarship Programme is now in its second year and there were 231 law scholars in the first year who studied for a range of qualifications from law A level to law degree and becoming barrister and solicitors. In London 80% CPS Law Scholars are women and 46% are ethnic minority.

These CPS law scholars will make a great and distinctive contribution to the legal profession and some of them will, in due course, become judges.



Every month I answer questions in the House of Commons about my work as Solicitor General.



20 Jan 2004:

R v. Angela Cannings

12.32 pm

**Mr. Dominic Grieve (Beaconsfield) (Con) (urgent question):** *To ask the Solicitor-General to make a statement on the review of criminal cases resulting from the decision of the Court of Appeal in the case of Angela Cannings.*

**The Solicitor-General (Ms Harriet Harman):** Yesterday's judgment in the Court of Appeal in the appeal against conviction of **Angela Cannings** has serious and far-reaching implications. The Court of Appeal said that, in relation to unexplained infant deaths when the outcome of the trial depended exclusively or almost exclusively on a serious disagreement between distinguished and reputable experts, it would often be unsafe to proceed. We are acting on that judgment.

In December, when the Court of Appeal freed **Angela Cannings**, we asked for all cases that potentially involved sudden infant death syndrome to be identified as quickly as possible. To date, some 258 convictions, reaching back over the past 10 years, for murder, manslaughter or infanticide of an infant aged under two years by its parent, have been identified. Those cases will be considered further as a matter of urgency to establish how many were convictions that the Court of Appeal judgment yesterday indicated may be unsafe. We expect the process to be completed swiftly in the coming weeks.

We propose that in all cases that appear to fulfil the criteria that the Court of Appeal laid down, the convicted person will be informed of developments immediately. There are then two possible routes. Either the case will be referred to the Criminal Cases Review Commission or the convicted person, with legal advice, can appeal out of time to the Court of Appeal. Under the Criminal Appeal Act 1995, the CCRC has the power to consider whether the convictions should be referred to the Court of Appeal.

The Attorney-General has made it clear that we are especially concerned about cases in which the convicted person is still in prison. So far, we have identified 54 prisoners whose cases may involve sudden infant death syndrome. They will receive the highest priority. The Attorney-General has already spoken to the chair of the CCRC and will meet him on Friday to discuss further the way in which the review of the cases can be expedited. We have also asked the Crown Prosecution Service to conduct a review of the 15 current cases that involve prosecutions for unexplained infant death.

*Extract from Hansard 20<sup>th</sup> January 2004 in the House of Commons*



## Unduly Lenient Sentences

Sometimes the courts give a sentence which is too harsh – and the offender then appeals to the Court of Appeal. Sometimes, the sentence is too lenient. In those cases, the Attorney General or I can refer the case to the Court of Appeal and ask for the sentence to be increased. We only use this power in exceptional circumstances when the sentence is so lenient that it would undermine public confidence – or where we fear the judge has based the sentence on the wrong principles

In 2003, we referred 86 cases to the Court of Appeal and in 58 of those cases the sentence was increased.

The main types of cases referred were:

Offence	Number of cases referred in 2003
Rape/Indecent Assault	33
Drug related	18
Robbery and Burglary	14
Wounding/GBH	9
Fraud	6
Manslaughter/Murder	4
Death by dangerous driving	2

*Of the above categories, 7 cases included firearms offences.*

If you are involved in, or know of a case where the sentence has been “unduly lenient” which has been in the Crown Court you can refer it to The Legal Secretariat to the Law Officers, Attorney General’s Chambers, 9 Buckingham Gate, London SW1E 6JP, Tel: 020 7271 2400 or email [lslo@gtnet.gov.uk](mailto:lslo@gtnet.gov.uk) – but it must be within 28 days of the sentence

## Improving London’s Criminal Justice System

The police, prosecutors and courts are now working more closely together to try and

- Reduce the number of offenders who get away without conviction
- Give better care and support to victims and witnesses
- Increase public confidence in the criminal justice system

I chair the group of ministers which has responsibility for the Criminal Justice System in London. Things are improving but there is still a long way to go.

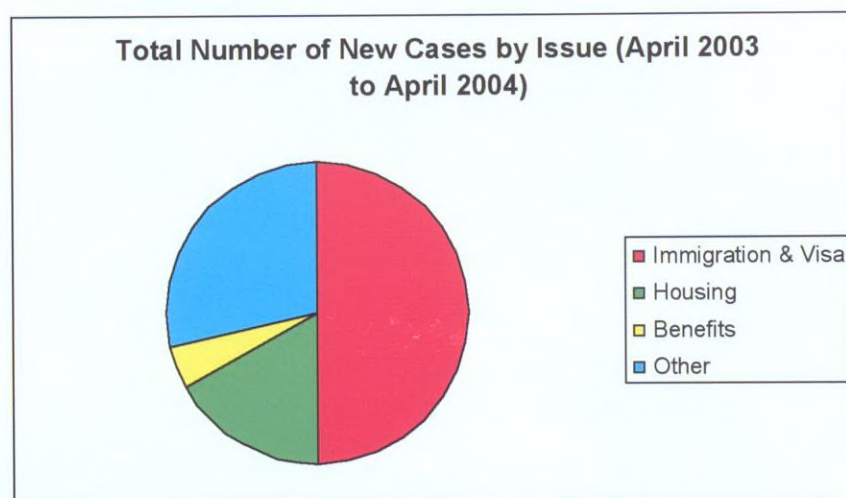


## Camberwell & Peckham Casework

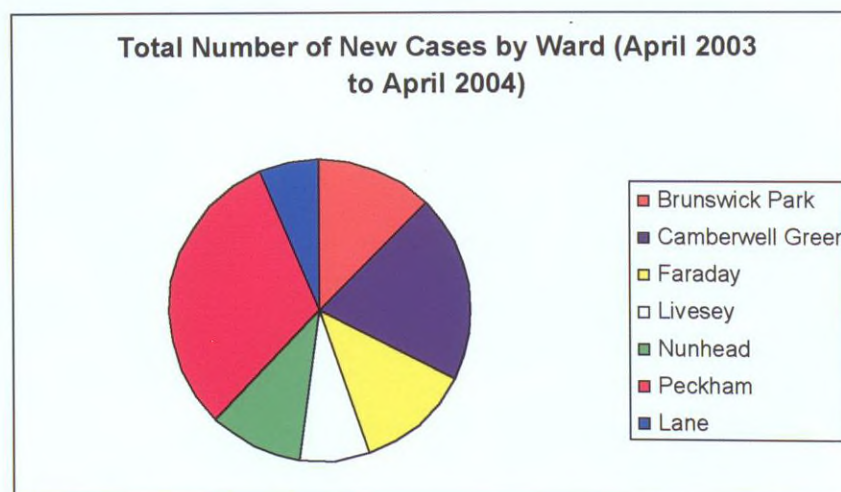
I hold regular advice surgeries at the Town Hall on Friday mornings and Tuesday evenings. These surgeries are very important as they enable me to meet and talk to a large number of my constituents and hear personally from them about their problems and issues that concern them.

At most of my advice surgeries my team and I deal with 55 cases. Each case can consist of two or three people meaning I can have 100 to 200 people at each advice surgery. I would like to thank those who have helped at my advice surgery over the last year: Charlotte Smith, Cllr Alun Hayes, Cllr Dora Dixon-Fyle, Cllr Barrie Hargrove and Cllr Vicky Naish. I would also like to thank the Town Hall Reception Team of Christine, Beverley and Ellen.

If you want to come to one of my advice surgeries, you can contact me on 020 7219 4218 for the dates or find them on my website at [www.harrietharman.labour.co.uk](http://www.harrietharman.labour.co.uk)



(Immigration and Visa Enquiries: 474, Housing: 160, Benefits: 42, Other: 272)



(Brunswick Park: 118, Camberwell Green: 192 Faraday: 117, Livesey: 72, Nunhead: 94, Peckham: 296, Lane: 62)

## Examples of Constituency Casework

Constituent A attended my advice surgery concerning his immigration status. He had a family here in Peckham he was supporting, but also supported an elderly mother in Nigeria who had become seriously ill. He was eager to travel to see her but couldn't as the Home Office were still considering his application for leave to remain in the UK.

I made representations to the Home Office that his case should be resolved as soon as possible. Sadly, on the day the letter arrived from the Home Office informing him that he had been granted indefinite leave to remain he also received a telegram informing him that his Mother had died. I made representations to ensure that within a week he received his passport and he was able to fly home to take part in the funeral ceremony.

A 14 year old girl from my constituency died suddenly from a heart condition. Her mother and father, who were originally from Ghana, came to see me at my advice surgery – they had relatives who wanted to fly to the UK for her funeral. I was able to cut through the red tape and within 7 days her aunts and uncles were granted visas to come to the UK and join the grieving family for the funeral.

Ms B's young son was tragically killed in a road accident. She wrote to me as she wanted to be re-housed by Southwark Council as the accident happened close to her home – she was faced with having to walk past the scene of the accident to take her other child to school. As the new school term approached she was becoming increasingly distressed at this prospect. I made representations to the Council and my constituent moved out of Southwark to be nearer to her relatives in another London Borough.

Mrs C wrote asking for my help to get her daughter into a popular secondary school. There were numerous reasons why the school was the most suitable for her daughter – it was close to the family home and was also able to cope with the special educational needs her daughter had. I wrote to the Head teacher explaining the situation and asking the school to review their decision. The Head teacher agreed to do this and decided to offer her a place at the school.

Mr D went to Lagos and KLM airline refused to allow him to return to the UK because he had a new passport without the correct stamp in it. His employers gave his wife a deadline – unless he returned within 7 days his job would be terminated and the family would lose their main income. I liaised with the British Embassy and got them to fast-track their checking procedures and issue him with the 'Returning Resident' stamp on his passport. He was then able to return to the UK, his family and his job.

I met with Mrs E when I was on a visit to a local Sheltered Housing Unit in Peckham. She was elderly and vulnerable and very concerned that she had received numerous letters from the Housing Department saying she owed varying amounts of money in rent, although it was supposed to be paid directly by Housing Benefit. Having never been in debt in her life, she was frightened that she would lose her home. I contacted the Housing Benefit Department and arranged for one of their representatives to come and visit Mrs E in her home. The situation was resolved and her peace of mind restored.



## Visits

It is very important that I am aware of the issues that affect my constituents. In addition to meeting them at advice surgeries and reading their letters and emails, I also visit organizations such as schools, nurseries, and Neighbourhood Housing Offices.

During my visits to schools I often take **Citizenship lessons** or **assemblies**. I also arrange for groups of school children to come to the **Houses of Parliament** for **tours** – but I can also arrange these tours for families or community groups. If you would like me to visit your school or arrange a tour of Parliament for you, please contact my office on 020 7219 2057.



*Above: Walworth Upper School.*



*Left: The Academy at Peckham and Sacred Heart School with local Councillors taking part in a debate at the Town Hall for Local Democracy week.*



*Above: Highshore School have a tour of Parliament.*

*Left: A Citizenship lesson at Waverley School.*

**Below is a list of just some of the places I have visited in the past year:**

- African Families Foundation
- Ann Bernard Nursery
- Cares of Life Project
- Southwark Pensioners Action Group
- East Peckham Consortium
- Icthus Primary School
- Soul & the City
- Lamps Court Housing
- The Grove Nursery
- Kings College Hospital
- Crawford Primary School
- Sierra Leone Refugee Welfare Association
- Aylesbury NDC Offices
- St Thomas the Apostle School
- Acorn Neighbourhood Housing Office
- Parkside Neighbourhood Housing Office
- Victim Support Southwark
- St Saviour's & St Olave's School
- St Peter's Primary School
- Cambridge House Legal Centre
- Southwark PCT
- St Joseph's Infants School
- Nell Gwynn Nursery
- Queens Road Day Centre
- Camberwell College of Arts
- Working Links
- Camelot School
- Christ Apostolic Church
- Aylesbury Child minding Centre
- Boyhood to Manhood
- The Academy at Peckham
- EDEN Project
- Barset Sheltered Housing Unit
- House of Praise, Rye Lane
- Walworth Police Station
- Kingsdale School
- Farassa
- Crawford Primary School
- Blackfriars Advice Centre
- Peckham Police Station
- Walworth Upper School
- Oliver Goldsmith's School
- New Covenant Church
- Willowbank School
- Waverley School
- Highshore School
- Russell Court Sheltered Housing Unit
- Lister Primary Care Centre
- D'Eynesford Sheltered Housing Unit
- Comber Grove School
- South London African Women's Organisation
- All Saints Church
- Camberwell Traders Association
- Walworth Church Commissioners Tenants Association
- Peckham Community Council
- John Donne Primary School
- Tykes Corner Nursery
- Caroline Gardens
- West Camberwell Neighbourhood Housing Office
- Damilola Taylor Centre
- Grosvenor Sheltered Housing Unit
- Everlasting Arms Ministry
- Ugandan Aids Action Fund
- House of Praise
- Wickway Centre
- Harry Lamborne Sheltered Housing Unit
- St Giles Trust
- Trafalgar Surgery
- Michael Faraday School
- Inspire at St Peters Church
- Women of Nigeria
- Southwark Somali Refugee Council
- South London Temple
- Archbishop Michael Ramsey Technology College International
- Camberwell After School Project





*Left: Presenting food hygiene certificates to community activists at Cambridge House.*

*Right: Peckham-born Rio Ferdinand at the Southwark Community Games.*



*Below: Cllr Tayo Situ and members of the congregation from The House of Praise, Rye Lane on the House of Commons Terrace.*



### **My constituency and parliamentary team**

I am supported in my work by my constituency and parliamentary team who are led by Charlotte Smith and Dora Dixon-Fyle. They are recognised as one of the hardest working and most professional teams in parliament. I'd like to thank them for all their work.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE FURTHER COPIES OF THIS REPORT,  
PLEASE CONTACT ME AT [harmanh@parliament.uk](mailto:harmanh@parliament.uk) OR ON 020 7219 4218