



News
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Report from Sharon Hodgson MP



Brandon Feeley launched his campaign in Washington South on February 24th. Since being selected as the candidate, Brandon and the team have made 425 contacts, with a 57% Labour promise.

SNP Opposition Day debate in Parliament

On Wednesday 21st Feb, I spoke in the Chamber to call for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza. The Speaker made the decision to allow votes on the SNP's debate motion, a Government amendment calling for 'humanitarian pauses', and a Labour amendment calling for an 'immediate humanitarian ceasefire'. While this broke convention on the Speaker's behalf, he recognised that MPs needed to have a broad debate, and the opportunity to vote for a ceasefire that respected this. This Opposition Day debate topic was extremely sensitive and internationally significant, and the vote would go on to represent the opinion of the whole House. It would not have been fair, accurate, or safe to hold such a vote without accurate representation of the positions of members across the house, that they could safely and meaningfully support. I called for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza, the immediate release of all hostages, an immediate increase of aid into Gaza, and demand an end to the horrific violence and suffering that, if left unopposed, will only cause more death and destruction.

Baby Loss Certificates announcement

On Thursday 21st Feb, the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) announced that they are introducing a certificate of recognition for pregnancies lost before 24 weeks. Previously, pregnancies lost before 24 weeks could only be recognised as a miscarriage even if, had the baby been born alive when they may have survived, it would be still classed as a miscarriage rather than a stillbirth, as in the case of my daughter, Lucy. For many families this is fundamentally inaccurate to their experience of loss. This new certificate of registration, which I have been campaigning towards for many years, now means that families like my own can have their child officially recognised. This change has come about thanks to the great work of my colleague Tim Loughton MP, whose Private Member's Bill (2017-2019) and review committee that I was part of, lobbied government to make this important change. As a pre-24-week bereaved mother, I understand the pain and rejection that many feel when our baby's passing isn't recognised as a death. I hope these certificates can help to bring some closure to grieving families, help them to feel heard, and have their babies' passings respected and recognised.

Labour's new deal for working people

For fourteen years, the Conservatives have failed working people and undermined the foundations of a good life: the biggest hit to living standards on record; over a million people on zero-hours contracts; and families pushed to the brink as costs spiral. Labour has a plan to make work pay. Our New Deal for Working People will boost wages and make work more secure. Labour's New Deal will: ban zero-hour contracts; end fire and rehire; ensure a genuine living wage; guarantee basic rights from day one; give stronger, properly enforced protections at work; strengthen sick pay and extend it to low paid workers; and tackle the gender pay gap. Labour is a pro-worker and pro-business party, which is why our New Deal will help to keep more people in work, improve worker wellbeing, and put more money in working people's pockets to spend, boosting economic growth, resilience, and conditions for innovation.

Envision site visit



I visited Envision AESC for an update on the new gigafactory currently under construction. This new factory will employ over 1000 local people and is expected to be operational as soon as 2025. Envision already has a factory next to Nissan and has committed long-term to providing quality careers for local people. Envision are also looking to volunteer in the community, if you know any community groups that need volunteers, please contact me at: hodgsons@parliament.uk

Leamside Line APPG AGM

I am happy to report a successful AGM for the Leamside Line APPG according to the new regulations. Paul Howell MP and I will continue as Co-Chairs, with Ian Levy MP and Emma Lewell-Buck MP remaining Vice-Chairs. Unfortunately, we had to say goodbye to our current Secretariat *56 Degrees North* but we are thankful for all their hard work helping to establish the group. We were also delighted to hear an update from Transport North East and discuss their plans for a business case for the line.

Crown Studio Works, Sunderland

On the 16th of February, many North East Labour MPs and I wrote to the Chancellor, urging him to act on the promises he made and support the Crown Works Project at the upcoming budget on the 6th of March. The Crown Works Studios development would build a world-class, high-end film and TV production facility on an 80-acre brownfield site on the south bank of the River Wear. This is an amazing opportunity to deliver groundbreaking levels of cultural and economic investment to our region, and one that we urge the Tories not to throw away. If this Government is serious about 'levelling up' then they must back this project. I will continue to lobby government alongside my North East colleagues.

National Apprenticeship Week



In honour of National Apprenticeship Week, I had the pleasure of meeting apprentices training at our local ASDA store.

Recent by-election results

In the recent Wellingborough and Kingswood by-elections, Labour has secured victories as new MPs Gen Kitchen and Damien Egan overturned Conservative majorities of over 10,000. I am confident that Gen and Damien will be fantastic representatives and I commend all their hard work. These victories show how the people of the UK have had enough of this failed Tory Government, though there is still a long fight ahead and we need to stay focused to secure a Labour victory at the next general election.

Local campaigning

I was delighted to join Lynne Dagg for her campaign launch in St Anne's, an area I'm proud to still represent until the next General Election – whenever that may be. I have also campaigned alongside Brandon Feeley in Washington South, and Luke Myer in our twinned seat of Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland; I will continue campaigning with candidates across the constituency and beyond to ensure Labour gets elected on May 2nd.

Rochdale by-election

We awoke to the news in Rochdale that George Galloway had been elected as MP, following Labour's suspension of Azhar Ali, after his reported antisemitic remarks. Galloway has capitalised on the conflict in Gaza, using the suffering as a political pawn, and exploiting the fears and tensions of the communities of Rochdale to secure himself a seat in the Commons. Having ran for MP 16 times, in various seats around the country, Galloway's motivations to represent the people of Rochdale clearly boil down to little more than his overwhelming desire to represent himself.

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

Sharon Hodgson, Washington & Sunderland West Constituency
Units 1 & 1A, Vermont House, Concord, Washington,
Tyne & Wear NE37 2SQ
Tel. (0191) 417 2000
W: www.sharonhodgson.org E: hodgsons@parliament.uk X: <https://twitter.com/SharonHodgsonMP>