

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

## **Parliamentary Report**

**27<sup>th</sup> April 2023**



House of Commons  
London SW1A 0AA  
0207 219 4218  
[harriet.harman.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:harriet.harman.mp@parliament.uk)  
[www.harrietharman.org.uk](http://www.harrietharman.org.uk)  
[@harrietharman](https://twitter.com/harrietharman)

## This is my April report 2023 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.

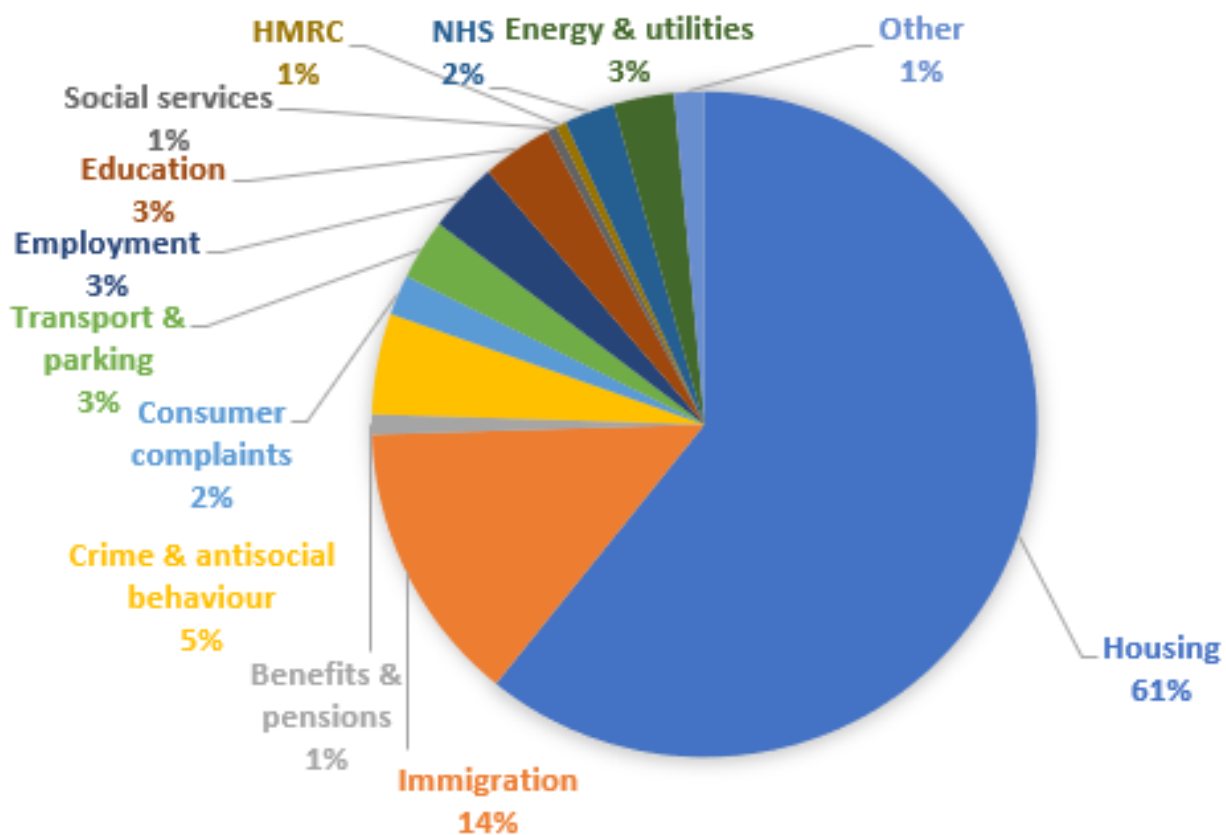
*Haniel Hamman*

## Constituency problems - update

There continues to be an increase in the number of constituents seeking my help with their problems.

## New cases breakdown – March 2023

In March I took action on **848** cases and recouped **£6,873** for constituents. In 2023 so far I have recouped **£16,181.51** for constituents.



## Case summaries:

- A local business owner and Camberwell resident wrote to me for help with electric vehicle charging points in Southwark. Over the last few years he had electrified his company's fleet of vans but was having ongoing problems saying vehicle charging points across the borough often didn't work and were poorly maintained. I wrote to Southwark Council about his concerns. The Council informed me that they had liaised with Char.gy, the company responsible for maintenance of the charging points, who had confirmed that they had fixed all broken charging points and would ensure they are all properly maintained in future. My constituent confirmed that he had seen a flurry of repairs on the charging points and had noticed a major improvement to the service.
- I was contacted by a Camberwell woman who asked for my help getting a refund from UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI). She had applied for a graduate visa and paid her Immigration Health Surcharge in November 2022, but after submitting the application realised she had made an error on her form. She quickly withdrew it and submitted a new application, but this meant she had made two separate application payments of £1,963. Upon withdrawal of the incorrect application UKVI told her that she would receive a refund within 28 days, but several months later she had still not received this. I wrote to UKVI to ask when my constituent would receive the refund. UKVI replied to tell me that the refund had now been processed. I shared this with my constituent who confirmed that she had now received the £1,963 refund.
- A woman from Nunhead asked for my help because she had been asked by Southwark Council, several months after her father's death in April 2022, to pay £1,044.25 in unpaid rent on his tenancy. My constituent was unable to pay this because of her own financial difficulties and I wrote to Southwark Council on her behalf. They explained that at the date of death there had been an arrears of £59 on his account, so his rent account wasn't terminated immediately as it should have been. This caused £1,044.25 to accrue in arrears, which my constituent was being asked to pay as his next of kin. The Council apologised for this error and cancelled the debt in full.
- A Peckham woman wrote to me because in summer 2022 she was told that she was due a tax rebate from HMRC for the 20-21 tax year and she had still not received it, despite contacting HMRC several times. I wrote to HMRC on her behalf and they let me know that as a result of my contact they had contacted my constituent directly to discuss the issue. HMRC subsequently sent my constituent a rebate of £808.04 which included interest that her overpayment had accrued.
- A woman in Peckham contacted me because she had no heating and water for six months. She had had problems with her boiler and whilst waiting for it to be fixed she had spent a lot on electric heating. I wrote to Southwark Council to ask that contractors carry out the necessary repairs as soon as possible. Southwark Council contacted me to confirm that the repairs had been completed and that my constituent would be compensated £255 for the time she spent without heating and hot water.
- I was contacted by a constituent from the Philippines living in Walworth who was concerned that, 8 weeks after his new-born baby's biometrics appointment,

he had yet to receive a response from the Home Office about his baby's Leave to Remain visa. My constituent needed to urgently travel back to the Philippines to see his mother, who is unwell and undergoing medical treatment, but was unable to do so until his baby received his visa. I urgently wrote to the Home Office to ask for a report and for clarification on when a decision is likely to be made. The Home Office replied confirming that my constituent's son's visa had been granted.

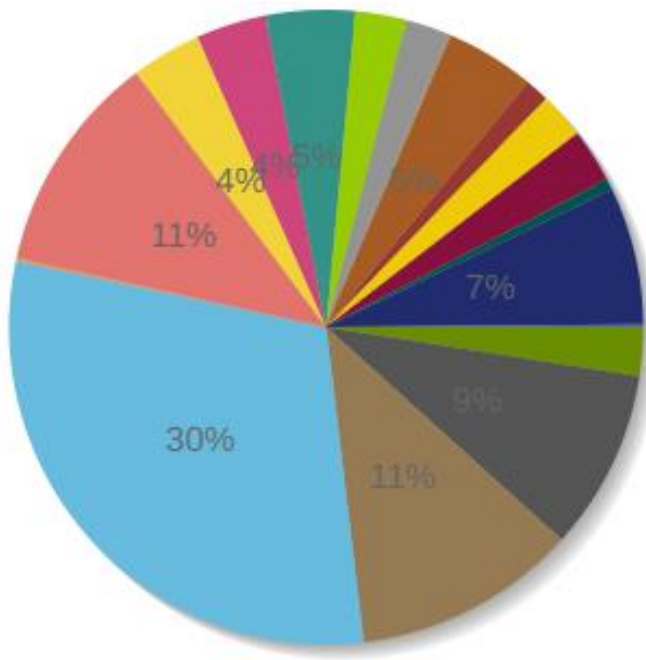
- A woman from Camberwell contacted me because she had no heating or hot water in her property. The lack of heating had contributed to significant damp and mould, particularly around the bedroom windows, and it had started to affect the health of her family. I wrote to Southwark council to ask that contractors arrange for the heating and hot water to be fixed as a matter of urgency. The council subsequently contacted me to confirm that the repairs had been completed and that my constituent had been compensated £142.
- A constituent contacted me about problems with a leak in her Southwark Council home. The leak was causing extensive damp in the property and her children were getting ill because of it. I wrote to the council to ask for a report and for them to stop the leak as soon as possible. I was contacted by the council who told me that contractors had visited my constituent and carried out the necessary repairs to permanently stop the leak.
- A Peckham woman contacted me regarding an outstanding visa application which she had submitted to UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) in October 2022. She wanted to travel to Jamaica to attend the funeral of her mother who had recently died but she was unable to travel abroad until she received her visa. I urgently wrote to UKVI to ask for a report on the progress of her application and how soon a decision would be made and that the application be expedited. Following this I was contacted by my constituent who told me that her application had been granted and she had received her Biometric Residence Permit.
- A Peckham resident wrote to tell me that she had filed a complaint against her landlord, Hexagon Housing Association, about the lack of heating and hot water at her property. The response to her complaint was overdue and I wrote to Hexagon to ask that the heating and hot water be restored as soon as possible. Hexagon replied stating that they had identified a fault in her boiler and confirmed that this had now been repaired and the tenant would be compensated. I shared this response with my constituent who confirmed that she has been compensated £910 by Hexagon.
- I was contacted by a constituent from Camberwell who was still waiting for a decision on an application he had made in 2022 to renew his Private Hire Vehicle driver's licence. The delay in the application meant he was unable to work and was extremely concerned that he would as a result be unable to afford future mortgage payments and payments owed to HMRC. I wrote to Transport for London (TfL) asking them when a decision was likely to be made on this application and as a result TfL renewed the licence for a full three-year term. I shared this response with my constituent who is now able to work.

- A constituent from Peckham contacted me about problems he had with an application to his local Job Centre for a laptop while he was on a course funded by the Restart Scheme. Peckham Job Centre had written to tell him that he was not eligible for the funding but they provided him with no explanation for rejecting his application. I wrote to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) asking why the application had been rejected. The DWP explained that Restart are an organisation contracted to support claimants, and so all funding requests need to be made to them rather than through the Job Centre. However, the DWP acknowledged that they had failed to direct my constituent back to Restart or inform him of any further support that was available to him. A Special Payment of £50 was issued to apologise for the distress and inconvenience that my constituent experienced.
- A Council tenant contact me after contractors employed by Southwark Council accidentally broke her toilet which then flooded her bathroom. This initial issue had been resolved but during the repairs process the contractors had failed to turn up to two scheduled appointments which my constituent had missed work for. She had raised this directly with the Council but she had not received a satisfactory response and had not been compensated for the work that she had missed. I raised this with Southwark Council who responded stating that my constituent would be awarded £50 for each missed appointment.
- A Camberwell man, whose wife is from the Netherlands, requested my help with her outstanding spousal visa application that had been submitted in July 2022. I wrote to UK Visas and Immigration to ask for a report on the progress on the overdue visa application and to find out how soon a decision would be made. Following my enquiry, I received a response stating that a decision was made to grant Entry Clearance to my constituent's wife. I shared this response with my constituent and his wife, who confirmed that they had also been notified of the decision.

In March I received **654** emails from constituents on policy issues including:

- Support the Bill to end trophy hunting – I have long supported and called on the Government to implement a ban on trophy hunting.
- Strengthen the Hunting Act – I support proposals to enhance and strengthen the Hunting Act.
- Ban conversion therapy – I completely agree that we must introduce a full ban on conversion therapy.
- Support teachers on strike – I want the Government to do more to support our teachers and ensure they are free to focus on ensuring the highest standards in our schools.
- Press the Government to deliver a new deal for renters – I strongly support replacing section 21 'no fault' evictions with something which gives new rights and protections to tenants.
- Support the development of onshore wind – I support the development of onshore wind.
- Concerns about human rights in Pakistan – The UK Government must continue to urge others to respect the rule of law and should put human rights at the heart of its international policies.
- Demand Government takes action to make homes warmer and bills cheaper – I agree that we need to retrofit homes and accelerate the development of cheap renewable energy.

## Policy issues breakdown



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

### Emergency “Gold Group” meeting with Southwark police after fall from height in Rye Hill

On Monday 17<sup>th</sup> April Southwark police convened an emergency MP and community stakeholder meeting to update us on the death of a man in Peckham following interaction with the police.

The incident has been referred to the Independent Office for Police Complaints (IOPC). The IOPC said:

*We have begun an independent investigation into an incident involving Metropolitan Police Service officers on Wednesday April 12 in south-east London, where a man was seriously injured and later died in hospital after falling from a balcony.*



### Inquiry begins after man falls to his death in London police Taser incident

Met officers had been called to a block of flats in Peckham amid reports the man was threatening to jump



*We were advised that MPS officers attended an address in Peckham at around 2am following a report of a man threatening to jump from a balcony on a residential building. We have established that officers were present for over an hour and attempted to persuade the man to come inside from the balcony.*

*The man has then been Tasered while on the balcony and he has fallen several floors to the ground.*

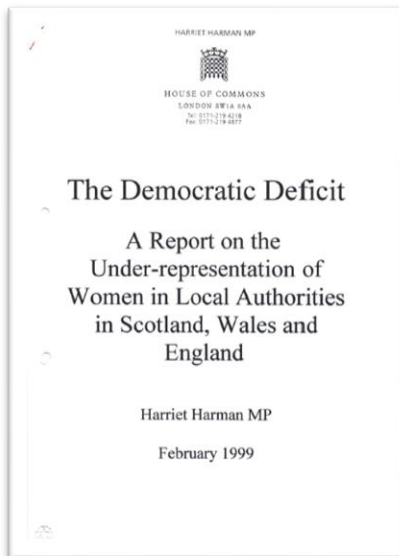


*The man was transported to hospital with life-threatening injuries and died later the same day.*

*Our investigation is in its initial stages and we have secured officers' body-worn footage as we begin gathering evidence.*

I have spoken to local Borough Commander, Seb Adjei-Addoh, and have further meetings with him regarding this issue planned.

## **We need to fix the democratic deficit in Local Councils**



Analysis by Fawcett Society and Democracy Club and reported in The Guardian has shown that men dominate 95% of local authorities in Britain and only 33% of local councillors are women. Labour has the best proportion of councillors who are women, with 47%, but this is still not enough.

Progress has been unacceptably slow. In 1999, I published a report on the under-representation of women in Local Authorities, which found that only 27% of councillors are women. This means that in 24 years, the total of women councillors has increased by a mere 6%.

## **Men dominate 95% of local authorities in Britain, data shows**

Only 18 of 382 councils have minimum gender representation parity, say equality charities



This matters because women are still not fully represented in our local democracy. Yet they are active in their local communities, as governors of local schools, as members of PTAs, and in tenants and residents associations. They are the majority of those employed in Council services, and the biggest users of those services.

Women are still being held back from making the step into democratic politics and until this changes there will remain a democratic deficit.

## **Visit to Parliament by The Charter School North Dulwich**

On 19<sup>th</sup> April 35 pupils from the Charter School North Dulwich came to take part in a tour of the Houses of Parliament and a workshop about law-making and the process of an Act of Parliament.

The pupils showed a strong interest in their local community and asked many questions about personal safety issues, in particular muggings and theft of personal mobile phones. They shared personal stories and identified particular local areas where they feel there needs to be a greater police presence to improve their safety before and after school.



## 2021 census data released for Camberwell and Peckham

New data from the 2021 census has been released for Camberwell and Peckham. You can view all the data for Camberwell and Peckham [here](#).

### Camberwell and Peckham

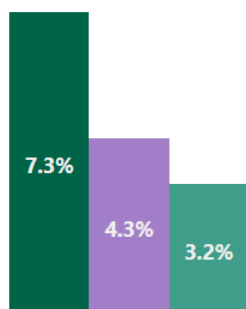
London

Population: **131,131** Density: **11,503 / sq. km** Area: **11.4 sq. km (16th smallest)**

Main land use: **86% built up areas, and 14% green areas or leisure facilities**

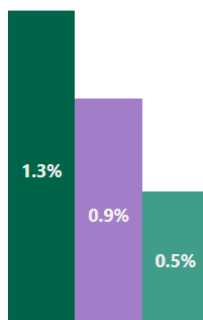
#### Proportion of 16+ year olds with a LGB+ sexual orientation

● Constituency ● Region / nation ● England & Wales



#### Proportion of people aged 16+ with a gender identity different from their sex registered at birth

● Constituency ● Region / nation ● England & Wales



### Sexual orientation and gender identity

7.3% of people in Camberwell and Peckham have a LGB+ orientation. This is over twice as high as the national rate, which is 3.2%

1.3% of people said they had a gender identity different to the sex they were registered with at birth, almost three times as high as the national rate, which is 0.5%

### Disability

At the 2021 census 18,221 people in Camberwell and Peckham, 14% of the population, were classed as disabled. This was higher than the London rate (13%), although lower than the national rate (18%). 28% of households in Peckham had at least one disabled person.

Limit on activities	Constituency	Region/Nation	England & Wales
No long-term conditions	80.2%	81.5%	75.7%
Day-to-day activities limited a little	8.1%	7.5%	10.0%
Day-to-day activities limited a lot	6.0%	5.7%	7.5%
Condition does not limit day-to-day activities	5.7%	5.2%	6.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### Country of birth

The census data shows that Camberwell and Peckham has a much higher percentage of its population born outside of the UK than the national average. 29.8% of people in the constituency were born outside of the UK and the EU, compared to 10.7% nationally, and of that 29.8%, the largest group was people born in Africa, which was 13.3% of people in the constituency.



### Country of birth: detailed breakdown

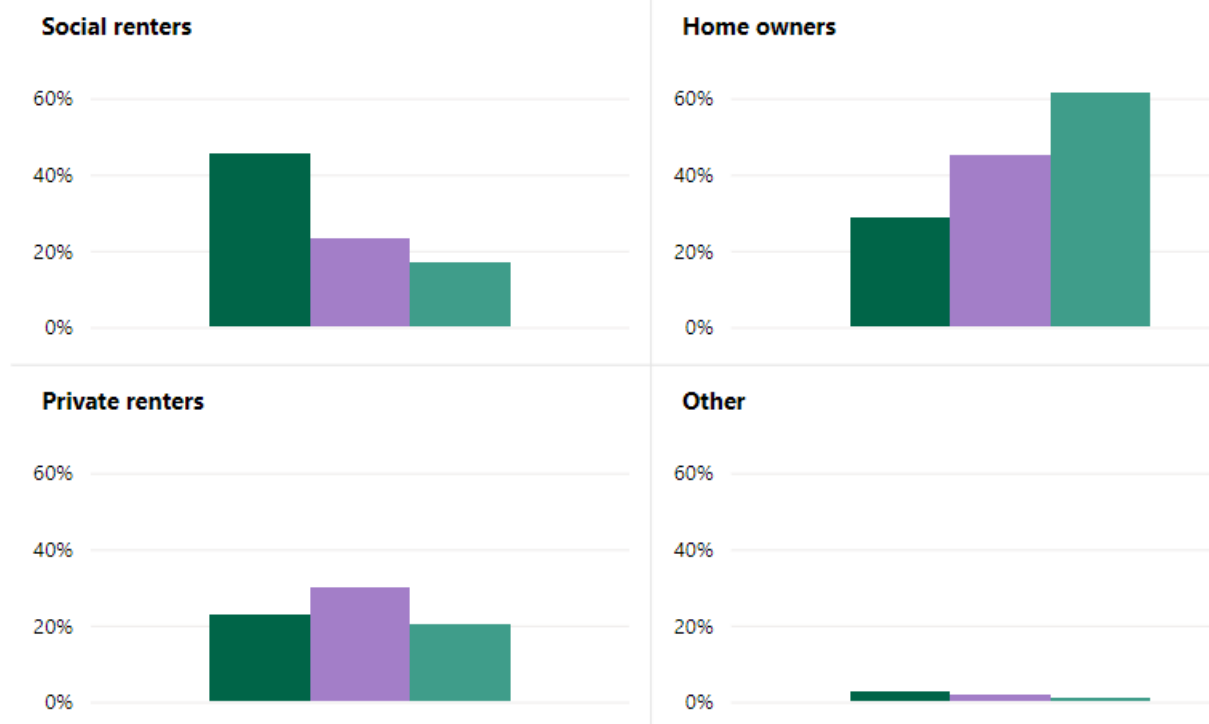
Area of birth	Constituency (%)	Region/Nation (%)	England and Wales (%)
<b>UK</b>	<b>61.4%</b>	<b>59.4%</b>	<b>83.2%</b>
UK	61.4%	59.4%	83.2%
<b>European Union</b>	<b>8.9%</b>	<b>12.8%</b>	<b>6.1%</b>
EU14 countries	6.3%	6.6%	2.7%
EU8 countries	1.5%	2.9%	2.1%
EU2 countries	0.6%	2.8%	1.2%
Other EU countries	0.5%	0.5%	0.2%
<b>Rest of world</b>	<b>29.8%</b>	<b>27.9%</b>	<b>10.7%</b>
Australasia and others	0.8%	0.7%	0.3%
European, non-EU countries	1.2%	2.8%	0.8%
Middle East and Asia	5.4%	13.0%	5.6%
Africa	13.3%	7.1%	2.7%
The Americas and the Caribbean	9.1%	4.2%	1.3%
British Overseas Territories	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%

## Housing

29% of households in Camberwell and Peckham owned their own home, significantly lower than the London (45%) and national (62%) rates. In comparison, 23% of households rented from a private landlord, and 46% rented from a social landlord, almost three times as high as the national rate of 17%.

### Proportion of households by tenure (%)

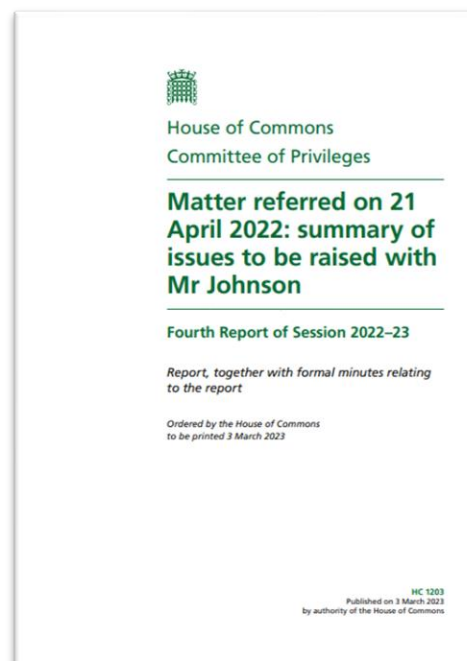
● Constituency ● Region/nation ● England and Wales



## Chairing the Privileges Committee

I continue in my role as Chair of the Privileges Committee's investigation into whether former Prime Minister Boris Johnson MP misled Parliament when he said that there were no parties in No. 10 during lockdown and that no rules or guidance was broken. We have obtained documentary evidence from the Government, on 3<sup>rd</sup> March we published our interim report which you can read [here](#), and on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March we held our oral evidence session with Boris Johnson MP, which you can view [here](#).

The members of the Privileges Committee are four Conservatives, Sir Bernard Jenkin MP, Alberto Costa MP, Andy Carter MP and Sir Charles Walker MP, one Scottish National Party, Allan Dorans MP, and myself and Yvonne Fovargue MP from the Labour Party. You can read more about the committee's work [here](#).



## Help and Support

### Concerned about rising cost of living? Finding support in Southwark:

If you, or someone you are supporting is struggling financially, there are lots of organisations in Southwark that can help. Southwark Council's Cost of Living support can all be found on their [website](#).

Southwark Emergency Support Scheme (SESS) can help if you're a Southwark resident who is facing a crisis, emergency or disaster and needs help.

Residents who receive certain benefits and need urgent financial support can apply to the Southwark Emergency Support Scheme, found [here](#).

Find out what further government support you might be able to get to help with your living costs [here](#).

Information about grants and other financial support can be found [here](#).

Cost of living support for businesses can be found [here](#).

### Free confidential advice:

- [Citizens Advice Southwark](#)

Citizens Advice Southwark provide free, confidential, independent and impartial advice to help people resolve their problems with money, housing, employment, legal issues, and more.

Advice line: 080 8278 7849

Drop-in sessions from 10.00 am to 2.00 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

### **Domestic abuse 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)

- [National Domestic Abuse Helpline](#)

The freephone, 24-hour Helpline: 0808 2000 247

### **Support for victims of crime:**

- [Victim Support South London](#)

South London Victim Assessment and Referral Service on freephone: 0808 168 9291, then dial 3

Lines are open 8am-8pm Monday to Friday and 9am-5pm on Saturdays.

If you need support outside of open hours, call the Supportline on freephone 0808 1689 111

### **Mental health help and support:**

- [Lambeth and Southwark Mind](#)

020 8159 8355 - 8am to 3pm Monday, Tuesday and Thursday

- [Samaritans](#) - 116 123 - 24/7

- [The Nest](#) - 020 8138 1805

### **Support for older people:**

- [Southwark Pensioners](#)

Open Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm

020 7708 4556 [info@southwarkpensioners.org.uk](mailto:info@southwarkpensioners.org.uk)

- [Age UK Lewisham and Southwark](#)

020 7701 9700 phone line open 10am to 4pm Tuesday to Friday

### **Legal advice:**

- [Southwark Law Centre](#)
- [Migrant Legal Action](#)

53 Addington Square, London. SE5 7LB  
Opening hours: Monday- Friday, 9:00am-5:00pm. Appointment only.

Reception: 0207 701 0141  
Advice Line: 0203 150 1470 (2:00pm to 4:00pm)

Email: [info@migrantlegalaction.org.uk](mailto:info@migrantlegalaction.org.uk)

- [Cambridge House Law Centre](#)

Provides legal advice and advocacy services by way of appointment for individuals and families dealing specifically with housing, employment, benefits, and community care issues.

Printworks, Unit F, 22 Amelia Street, London SE17 3BZ

Telephone: 020 7358 7025

Email: [lawcentre@ch1889.org](mailto:lawcentre@ch1889.org)

- [Disability Law Service](#)

Provides free legal advice to disabled people, their families and carers. For issues of employment and discrimination at work, or welfare benefits:

Advice Line: 0207 791 9800  
Opening hours: Monday-Friday, 10am – 1pm, 2pm – 5pm

## **Food and essentials:**

- [Southwark Food Action Alliance](#)

Southwark Food Action Alliance is a group of local organisations that care about good food for all in the borough. Many of its members provide food support to Southwark residents. The SFAA website has information on low-cost recipes and maps showing where you can learn to grow food and where food support services are located in Southwark. Some food support services are only for specific groups, such as older adults. So do check who the service is for before visiting.

- [Pecan foodbank](#)

Peckham Methodist Church, 2 Wood's Rd, SE15 2PX. Monday and Thurs 1pm to 3pm (by appointment only).

Pecan foodbanks work using a voucher referral system. In order to get help from Pecan, people need a voucher issued by a local agency before arriving at a centre. For more information email [foodbank.support@pecan.org.uk](mailto:foodbank.support@pecan.org.uk) or call 020 7732 0007.

Pecan also run [Peckham Pantry](#). Members of Peckham Pantry pay £4.50 per shop,

which gives access to fresh fruit and veg and store cupboard favourites – to the value of £15 or more. For further information please contact [pantry@pecan.org.uk](mailto:pantry@pecan.org.uk) or 020 7277 7075.

- [Spring Community Hub Foodbank](#)

Spring Community Hub, 1 Wilson Road, Modular Building, SE5 8LU. Thursday and Friday 10am to 1pm. Spring Community Hub Foodbanks also work on a referral system. For more information email [office@springcommunityhub.org](mailto:office@springcommunityhub.org) or call 07901 617 189.

### **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.](#)

### **Concerned about British and non-British nationals who have been affected by the situation in Afghanistan?**

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](#)



House of Commons  
London SW1A 0AA  
0207 219 4218

harriet.harman.mp@parliament.uk  
www.harrietharman.org.uk  
@harrietharman

Let me know your views at [harriet.harman. mp@parliament.uk](mailto:harriet.harman.mp@parliament.uk)