

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

November Report

30th November 2022



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This is my November 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.

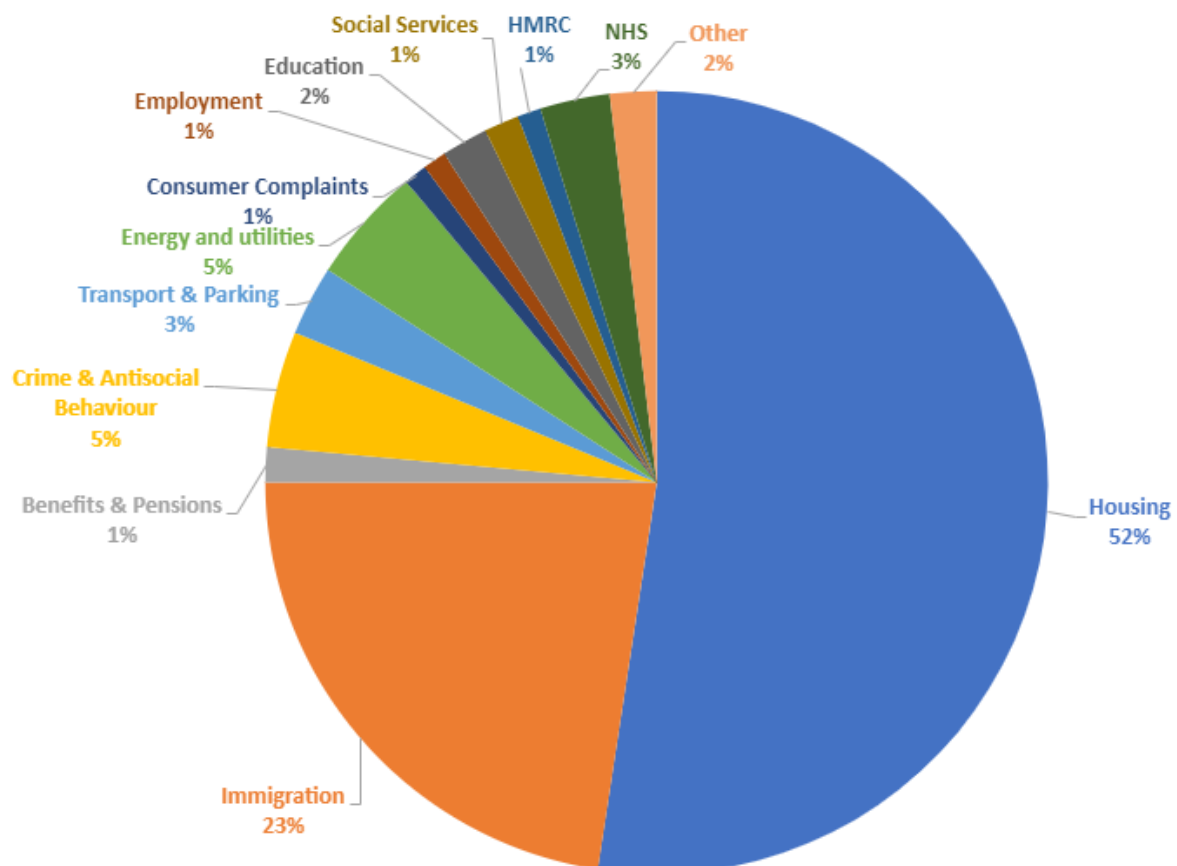
Haniel Harman

Constituency problems - update

My casework team continue to deal with problems and there continues to be an increase in the number of constituents seeking my help.

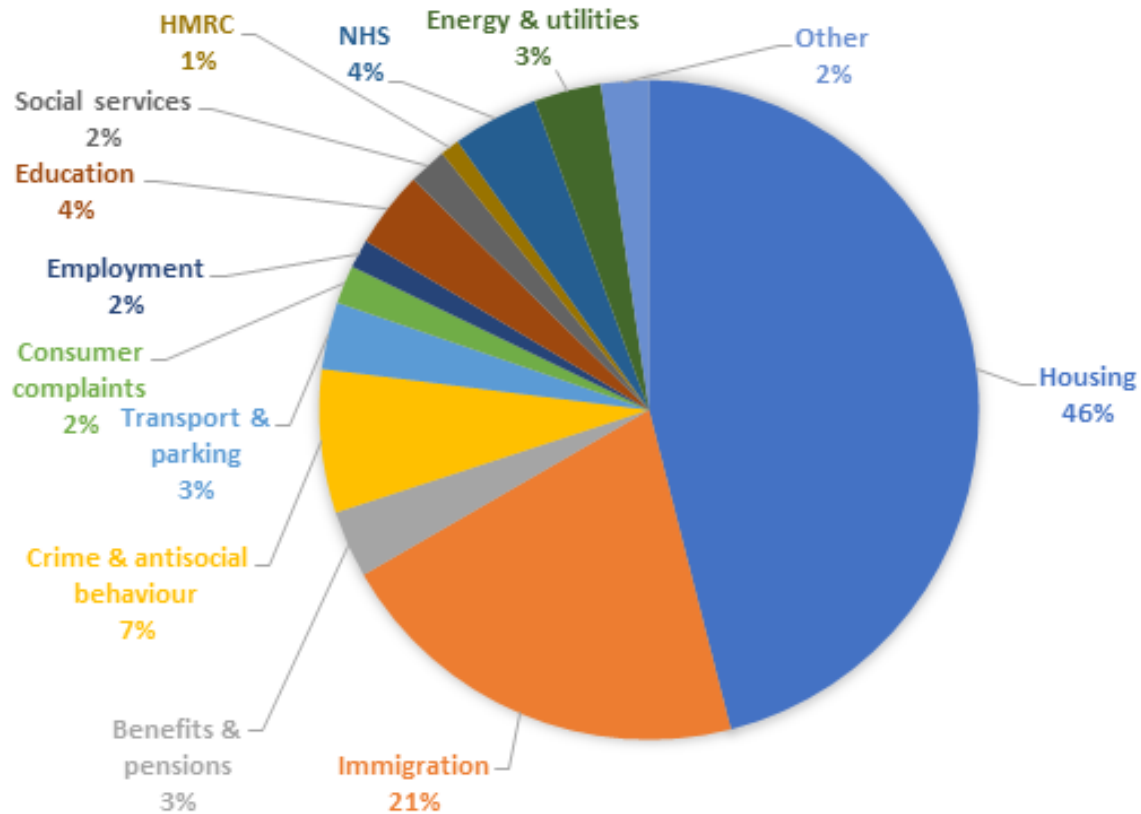
New cases breakdown – September 2022

In September I took action on **714** cases.



New cases breakdown – October 2022

In October I took action on **715** cases and I recouped **£1,260.72** for constituents. This year I have recouped a total of **£14,873.09** for constituents.



Case summaries:

- I was contacted by a man from Peckham following the unexpected death of his sister, asking for my help to enable his niece, who lives in Ghana, to travel to the UK for her mother's funeral. His niece had previously submitted an application for a visitor visa but the Home Office's Super Priority Service was not available when the application was made and so she was not going to receive the visa in time. I urgently wrote to the Home Office to ask for a report into the process of her application and to request that the application be expedited on compassionate grounds. After following up with the Home Office I was informed that as a result of my enquiry the application had been expedited and that the family had been informed of the positive outcome. I shared this update with my constituent who confirmed that his niece had been granted a visit visa and would be able to attend her mother's funeral as a result.
- A single mother from Peckham Rye asked for my assistance with her housing situation. She and her teenage daughter were housed by Southwark Council in overcrowded accommodation that did not suit their needs and as a result of their housing situation her daughter's mental health was deteriorating, leading to suicidal thoughts. My constituent was bidding on band 3 and was finding it

hard to place a successful bid so I wrote urgently to Southwark Council on her behalf and also raised the issue with the Southwark Council Cabinet Member for Children, Young People, Education and Refugees to ensure that my constituent's daughter was receiving the support she needed. I received a swift response confirming that the council were in touch with my constituent and her daughter was being given the appropriate mental health treatment. The family have now been moved to band 2 and my constituent's final position in the last bidding cycle was 2nd, meaning she should secure alternative suitable accommodation very soon.

- A man living near Old Kent Road contacted me as his 74-year-old wife had suffered a stroke earlier this year and she had been under the care of the Royal Hospital for Neuro-Disability for over 3 months as a result. He told me that her condition had been improving while under the hospital's care but he had been told at short notice that the NHS funding had come to an end and she would have to leave the hospital the following week. He had been looking into local care homes but he couldn't find one that he felt would be able to provide the same level of care as the Royal Hospital for Neuro-Disability. I wrote to Southwark Council and the South East London Clinical Commissioning Group to raise this situation and to ask what support was available for the couple. I received a response from Southwark Council which confirmed that his wife has now been placed at a suitable nursing home that is able to meet her needs in Blackheath and my constituent is happy with this outcome.
- I was contacted by a Southwark Council tenant who informed me that her family are experiencing violent and threatening behaviour from their neighbour. The neighbour has been diagnosed with schizophrenia and since the pandemic my constituent has noticed a decline in his mental health. My constituent had contacted the Police on several occasions to report incidents of threatening behaviour and actions but she was told that the Police are limited in the action that they can take as the events take place within the shared maisonette which is not considered public. I don't think that's a valid reason not to take action. She notified me that a multiagency meeting was scheduled between Southwark Council, the Police and the Safer Neighbourhoods team and I have asked to be updated on the outcome of this meeting. I have also written to the Council and the Police to ask what steps they are taking to ensure the safety of all individuals and I am currently awaiting a response.
- A constituent contacted me through her son to let me know that she had not received her Energy Bills Support Scheme vouchers for her prepayment meter. I urgently raised this with her supplier, Utilita Energy Limited, and received a prompt response explaining that her vouchers had been sent to her via post and that the delivery had been impacted by strikes. Following my enquiry, Utilita contacted my constituent directly to discuss the issue and they have promised to fit an updated smart meter so that discounts can be applied virtually and she will not have to rely on the postal service for future discount payments.
- A Camberwell woman wrote to me because she had been issued a number of penalty charge notices by Transport for London (TfL) for inadvertently driving in the Ultra-Low Emissions Zone with a car that didn't meet the guidelines. She had accepted the fine but due to her financial circumstances she was having difficulty paying and could not get through to TfL to set up a reasonable

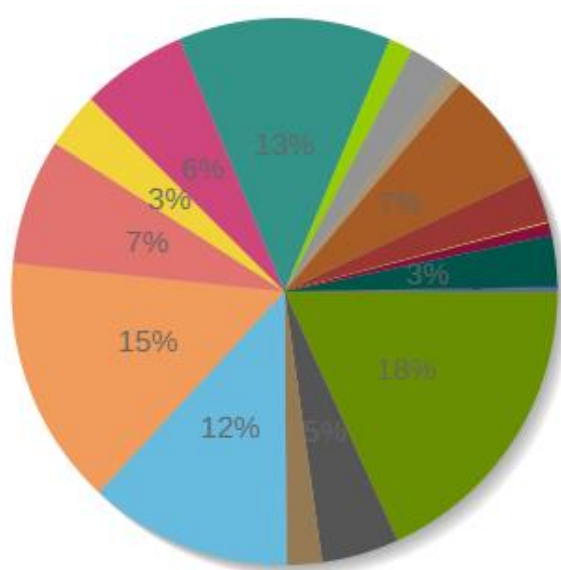
payment plan. I wrote to TfL on her behalf to ask them to contact her to organise an alternative payment plan. In response to my correspondence TfL agreed to pause all action on recouping the fee until December, but also said my constituent could pay a much-reduced rate if she contacted the TfL regulation team on a specific number and arranged to pay within the month. I shared this response with my constituent who was able to arrange to pay the reduced fee.

- I was contacted by a man from Peckham regarding his outstanding application for Leave to Remain on the basis of a family/private life. He was originally from Sierra Leone and he informed me that he had submitted the application to UKVI back in November 2021 but had not received any correspondence since 23rd December 2021 and as a result was struggling to support his family. I wrote to UKVI to ask for a full report detailing the progress of the application and when a response could be expected. I received a response stating that the application has now been granted. This was confirmed by my constituent.
- A woman from Peckham Rye requested my help with the visa application of a Ukrainian family she was sponsoring under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme. The family's mother and children had been able to travel to the UK but due to a delay in the father's visa application he was stuck in Poland. I wrote urgently to the Home Office to request a report into the progress of his visa application and to ask how soon a decision was likely to be made. Following my enquiry I received a response from the Home Office confirming that his visa had been granted and my constituent confirmed that the family she was sponsoring had been safely reunited in Peckham.
- A man living in East Dulwich contacted me for assistance with his housing because his mother had recently had a stroke and their Southwark Council housing was no longer suitable for her specific medical needs. They had submitted the relevant medical documentation but their access to bidding had been paused while this was reviewed, which was taking longer than anticipated. I wrote to Southwark Council on their behalf to ask for a report into what support was available to this family and when they could expect their bidding to be reinstated. I received a response from the Council which confirmed that their bidding had been reinstated and as a result they had been able to place a successful bid for a suitable property in Bermondsey which met their requirements.

In September and October I received **1,273** emails from constituents on policy issues including:

- Support the Hunting Trophies (Import Prohibition) Bill – I support ending the import of wild animal trophies from threatened species
- Help stop the Rosebank oil field – I am against new fossil fuel developments in the North Sea
- Support the Eat Play Love campaign for early years nutrition – I agree we need a renewed focus on the early years and to deliver a modern childcare system, giving children the best start in life.
- Protect the right to protest and vote against the Public Order Bill – I have voted against the Public Order Bill at every opportunity

- Take urgent action on the plastic pollution crisis – I supported efforts to amend the Environment Act 2021 to allow charges against all single-use materials to tackle the throwaway economy and culture
- Demand reform of childcare, flexible working and parental leave – I strongly support reform of childcare, flexible working and improved and expanded parental leave
- Support the Long Live the Local campaign to lower business rates – I support an overhaul of business rates
- Support action on human rights abuses in Iran – I stand in solidarity with those standing up to an oppressive regime and I supported new sanctions against Iran
- Encourage UK Governments to introduce tighter firework regulations – I agree that the Government should look at fireworks regulations to determine the changing impact of fireworks and whether any changes are needed



International affairs	Economy and finance
Social Security and pensions	Agriculture, animals, food and rural affairs
Energy, utilities and environment	Crime, civil law, justice and rights
Housing and planning	Parliament, government and politics
Health services and medicine	Transport
Asylum, immigration and nationality	Culture, charities, media and sport
Education	Defence
Social services and social care	Employment and training
Communities and families	Local Government
Business, industry and consumers	

40th Anniversary of my Election to Parliament



On 2nd November I marked my 40th anniversary as MP for Camberwell and Peckham. There hasn't been a single day when I haven't felt it was a huge privilege and never faltered in my belief in the fundamental importance of Parliament as the very anchor of our democracy, especially so in this time of government chaos and instability. As the Government lurches from crisis to crisis, wreaking terrible havoc on our economy and people's living standards, Parliament speaking up for the realities that people face is crucial.

The first phase of my time in Parliament from 1982 to 1997 was 15 years long years of Labour being in the wilderness of opposition. And I spent those years being completely dedicated to getting Labour into government. Which we did. And we need to again. I'm very encouraged by what Keir Starmer and his team are doing and optimistic as I see them growing in confidence and authority and looking like a government in waiting, the government we wish we already had. Though we can't be complacent.

I came into Parliament as part of that generation of women who looked at society, the subordination of women, who couldn't accept it and resolved to change it. And we did.

We changed parliament going from only 3% in 1982 to 35% now which changed not just the face of Parliament but the political agenda. Women's representation spread to the Tory benches too. And women forced their way into all the places that were previously men-only zones, into the media, into the law.

But for all the progress there's still far to go.

Women are still outnumbered 2:1 by men in Parliament. In every sector, men still earn more! Childcare is still a nightmare and male violence against women remains at terrible levels.

Because there's still a long way to go I look to the new generation of women to lead this agenda forward and I will be cheering them on!

But there are new allies at hand with the arrival in Parliament of "new man". Men who I call the sons of the Women's Movement, who were brought up by feminist mothers of my generation to support women's equality.

One person who was at my side for every day of these past years was Jack. His phenomenal political qualities and confidence in me propelled me into Parliament and sustained me. He's so missed.

I owe a great deal to the 40 years' worth of young men and women who've worked in my parliamentary and constituency office. They've helped literally thousands of my constituents. Last month alone my small team took action on no fewer than 715 cases.

Some people still living in Camberwell and Peckham were Labour party members 40 years ago and selected me to be their MP. I'm always grateful to them. But many weren't even born when I was first an MP. There's a new cadre of young people in public service. Southwark councillors seem to get younger every day.

I'm standing down at the next election but there is an outstanding list of men and women from whom my successor will be chosen. So I'm totally confident that whoever it is will blaze a trail and have my 100% backing!

I'll continue to work hard for my constituents and for Parliament every day till the next election which for the sake of the country we need as soon as possible but may well not be till 2024.

But in the meantime I reflect that it's been such an incredible thing to be an MP, in government, end up as Mother of the House, to be part of the great movement which is Labour and to play my part in the feminist tide which has fundamentally changed this country for the better.



Women's Equality - 40 Years Ago and Today



Great progress but still far to go

One of the driving forces which propelled me into Parliament in 1982 was the Women's Movement. We had clear demands which couldn't be met unless we got into Parliament and into government. They included:

- tackling male violence against women
- women having an equal role in decision-making
- economic equality

Since then great progress has been made.

All parties are committed to tackling male violence against women and numerous laws have been passed to that end.

The pay gap between men and women has narrowed and women have broken into what were hitherto men-only areas.

But the scourge of male violence against women persists, many important spheres remain male-dominated and women remain responsible for most of the family care for children and older relatives.

So while we have made a great deal of progress, there is much further to go. In 40 years we have progressed:

- From 3% women MPs to 35%
- From 3% women High court judges to 27%
- From 5% women cabinet ministers to 26%
- From 0% FTSE women CEOs to 8%
- The pay gap between men and women has fallen from 37% to 15%

But:

- Men still outnumber women at least 2:1 in positions of power

- Women still running the home and caring for children means they are not “having it all” but doing it all!

Public office

Proportion of women in various political and judicial offices

Most recent figures compared with figures most proximate to 1982

Office	Data proximate to 1982				Most recent data			
	Total number of office holders	Number of female office holders	% female	Year	Total number of office holders	Number of female office holders	% female	Year
Member of Parliament	632	21	3%	1982	650	225	35%	2022
Peer	967	53	5%	1982	757	219	29%	2022
Cabinet Minister	22	1	5%	1982	23	6	26%	2022
Local councillor	-	-	19%	1985	16,195	6,622	41%	2022
High Court judge	75	2	3%	1978	97	26	27%	2019

Women Mayors

2002: 14%

2022: 20%

Women Council leaders

2022: 17%

University Vice Chancellors

1995: 6%

2022: 33%

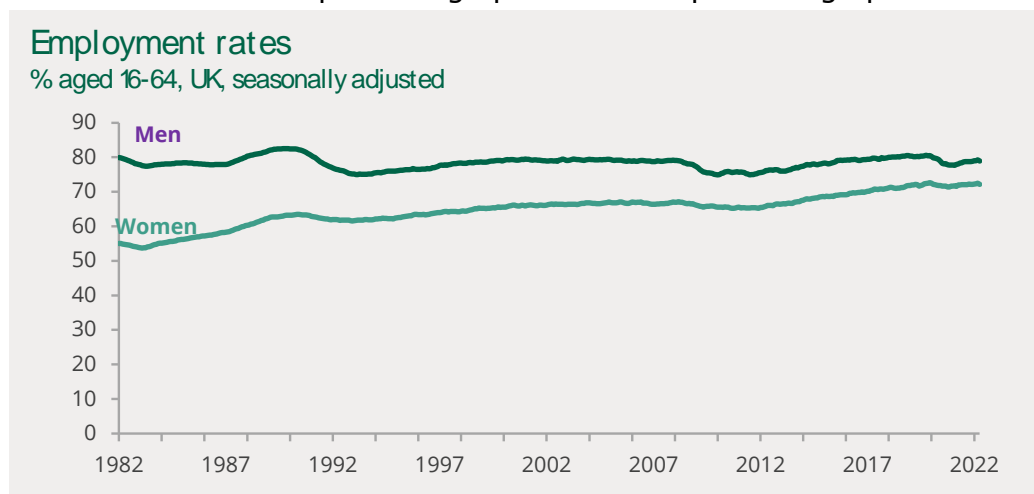
CEOs of FTSE 100 Companies

1982: 0%

2021: 8%

Women in the workforce

The difference between the employment rates for men and women over this period has fallen from 24.7 percentage points to 6.7 percentage points.



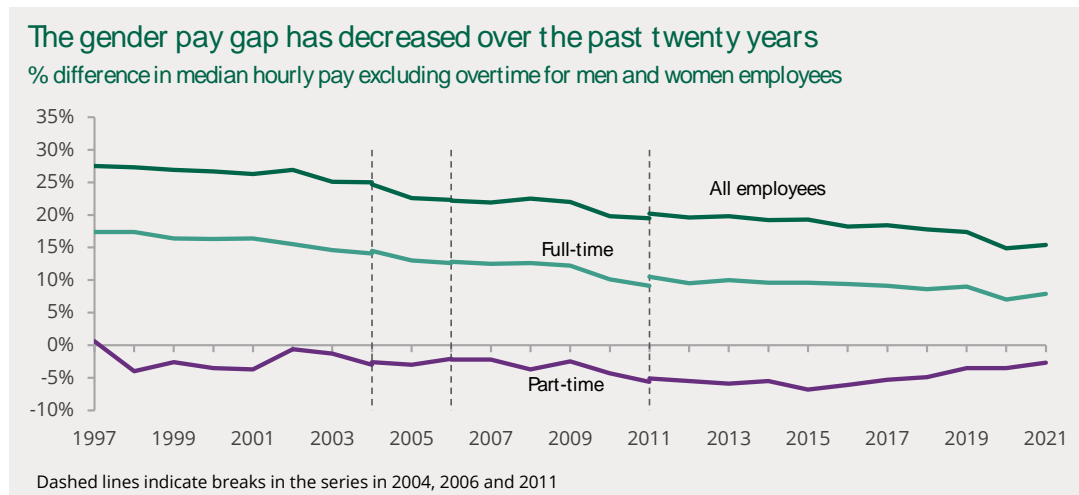
Gender Pay Gap

Mean gender pay gap

1981: 27.2%

2021: 12.3%

The median gender pay gap for full-time employees has been gradually decreasing since 1997.



Trade Union General Secretaries

1989: 3 General Secretaries (221,000 members covered)

2012: 15 General Secretaries (750,000 members covered)

Homicides of women

Table 1: The number of female victims aged 16 and over for homicide in England and Wales² since the year ending March 2015

Apr '14 to Mar '15	Apr '15 to Mar '16	Apr '16 to Mar '17	Apr '17 to Mar '18	Apr '18 to Mar '19	Apr '19 to Mar '20	Apr '20 to Mar '21
162	152	151	181	189	167	153

Source: Homicide Index, Home Office

Home Responsibilities

Average hours of care for family members per week (2012)

Women 22.7

Men 10.4

Average hours of housework per week

2002 **2012**

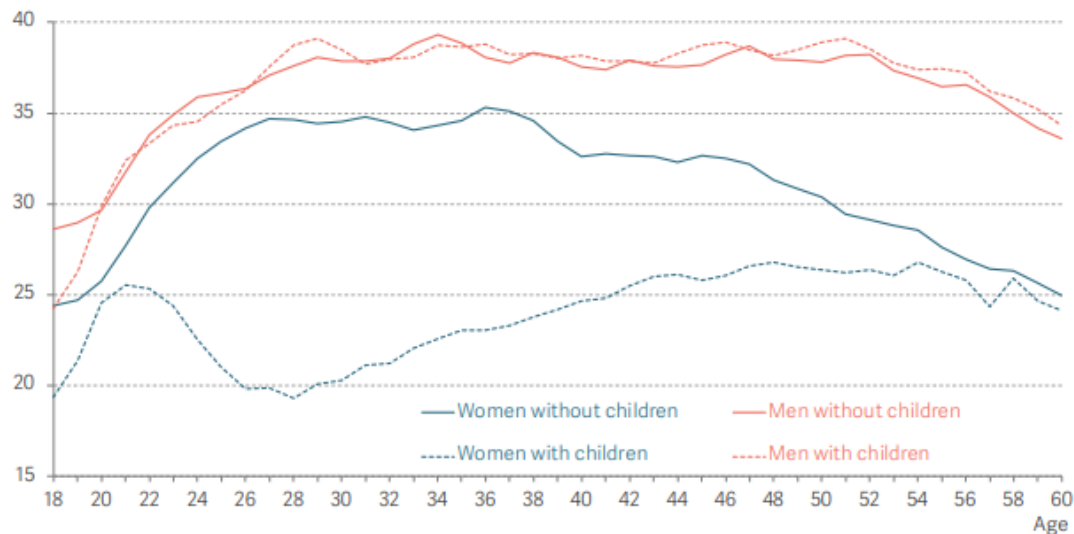
Women 14 13.3

Men 7.8 8.3

(From the British Social Attitudes Survey)

FIGURE 4: The presence of children changes women's working hours a lot, but on average has no effect on men's

Average actual weekly working hours by sex, age and presence of children in household: UK, 2018



NOTES: Includes all workers including those working no actual hours in reference week. Lines show three-year moving averages. Hours refer to main jobs only, for employed and self-employed workers.
SOURCE: RF analysis of ONS, Labour Force Survey

(From The Resolution Foundation)



Remembrance Day 2022

On 7th November as Mother of the House of Commons I attended the annual opening of the Speaker's Constituency Garden of Remembrance. I placed a Remembrance stake on behalf of Camberwell and Peckham, in memory of all those who have fallen for this country.

On Sunday 13th I attended the Southwark Borough Remembrance Sunday service at Borough and I, alongside the Mayor of Southwark Sunil Chopra and the Leader of the Council Cllr Kieron Williams laid a wreath at the war memorial. My thanks go to all those who organised this year's ceremony.



My statement: Black History Month 2022, 'A Seat at the Table' Exhibition

I would like to congratulate and thank the organisers of this event and the exhibition "A Seat at the Table", The Southwark Black Parents Forum. The history of Southwark is made by all the people who live there and it is so important, and overdue, to recognise the contribution of African and Caribbean communities to our public life.

Today is also the launch of Southwark Council's Southwark Together civic leadership programme, a programme that I whole-heartedly endorse and I send my congratulations to Cllrs Stephanie Cryan and Natasha Ennin for their work on this.

The involvement of black people in our political life is not just morally right but it is a democratic imperative. Representation matters and local people deserve political representatives who understand their communities and their backgrounds.

In 2008 I published a report titled "The Peckham Pioneers: The Black Women Councillors in Camberwell and Peckham", hearing about the careers and celebrating the achievements of Cllrs Dora Dixon-Fyle, Althea Smith, Mary Foulkes and Sandra Rhule. Back then, Camberwell and Peckham had 8 Councillors from ethnic minority backgrounds. We now have 10, 7 of which are women, and Black History Month gives us an opportunity to focus on the contribution to our communities, and to our public life, of black people throughout Southwark.

Transport for London:
Central London Bus Review
"Stop the bus cuts in Camberwell and Peckham"
Submission by Harriet Harman MP
3rd August 2022



Harriet Harman QC MP
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Thank you to everyone who contacted me directly about their concerns. I included your testimonies in my formal response to the consultation, which you can read [here](#).

Fighting the Arts Council England decision to reduce funding to key cultural institutions

On 4th November Arts Council England (ACE), the organisation that oversees the disbursement of government funding to arts institutions, announced that there would be big cuts for arts funding in London. This included slashing the funding for the English National Opera, one of the UK's flagship opera houses, and forcing it to move out of London.

This is nothing less than cultural vandalism. There is cross-party support for ACE to reconsider this funding decision and I spoke in a Westminster Hall debate on this issue on 22nd November. You can watch my speech [here](#) and read it below.

Saving Camberwell and Peckham's bus routes from cuts

On Wednesday 23rd November the Mayor of London Sadiq Khan announced that the proposed cuts to bus routes in Camberwell and Peckham will not go ahead. This is a huge success after months of campaigning by Southwark Council, trade unions, politicians and civil society.

These cuts were unjustified and would have hit the most vulnerable hardest. I am very pleased that Sadiq Khan has listened to the many residents of Camberwell and Peckham who submitted responses to TfL's consultation objecting to these cuts in the strongest terms.



I have also written to the Secretaries of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, and Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, pressing them on the ACE funding decision and the impact it will have on "levelling up".



Harriet Harman
@HarrietHarman

MPs from all parties protest closure of @E_N_O @cj_dinenage @KeeleyMP @KevinBrennanMP @neill_bob @FloEshalomi @margarethodge. "Cultural vandalism" to close excellent @E_N_O. Why @ace_national must u-turn. My speech 1/2 🗣️



9:24 PM · Nov 22, 2022 · Twitter Web App

Westminster Hall 22nd November

With everybody incredibly anxious about what is going to happen to energy bills, with food prices soaring and with the NHS and public services struggling, it might seem an odd time to be raising the issue of funding for the arts, but it is absolutely right for us to do so. As well as helping drive our economy, as the hon. Member for Gosport said, our culture and arts are central to how we define ourselves individually and as a nation.

We must not allow public policy to drive the cultural impoverishment of this country, but unless the Government step in to stop that or the Arts Council can be persuaded to think again, that is exactly what is going to happen with the closure of

the English National Opera at the Coliseum. We cannot stand by while the ENO, which is artistically excellent, economically vital and culturally important, is closed and, with that, see the end of the social engagement and widening access that is central to the ENO's mission.

The Arts Council has removed all funding from the ENO at the Coliseum, meaning that, as the hon. Member for Bromley and Chislehurst (Sir Robert Neill) rightly said, 300 skilled artists, dedicated professionals and other employees will be thrown out of work. The Arts Council spin was that the ENO was to be relocated as part of levelling up. The Guardian said that the ENO

"is to relocate outside London"

and the BBC said:

"English National Opera to leave London as arts funding gets levelled up".

The briefing was that the ENO was going to Manchester—not only was that a bolt out of the blue to the ENO, but it was the first time Manchester had heard of it, and it was not what they wanted. The Arts Council is closing the ENO with a tremendous cultural loss and nothing to show for it up north.

What the Arts Council proposes to do is completely wrong, but the way it has gone about it—with no consultation and, frankly, misleading spin—is shameful. It should think again. Yes, times have changed and times are hard, but difficult decisions should be made carefully, not with a wrecking ball. I am backing the ENO's call for three things: a strategic review of opera as a whole; that the Arts Council should agree realistic funds for the ENO for a period of four years; and that the Arts Council should

agree a period of five years to consult on a new model, based on the ENO retaining its Coliseum base but increasing still further its fundraising and work outside London.

As has been said, the ENO has effective leadership; I pay tribute to that and it is also fully acknowledged by the Arts Council. It has a dedicated company of employees who deserve better than to be thrown out of work in April next year. The ENO means a great deal to many, as emails from my constituents can attest. I thank all those who have contacted me and assure them that the ENO will have my full support.

Surely Sir Nicholas Serota does not want his legacy to be the closure of the ENO; if he goes ahead with the closure, that will be the only thing everybody will remember about him and his tenure at the Arts Council. The decision to close the ENO is wrong, and the best thing to do with a wrong decision is to change it. The Government have been quite active on that front in the past, with U-turns here and there—this would be one U-turn that would be universally welcomed. I welcome the Minister to his role and I hope to hear in public, or even in private—whatever is necessary—that he will step in, and that the ENO will not be closed.

Continuing to demand the UK Government act to secure visa-free EU touring for UK musicians

I have signed this letter along with other MPs to the new Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.

Dear Secretary of State

**UNLOCKING THE UK-EU DEADLOCK:
TIME FOR ACTION TO GET TOURING
PROFESSIONALS AND ARTISTS BACK
ON TOUR**

As the new Secretary of State, we are writing to you in the hope that you will want to do everything you can to get creative artists and professionals back on tour and unlock the deadlock created by the failure to secure an exemption in the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) for those UK nationals who rely on touring for a living.

The UK's cultural economy is being severely impacted. Touring professionals now face a mountain of bureaucracy alongside confusing, burdensome, and costly procedures in each EU country they visit on tour. Additionally, the '90/180 day' rule, which limits the time UK citizens have access to the Schengen area, continues to put real jobs and real lives at stake. Please read Steve Barney's letter which sets out the true story of what is happening to UK creatives and artists who do go on tour.

Right now, tours are still stuck on British soil, leaving countless careers on hold. UK passport holders are simply being turned down or not offered the roles in the first place. The impact on our lives and our ability to earn and pay tax in an industry that brings pleasure to millions of people is under pressure like never before. We believe it is not impossible for you as the new Secretary of State to unlock the deadlock and find a solution that will truly get this world leading industry back to what it does best.



Our UK-EU Summit in the House of Lords, attended by Parliamentarians from across the House including Lord Clement-Jones CBE, Lord German, Baroness Bull, Earl of Clancarty, Lord Berkeley, Lord Wallace, Baroness Bonham Carter, Kevin Brennan MP, Tommy Shepherd MP and Christina Rees MP highlighted how creative touring has been affected by the TCA, which, in its current form, roundly fails the UK's world-leading creative industries.

We want you to fight our corner and ultimately return to the negotiating table to talk through an exemption. Without this, many jobs and livelihoods will be lost, as well as income for crew, haulage, and production. We hope that you will now take the urgent action needed to resolve the problems created by the TCA and re-engage with your counterparts across Europe to reach a resolution which supports this vital part of our economy.

We believe that the UK must open the door to negotiation, work to unlock the deadlock and get touring working.

We look forward to your urgent reply and hope that you will be keen to meet with representatives and supporters of Carry On Touring to explain why the Government's position is untenable. We very much hope that you will listen and act.

Protesting about the lenient sentence on the killer of Jobari Gooden

I wrote to the Attorney General on behalf of the mother of my constituent Jobari Gooden who was tragically killed in Peckham Rye last December. His killer was convicted but sentenced to only 7 years in prison. I agree with Jobari's family that this is not justice and I wrote to the Attorney General to request that she refer the sentence to the Court of Appeal as a Unduly Lenient. It is very disappointing that the Government has refused to do so.



Harriet Harman · @HarrietHarman · Nov 17

I'm dismayed that the sentence for killer of my consti Jobari Gooden was only 7 years. I have asked @attorneygeneral to refer the sentence to Court of Appeal as an Unduly Lenient Sentence.



Responding to the Government's Autumn Statement

Britain has so much potential. But right now we're facing a cost of living crisis that's holding us back – with mortgages, rent, food and energy all going up and up.

This economic crisis is down to 12 years of Tory failure and wasted opportunities.

The Tories say this is a global problem, but no other country is in this mess. Our economy hasn't been working for far too long.

The UK economy grew 50% faster with Labour - at an average rate of 2.1% compared to 1.4% since 2010

The UK is forecast to have the lowest growth in the OECD over the next two years

And the UK is the only G7 country still smaller than before the pandemic: every other G7 economy is now bigger than it was at end of 2019

After the Chancellor's Autumn Statement, people will be asking themselves: Am I and my family better off with the Tories? The answer is no.

Labour has a long-term plan to get our economy growing again – powered by the talent and effort of millions of working people and thousands of businesses.

It will be fairer, greener, and more dynamic:

- With jobs across every part of the country in renewables, nuclear power, in insulating homes
- With a modern industrial strategy where government works hand in hand with business
- By fixing business rates so our high streets thrive again
- Putting skills at the heart of our plan for growth

Pressing for more support for people on Communal Heat Networks

At least 17,000 homes in Southwark are served by communal heat networks. Communal heat networks buy gas wholesale and then distribute it to residents and because communal heat networks are not regulated by Ofgem residents are not protected by the energy price cap. This means that, at a time when global gas prices are soaring, these costs get passed directly onto the consumer.

The majority of residents in the UK on heat networks live in social housing, and the majority of those in social housing are over the age of 55, which means that these price rises often disproportionately hit the elderly and those on low incomes. Southwark Council has negotiated competitive gas prices for its bulk purchasing for many years and it is also absorbing some of the financial shock caused by energy price spikes, so council tenants in Southwark are protected from the worst of the price rises. But the Government should have acted far sooner and it is unacceptable that many heat network customers have been left without protection.

I back the call from Labour for far greater regulation of the heat network system so that customers are properly protected and do not see unsustainable price rises. I want there to be a new regulatory regime for heat networks, including bringing heat networks onto the price cap system if possible.

People in Camberwell and Peckham on communal heat networks have already faced huge increases in their bills. The wholesale price of gas has increased over 200% in the past year and is forecast to continue to rise.

I have been contacted directly by no fewer than 40 constituents who are on communal heat networks and who are concerned about unsustainable rises in their energy bills. One constituent told me that their bill was due to increase by 776% and another said that their bill had already increased from £87.53 last year to £630.25 this year.

One constituent said that the bill rises will:

make heating and hot water unaffordable for many residents and families and we remain exposed to even worse potential rises the year after.

Another said:

This 400% rise is going to make heating and hot water unaffordable for many of our residents, who are on low or fixed incomes. It is distressing news, especially as we face job losses, wage stagnation and other rises in the costs of living.

In September I wrote to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy on behalf of my constituents demanding that people on heat networks be included in the Government's plan to freeze energy prices.

Following my letter, I was reassured to see that people on communal heat networks were included in the Government's policy. However, clearly the promised Government support has not materialised for many of my constituents, meaning that they are still facing huge rises in their bills. This failure to provide timely support despite it having been announced is yet another failing by the Government and I have asked further questions of the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, Grant Shapps, to press for the promised support to get to my constituents and hundreds of thousands of others. I continue to press the Government and once I have the Government's response I will be communicating it directly with my constituents.



Speaking at Southwark Labour Conference 2022

I was pleased to speak at Southwark Labour Conference on 26th November at Clubland. Huge congratulations to Miatta Fahnbulleh. I am sure she will be a brilliant representative for Camberwell and Peckham

and I am proud to have her as my successor.



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

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

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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