

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

## **June Report**

**23<sup>rd</sup> June 2022**



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## This is my June report 2022 in which I:

- 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.

*Harriet Harman*

### Redevelopment of Sceaux Gardens

On 21<sup>st</sup> June I visited Sceaux Gardens to meet with the Chair of the Tenant and Residents' Association, Mike Edge, to hear about the concerns of residents regarding the redevelopment of the estate and the fire safety works on Marie Curie block.

As with all redevelopments, there are two imperatives. One is fairness to the tenants and residents – both those who have moved and those who have yet to move. The other is the need for finality so that the development can start and proceed to conclusion. Despite it being announced in May 2021, fire safety work on Marie Curie has still not started, and there is no clear timeframe for when the work will take place. I will be writing to the Council to ask whether they have a timeline for the works, and whether they have considered a bespoke independent arbitration process to ensure fairness to residents.

My thanks to Mike for meeting with me and taking me around the estate, and for speaking up for residents.

### Opposing cuts to Camberwell and Peckham bus routes

On 1<sup>st</sup> June, Transport for London (TfL) launched a consultation on proposed changes to bus routes in London. In Camberwell and Peckham they plan to withdraw the 12, 45 and 78 routes and change the routes of the 59, 148, 171 and 388. Across London of the proposed bus routes to be cut 25% were scheduled for Southwark.

I am strongly against these proposals. It would mean fewer buses, longer waits at bus stops and needing to change more often. I don't think TfL has taken account of the problems this will cause for people in the local communities that rely on those buses, particularly women and girls, those with disabilities, the elderly, and those on low incomes.



I have written to Sadiq Khan, the Mayor of London, asking for information about what proposals TfL considered which would have avoided discriminating against those who already face disadvantages, and you can read my letter [here](#).

These cuts are a direct result of the Government's refusal to fund TfL sufficiently following its substantial loss of income during the pandemic. Along with Helen Hayes MP and Neil Coyle MP, I wrote to the Secretary of State for Transport, Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP, demanding that he stop holding our constituents to ransom and properly fund TfL to avoid these cuts having to go ahead. You can read my letter [here](#).

I attended a meeting with TfL and other London MPs and pressed TfL on their process for deciding where these cuts would take place. I don't think that TfL have looked at the impact they will have on local communities and have focused only on where the buses are most frequent, not where the areas of greatest need are. I urged them to start again from a perspective of social equality, rather than transport, to ensure that the cuts don't hit hardest those who can least afford it.



Harriet Harman  
@HarrietHarman

Cuts to bus routes hit hardest those who can least afford it. My, [@helenhayes](#) and [@coyleneil](#)'s letter to Transport Sec [@grantschapps](#) protesting Govt failure to fund [@TfL](#). This is not levelling up. 🇬🇧



Harriet Harman · Jun 1

25% of proposed bus cuts are in @lb\_southwark. Tube-less Camb & P'ham needs more transport links. Not less! @MayorofLondon @SouthwarkLabour @transportgovuk @grantschapps twitter.com/diamondgeezers/...



I will be submitting a response to the TfL consultation. I have contacted Tenant and Residents' Associations along the routes affected to get their views so that I can include them in my response to the consultation. I encourage everyone who is affected by these proposed changes to submit a response to the consultation, which you can do [here](#), and sign Southwark Labour's petition [here](#).



*The Government is not giving Transport for London (TfL) enough funds to run the transport system that London needs. So TfL have worked out that they have to cut 4% from their budget for buses. They've published proposals that they have put out for consultation and I will be strongly objecting to them on behalf of people of Camberwell and Peckham.*



They plan to withdraw the 12, 45 and 78 routes and change the routes of the 59, 148, 171 and 388. It would mean fewer buses, longer waits at bus stops and needing to change more often.

25% of the London Bus cuts they are proposing fall in Southwark, just one London borough out of 32 served by TfL. And people here need the buses. Most people don't have cars or can't afford the petrol to drive to work. We don't have a tube in Camberwell and Peckham for people to use as an alternative. And though many people here, especially young people, cycle, jumping on a bike is not possible for a mum with a couple of kids, a frail elderly person or a wheelchair user.

The cuts will mean people having to change buses or "more interchanges" as TfL put it. For an elderly person who can do one journey might not be able to do two. For a young woman or girl on her own waiting at a bus stop in the dark could make them feel unsafe. For a disabled person, getting on a crowded bus might feel impossible.

TfL don't want to make these cuts. They know we need more buses, not fewer. But in view of the fact they feel forced to cut, they should make those cuts in a way which is least harmful to those who will be worst hit. I've spoken to TfL and I'm working with Southwark's two other MPs Helen Hayes and Neil Coyle on this. I've said to TfL that they should completely redo their planned cuts. They should start with a map showing the greatest concentrations of low income and make sure the cuts avoid those areas. TfL acknowledge in their "impact statement" that any cuts to buses hit hardest at the elderly, women and girls, those with disabilities and those on low incomes. So it makes no sense that they plan to hit Southwark so hard.

Please get in touch with me to give me your views about the buses in your area that you use so I can include what you say in my strong protests to TfL. You can email me at [harriet.harman.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:harriet.harman.mp@parliament.uk).

TfL have tough choices to make. But they shouldn't make life tougher for those who can least afford it.

## Urging the Prime Minister to protect rights of rape survivors

On 17<sup>th</sup> June I, along with almost 100 other Labour women MPs, signed a letter to the Prime Minister regarding changes to rules on evidence for rape trials.

The rate of prosecution for rape is already low, and the conviction rate is even lower. Changing rules to include counselling notes in disclosure at trial will stop women from seeking support following rape, and will disincentivise women from reporting rape to the police.

The Government must stop these changes coming into effect.

The letter in full:



I am one of almost 100 Labour women MPs who have written to Boris Johnson today urging him to block new rules which threaten the rights of rape survivors to seek counselling before their attackers go on trial. No survivor should ever have to choose between therapy and justice.



11:16 AM · Jun 17, 2022 · Twitter Web App

757 Retweets 39 Quote Tweets 2,799 Likes

*At Prime Minister's Questions on Wednesday, Sarah Champion asked you about the Attorney General's proposed changes affecting the rights of survivors of rape and sexual assault to seek counselling while their attackers are awaiting trial. You appeared unaware of these changes, but sincere in your desire to look into the concerns raised, so we wanted as a group to write to you to explain the issue and ask you to intervene before these changes take effect next month.*

*As you may be aware, it has been the legal precedent since 2004 – established by R v Alibhai – that third-party information in criminal cases need only be disclosed by the prosecuting authorities where it would actively damage their case and help the defence's.*

*This test is particularly important in cases of rape and sexual assault, where that third party information could include notes from therapy or counselling sessions, which survivors of those crimes have sought to help them deal with the trauma they have faced.*

*For tens of thousands of survivors of rape and sexual assault, that counselling is a crucial step on the road to recovery, and one which they should feel confident about seeking, especially during the increasingly long delays many are having to endure waiting for their day in court.*

*However, new guidance published by the Attorney General advises that the Alibhai precedent does "not set a binding standard for what the test [for disclosure] should be", and that all third-party information must be disclosed if it is deemed 'relevant' to the case at hand.*

*If these changes go ahead, it risks opening the door for the disclosure of almost all notes from pre-trial counselling sessions received by survivors of rape and sexual assault. And sadly, the history of such trials in our country has told us what will happen next.*

*The deeply personal, private information from those counselling sessions will not just be exposed for the world to see, but be used to try and intimidate, humiliate and discredit women and girls who are simply trying to bring the men who raped or assaulted them to justice.*

*That prospect will cause many survivors to avoid seeking therapy, and make it more likely that cases will collapse when the prolonged stress of waiting for trials becomes too much. As Sarah said to you on Wednesday, it will force many women to choose between therapy and justice.*

*It is no wonder that the Victims' Commissioner has criticised the Attorney General's proposals, and that the new guidance has been condemned by a broad range of campaigners and experts on violence against women and girls, as well as by survivors themselves.*

*At a time when incidents of violence against women and girls are the highest on record, when the charge rate in rape cases has dropped to a historic low of 1.3 percent, and when rape survivors are typically having to wait more than 1,000 days to have their cases completed in court, it cannot be right to make it harder for rape survivors to access therapy.*

*We therefore urge you to intervene and instruct the Attorney General to reconsider this dangerous and ill-considered guidance before it comes into effect on the 25th July.*

## **Interviewing Women MPs from other countries**

While parliaments around the world are still male-dominated there are now women MPs in every parliament in the world. Despite very different contexts, our objectives for progressive change for women in our respective countries are so similar. I'm interviewing women from parliaments around the world to hear from them about why they decided to enter politics, how they got there and what they hope to achieve.



Over the past few weeks, I've interviewed:

- New Zealand – Jan Logie MP
- Mexico – Cynthia Lopez Castro MP
- Indonesia – Luluk Nur Hamidah MP
- Canada – Ruby Sahota MP

I have more interviews planned for the coming weeks.

## **New Role: Chair of the Committee of Privileges**

I have been chosen by the House of Commons to chair of the Committee of Privileges, a parliamentary committee that investigates MPs' conduct in the House of Commons.

In order to conduct the investigation into whether or not the Prime Minister knowingly misled the House in his statements regarding the parties in Downing Street I will be stepping out of my role as chair of the Joint Committee on Human Rights until this inquiry by the Committee of Privileges has concluded.



NEW:

Former acting leader of the Labour Party, Harriet Harman MP, is to head the committee that will decide if Boris Johnson intentionally misled Parliament over partygate.

3:01 PM · May 26, 2022 · Twitter for iPhone

## **Raising concerns about human rights violations in the Government's Asylum Partnership with Rwanda**

On 8<sup>th</sup> June the Joint Committee on Human Rights, which I chair, heard evidence from:

- Stephanie Harrison QC, Barrister at Garden Court Chambers
- Colin Yeo, Barrister at Garden Court Chambers
- Dr Hazel Cameron, CEO of Pearl International Insights,

about the Government's plan to send refugees to Rwanda.



The policy is draconian and risks vulnerable refugee women and children being deported to Rwanda. It could even be applied to asylum seekers who have arrived legally.

Every person has a right to seek asylum in another country, as enshrined in Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of human rights. The planned deportation flight was cancelled earlier this month but I remain concerned that the Government will continue with their plans in future. The committee will be writing a letter to the Government about this policy in due course,

and you can read more about the inquiry [here](#).

You can watch our evidence session [here](#).

## Opposing demonstration curbs in the Government's Public Order Bill

On 17<sup>th</sup> June the Joint Committee on Human Rights (JCHR) published our report into the Government's Public Order Bill.

The committee found that the Government is creating a hostile environment for peaceful protest in this country and that the legislation would have a "chilling effect" on the right to protest.

Noisy protests are the exercises of the lungs of a healthy democracy. The right to protest is a fundamental right for all. Protests should not be treated as an inconvenience by those in power and this Bill is very concerning. You can read the committee's report [here](#).



UK Parliament Human Rights Comm... @HumanRights... - Jun 17 ...  
Today we publish our report which expresses concern that the Public Order Bill could put fundamental democratic rights at risk.

Report summary: [publications.parliament.uk/pa/jt5803/jtse...](https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/jt5803/jtse...)

Report conclusions and recommendations:  
[publications.parliament.uk/pa/jt5803/jtse...](https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/jt5803/jtse...)



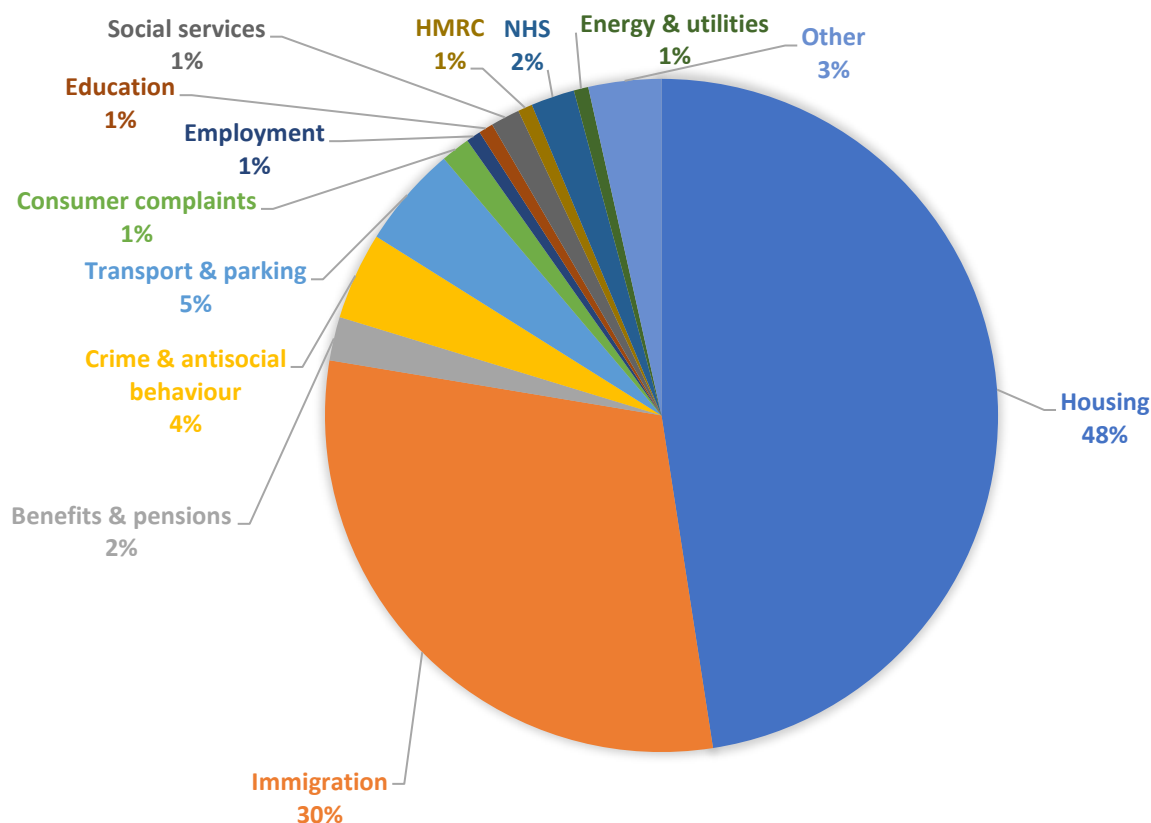
## Constituency problems - update

My casework team continue to deal with problems including ongoing COVID-19 issues, and there continues to be an increase in the number of constituents seeking my help.

## New cases breakdown – May 2022

In May I took action on **585** cases. Since the start of 2022, I have taken action on **2,718** cases.

In May I recouped **£1,775** for constituents. Since the start of 2022, the total I have recouped for constituents is **£3,920**. This includes underpaid benefit payments, coronavirus business grants for local business owners, waived HMRC penalties and compensation for errors and delays on action by housing associations and by the Home Office.



### Case summaries:

- A single mother from East Dulwich wrote to me asking for help with her overcrowded housing. She had originally been housed by Southwark Council in 2003 in a studio flat and was told that this would be temporary. Yet almost two decades on, she was still living in the property, now with her four-year-old son. As a result, the flat was overcrowded with very little living space. I wrote to Southwark Council on her behalf to ask that she be rehoused in suitable alternative accommodation. Following my enquiry, Southwark Council have now rehoused my constituent in a two-bedroom council property with more facilities and sufficient space for her and her son.
- A Hexagon Housing Association tenant from Nunhead asked for my help to resolve serious disrepair to the flooring in her kitchen and bathroom. The flooring in both rooms had developed large cracks and was beginning to sink and the lino on the floor had split in many areas. She had reported her situation to Hexagon Housing Association over a year ago. Whilst they sent several contractors to her property to inspect the issues and the contractors reported their concerns back to Hexagon, they had still not arranged an appointment to deal with the disrepair. I wrote to Hexagon to ask that they undertake the repairs as soon as possible. Hexagon have now carried out the necessary repairs.
- I was contacted by a young single mother from Camberwell who informed me that there were holes in the roof of her home, meaning the property was flooding when it rained causing damage to the walls and light fittings. She was also concerned that the damp conditions would cause mould to grow on the walls and the impact this would have on her two-year-old son. I wrote to her



landlord Hexagon Housing urgently to request that action be taken to fix the roof and ensure that the family were living in a damp-free and mould-free environment. I received a response from Hexagon confirming that works to the roof had been completed and I received assurances that they would be monitoring the interior to ensure there was no lasting damage or mould growth.

- A 67-year-old pensioner from Camberwell contacted me because he was experiencing a bedbug infestation in his home and he wanted to downsize to a smaller council property. He had been living in a three-bedroom council property since 1989 and was starting to find it unmanageable. The bedbug infestation he was experiencing had unfortunately spread to most of his furniture and belongings and it was severely affecting his health and wellbeing, particularly because he suffers from polymyositis which can make movements difficult. The Council had sent contractors to spray the property with chemicals but my constituent remained concerned about the state of the infestation and wanted to be moved as soon as possible. He had been trying to liaise with Southwark Council about downsizing but had found this difficult due to his computer illiteracy. I wrote to Southwark Council on his behalf to ask them to assist him in obtaining suitable alternative housing and they have now moved him into alternative accommodation.
- A Peckham woman contacted me because she had applied for a Spousal Visa and paid an additional fee of £800 for 'super priority' 24-hour turnaround service but over two weeks later had still not received a response. Because of this she had missed her brother's wedding in the USA in May due to her inability to fly without a valid visa. Her friend was also due to get married in the USA at the beginning of June and she was concerned that she would miss this too if the matter was not resolved. One of my caseworkers spoke to several Home Office advisors on the telephone regarding this matter and was informed that there had been a technical issue on the application. The advisor confirmed that the application had been escalated and the Home Office would contact my constituent directly. My constituent has now been issued her visa and was able to attend her friend's wedding.
- A woman from Peckham Rye contacted me because she was experiencing delays with her driving licence renewal application. She applied for the renewal and provided all the relevant documentation to the DVLA in September 2021, but as of May 2022 she had still not received her driving licence. I wrote urgently to the DVLA to request a report into the progress of the application and to ask when she could expect to receive her licence. Following my enquiry, the DVLA have now issued the licence to my constituent.
- I was contacted by a woman living in Bali on behalf of her adult son who lives in my constituency and had responded badly to his first dose of the Pfizer vaccine. He was therefore seeking an alternative vaccine for his second dose. The individual's mother explained that her son had raised his concerns with his GP but had been unable to make a booking for a specific alternative vaccine. I wrote to South East London Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to request a report into the situation and ask if it would be possible for the individual to receive an alternative second dose. I received a response advising that he should consult with the Guys and St Thomas cardiology team before receiving his next Covid-19 vaccine dose. I shared this with my constituent and after a few weeks, the constituent's mother informed me that disappointingly her son

had not been given an appointment. He had plans to travel to Bali to visit his mother but was now unlikely to be able to do so due to his incomplete vaccination status. Following this update, I made further enquiries to the CCG on his behalf. My constituent has now been able to access a second dose of Astra Zeneca and he has been able to travel to Bali.

## Help and Support

### Concerned about British nationals who need assistance in Ukraine?

Consular support is still available to British nationals through the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office helpline (open 24 hours, 7 days a week) on:

**+380 44 490 3660** (from Ukraine)

**+44 (0) 1908 516666** (from the UK)

**[Click here for UK Government advice about the situation in Ukraine.](#)**

### Concerned about non-British family members in Ukraine?

The British Government has announced that British nationals and people of any nationality settled in the UK will be supported to bring family members to the UK. This includes immediate family members (under Family Migration visas) as well as parents, grandparents, adult children and siblings (under the Ukraine Family Scheme).

To check your eligibility and begin the application call the helpline (open 24 hours, 7 days a week) on:

From Ukraine: **+44 808 164 8810** – select option 1

From the UK: **0808 164 8810** if you are in the UK – select option 1

**[Find further information on UK Government guidance support to Ukrainian nationals and their families.](#)**

### Concerned as a Ukrainian national in the UK?

The Home Office has agreed some temporary concessions to support Ukrainian nationals currently in the UK who are now unable to return when their existing visa expires.

If you are in the UK and need assistance, contact UKVI on:

**0808 164 8810** – select option 2

Monday to Thursday (excluding bank holidays), 9am to 4:45pm.

Friday (excluding bank holidays), 9am to 4:30pm.

**[Find further information on UK Government guidance support to Ukrainian nationals and their families.](#)**

## **Need legal advice?**

The Ukraine Advice Project UK offers free legal advice on UK immigration, visas and asylum by qualified legal advisors for Ukrainians affected by the crisis.

Send details of your circumstances and the advice you need to:  
[ukraine@freemovement.org.uk](mailto:ukraine@freemovement.org.uk)

Find further information from **[Ukraine Advice Project UK](#)**

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](#)**

## **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](mailto: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
- [The Nest](#) - 020 8138 1805

## **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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