



News
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Report from Sharon Hodgson MP



Alongside Pudsey Bear, Sharon helps to launch the annual Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal in ASDA, The Galleries Washington.

Thou shall have a Rishi

She crashed the economy, she sacked her Chancellor, she dismissed her Home Secretary and then she allegedly forced her MPs through the voting lobbies to crack their countryside constituencies. It was over before it began. Graham Brady, the 1922 Committee Chair met with former Prime Minister Liz Truss and told her she had to go, and so her clumsily assembled house of cards collapsed.

Do not be moved by the sentimental reports of Truss's last hours in the pages of the right-wing media; she was a woeful PM. Ideologically bound to the very worst tendencies of her party, she sought to cut tax for the wealthiest and load up our national debt for working people to pay off. The Bank of England had to bail out pension funds as many as three times in little over a month, raising the cost of government borrowing and therefore exposing us to a round of public service cuts. Base Rate hit 3% yesterday, meaning mortgage hikes at the worst possible time. Enter Rishi Sunak, the 'one nation' Thatcherite

Brexiteer who lost to 'dry' Remainer Truss in the summer's Tory leadership election (remember that?). A different prospect to Truss and Johnson, he presents a challenge for Labour in so far as he actually reads his briefs. Nonetheless I am glad that the UK has its first British Asian PM. It is a great step for representation in our country.

Truss has done some lasting damage to her party's brand. Polling shows a widespread distrust of the Conservatives' competence in every policy area. You cannot unburn a piece of toast. Yet with up to two years between now and an election, it would be foolish to look at the polls and to think we have this in the bag. As we have seen in only the past six months, things change fast.

Cancer Minister meeting on ovarian cancer.

This month I met with Will Quince, a Health Minister, to talk about my work as Chair of the APPG on Ovarian Cancer. It is clearly a very prevalent cancer, because we both spoke about Parliamentary colleagues who had lost mothers to the Cancer. I also found it shocking that 93 percent of women diagnosed at the earliest stage survive for at least five years, compared to just 13 per cent of women diagnosed at the most advanced stage. That means that if we are able to raise awareness about the symptoms and encourage people to get checked up with their GP, then we are able to save lives.

At the meeting, we discussed Scotland, somewhere that is leading the way in Ovarian Cancer diagnosis. Unlike in England, Scotland carries out both of the tests used to diagnose the cancer at the same time, rather than waiting for the results of one to carry out the other. I have been calling for England to follow suit. It was a really productive meeting and I will keep fighting to improve the lives of women with Ovarian Cancer.

Roving street surgeries and campaign update.



This month I held two door knocking sessions across the constituency, in St Anne's and Washington South. I was met at the door with many fed up residents who were appalled by the Conservatives' conduct and the damaging effects their economic incompetence has caused, with many fearful for the prospect of Rishi Sunak returning to Downing Street. While residents have been struggling with the spiralling cost of living, the Government has continued to neglect working people. A number of local issues were brought up including speeding cars and traffic noise, the stealing of bins and the maintenance of bushes and trees, which the Councillors and myself have taken up. I would finally like to congratulate all the three newly-selected Council candidates, Cllr Fiona Miller (Washington East), Cllr John Usher (Redhill) and Beth Jones (Washington Central).

There is no better time than now to encourage your family and friends to join the Labour Party. Join here, by using this link below:
<https://labour.org.uk/members/why-join-labour>

Food and drink supply chain APPG

In October I chaired an emergency inquiry session of the Food and Drink Supply Chain All-Party Parliamentary Group, to hear from the food and drink sector about the effects of inflation and skyrocketing utilities costs on the sector and on our supply chain. We heard that redundancies, business closures and a sharp decline in investment are likely to follow should businesses within the food supply chain miss out on energy support after March. Given how vital this sector is to the UK economy, from public sector catering to hospitality venues, it is vital that the Government listens to the evidence brought forward in this session to support businesses involved.

Ella's Kitchen "Eat. Play. Love." campaign

I am proud to have sponsored the Ella's Kitchen parliamentary reception where they launched their "Eat. Play. Love." campaign to promote sensory food play as a policy. Sensory food play for little ones is proven to promote good relationships between children and eating healthy fruit and veg. At a time when dietary related illnesses and diet-based health inequalities are on the rise, especially in younger children from disadvantaged backgrounds, this seems like a practical solution.

Tennis courts funding



This month I was delighted to attend an LTA Park Tennis Project drop-in event. Where I was able to discuss details of £47,200 worth of investment in Usworth Park tennis courts. The joint LTA and UK Government Parks Tennis Project investment is designed to open up tennis to people of all backgrounds, to regenerate sports provision across the nation, and provide greater opportunities for children and adults to be active. The prospective work includes court resurfacing, fencing, installation of a gate access system and new nets and posts. It is anticipated that work will begin this winter, and work on identified sites will commence as they are approved over the next 18 months.

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