

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

Parliamentary Report

October 2023



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This is my October 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.

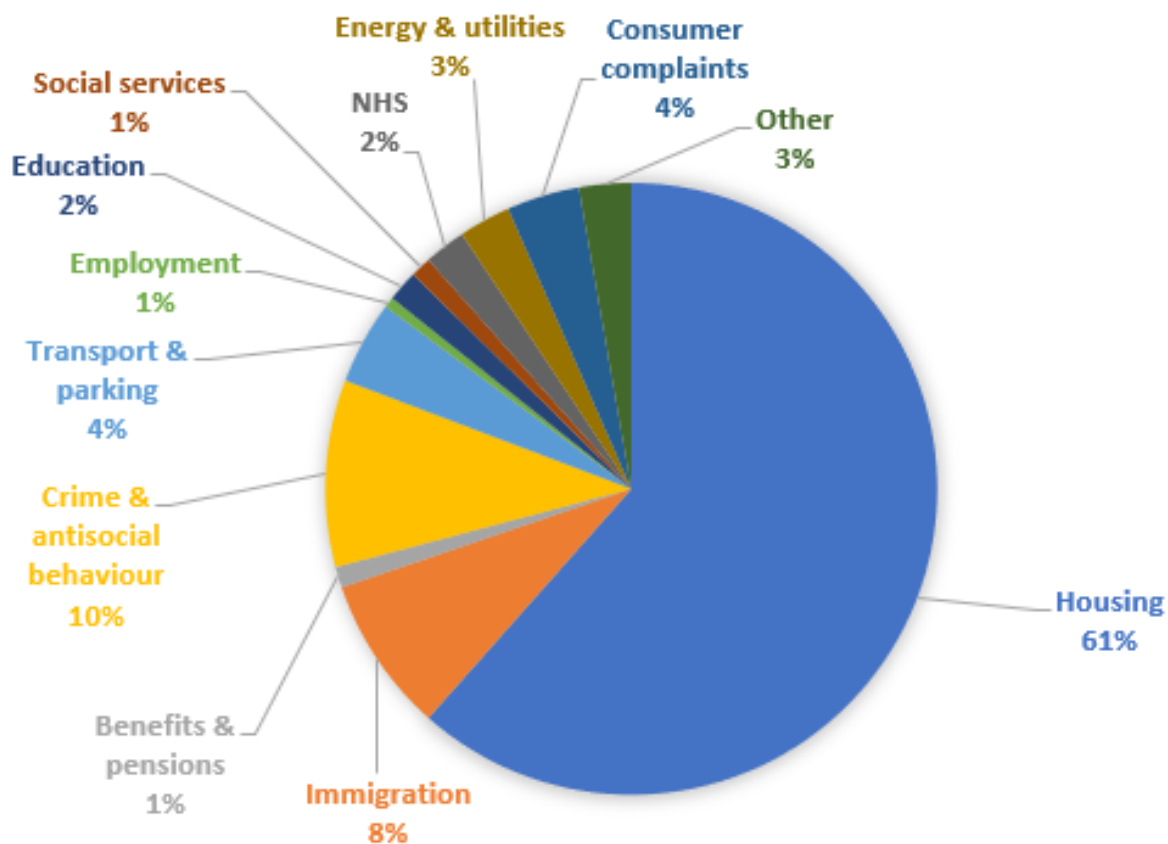
Haniel Hamman

Constituency problems - update

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

New cases breakdown – September 2023

In September I took action on **892** cases and recouped **£1,040** for constituents. In 2023 so far I have recouped **£247,199.58** for constituents.



Case summaries:

- A Nigerian woman from Peckham wrote to me after the Home Office rejected her application for Leave to Remain on the basis of Family and Private Life saying that she did not meet the requirements. The Home Office instead granted her leave under the five-year settlement route. My constituent asked me for my support to review the Home Office's decision which she felt was wrong. I wrote to the Home Office to request a full report and a timeline of my constituent's applications. I received a response stating that their casework team have agreed to reconsider the application.
- Several constituents emailed me after being affected by the smoke and fumes from the fire at the waste transfer station in Shakespeare Road, Herne Hill. I visited the site of the fire and experienced for myself the fumes and the smell of burnt plastics and chemicals. I liaised with Helen Hayes MP as the fire was within her constituency of Dulwich and West Norwood, and following my constituents' emails I wrote to the London Fire Brigade, Lambeth Council and Southwark Council to ask for full reports into this matter. I received responses outlining the actions taken to address the fire and the strategic decisions taken to protect residents from the fumes, which I shared with my constituents.
- A Walworth man wrote to me because he had received a new Council Tax bill which he was struggling to pay as it did not include the single person discount he was entitled to. I wrote to Southwark Council on his behalf and the Council rectified this error, issued a new bill with the correct amount and offered my constituent a £50 apology payment for the distress caused.
- I was contacted by a Camberwell woman because her ceiling was leaking and her landlord, PA Housing, had still not repaired it. I wrote to PA Housing on her behalf to ask them to undertake the necessary repairs as a matter of urgency. Contractors were sent out to fix the roof following my correspondence. They have not repaired the leak fully as one section of the guttering is still leaking, but the contractors are continue to work with my constituent to arrange the final repairs.
- I was contacted by three constituents about noise pollution from aeroplanes flying over Camberwell and Peckham towards Heathrow Airport. I wrote to Heathrow to share my constituents' concerns and to ask what action the airport was taking to reduce noise pollution. I received a response outlining the steps that they are taking and I shared this with my constituents. The response also provided the details for the Community Relations team which I shared directly with constituents so that they can also be in touch with Heathrow directly.

In September I received **631** emails from constituents on policy issues including:

- Keep railway ticket offices open – I wrote to Southern Railway and Southwestern Railway to register my opposition to the plan to close railway ticket offices. I am relieved that the plans have been abandoned.
- Reform the Dangerous Dogs Act – I support the decision to review the list of dangerous dogs to include the American XL Bully
- Speak up for trans inclusion in schools – I support comprehensive relationship and sex education in schools.
- Support onshore wind – I supported amendments to the Energy Bill in favour of onshore wind.

- No new oil and gas projects in the North Sea – I share concerns on this issue. The Government's plan for new exploration in the North Sea is wrong.
- Protect our rivers – I share concerns about the state of our waterways and I want to see a legally binding target to end 90% of sewage discharges by 2030.
- Please support your local pharmacies – I share concerns about the challenges facing pharmacies. We need an NHS fit for the future, and this includes ensuring pharmacy services are secured for the long term.

My Statement on the Conflict in the Middle East

The terrible news of the blast at the Al-Ahli al-Arabi hospital on 17th October came as we are still mourning the terrorist attack on Israel on 7th October; Jews mutilated, slaughtered and taken hostage. Every minute of every hour of every day their families hope for good news but fear the worst. They know the lives of their loved ones are in the hands of murderers. It's unimaginable agony. Israel has a right, a duty, to defend itself from Hamas, keep its people safe and bring hostages home. And it is clear that if Hamas had a single concern for human life, a single concern for the safety of the Palestinian people, then they would never have taken these hostages, and they should release them immediately.

We have heard accounts on the media, including from charities working in Gaza, of the harrowing humanitarian crisis now occurring; children fleeing their homes and hospitals unable to function. The lights are going out and the innocent civilians of Gaza are terrified that they will die in the darkness, out of sight. International law must always be followed. Hamas are not the Palestinian people and the Palestinian people are not Hamas. Sufficient medicines, food, fuel and water must get into Gaza immediately. This is an urgent situation and innocent Palestinians need to know that the world isn't simply watching but acting to prevent a humanitarian catastrophe.

Since Hamas' terrorist attack on Israel, the UK has seen a disgusting rise in antisemitism; Jewish businesses attacked, Jewish schools daubed with red paint and Jewish families hiding who they are. And we've seen an appalling surge in islamophobia with racist graffiti, mosques forced to ramp up security and British Muslims and Palestinians spoken to as if they were terrorists. Every British Jew and every British Muslim has the right to live their life free from fear and free from discrimination here in their own country.

We must have grave concern that this conflict will escalate across the Middle East, where there has been too much bloodshed and darkness for too long. A two-state solution, a Palestinian state alongside a safe and secure Israel, feels more distant than ever but it remains the only way through. We must work our hardest to ensure that the voices of division and despair are side-lined and that, however difficult it seems, the hope of a political path to peace is maintained.

This is a crisis where lives hang in the balance and when the enemies of peace and democracy would like nothing more than for us to become divided and to abandon our values. During this grave crisis, the UK must strive to speak with one voice in condemnation of terror, in support of Israel's right to self-defence, and for the dignity of all human life, which cannot be protected without humanitarian access to those suffering in Gaza and the constant maintenance of the rule of international law.

Election as Chair for the Committee on Standards

Following my taking up the role of chair of the Committee of Privileges to undertake the inquiry into Boris Johnson, on 18th October I was elected by the House of Commons as the Chair for the Committee on Standards. I won the vote with 341 votes out of the 457 votes cast.

The Committee on Standards is a cross-party committee and its remit includes:

- overseeing the work of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards
- examining the arrangements proposed by the Commissioner for the compilation, maintenance and accessibility of the Register of Members' Financial Interests and any other registers of interest established by the House
- reviewing from time to time the form and content of those registers
- considering any specific complaints made in relation to the registering or declaring of interests referred to it by the Commissioner
- considering any matter relating to the conduct of Members, including specific complaints in relation to alleged breaches in the Code of Conduct which have been drawn to the Committee's attention by the Commissioner
- recommending any modifications to the Code of Conduct as may from time to time appear to be necessary.

I start my role with immediate effect and I will be standing down as chair of the Joint Committee on Human Rights.

Standards Committee @HoCStandards · Oct 18
As announced in the Chamber this afternoon, Harriet Harman MP has been elected to serve as the Chair of the Committee on Standards, and will begin the position with immediate effect.

Find out more: [committees.parliament.uk/committee/290/...](https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/290/)



Harriet Harman @HarrietHarman · Oct 25
Thanks to Seb Adjei-Addoh @MPSSouthwark for briefing at Rye Hill estate on investigation process re death of Zodoq Obatolah with @clldoradf @lb_southwark. @policeconduct need to get on with deciding if will go to @CPSUK.



Attending briefing at Rye Hill Estate on the investigation into the death of Zodoq Obatolah

On Wednesday 11th of October I attended a community meeting on the Rye Hill Estate to hear from the Southwark and Lambeth BCU commander, Seb Adjei-Addoh, about the investigation into the death of Zodoq Obatolah. Zodoq died after he fell from his balcony following the use on him of a taser by police officers. Two officers

are currently under criminal investigation. I continue to monitor the case closely and I am in contact with the Independent Office of Police Conduct which is carrying out the investigation.

Celebrating Black History Month

October is Black History Month. It was a pleasure to attend a reception hosted by the Speaker of the House of Commons to

Harriet Harman @HarrietHarman · Oct 24
It's Black History Month. Thanks to @CommonsSpeaker for wonderful reception in Speaker's house. @helenhayes @ChiOnwurah @DawnButlerBrent @BellRibeiroAddy @FloEshalomi



celebrate Black History Month alongside many of my black Labour colleagues including Dawn Butler MP, Florence Eshalomi MP, Bell Ribeiro-Addy MP and Chi Onwurah MP.



Welcoming two new Labour MPs to the House of Commons

On 19th October, the constituencies of Tamworth and Mid-Bedfordshire elected two new Labour MPs in historic by-election victories. The Tamworth by-election was called after the resignation of the previous MP Chris Pincher following his sexual misconduct scandal, and the Labour candidate Sarah Edwards overturned a majority of 19,634 with a 23.9% swing, the second-biggest swing from Conservative to Labour since the 1945 election. In Mid-Bedfordshire, the Labour candidate Alistair Strathern overturned a majority of 24,664 from the

previous MP, Nadine Dorries, who had resigned. It was the first time that Labour had won the seat since its creation in 1918.

My congratulations to both Sarah and Alistair, who will be excellent representatives for their constituencies and who have shown that Labour can win in all parts of the country.

National Women's Conference Reception

I attended a reception the evening before 2023 Labour Women's Conference in Liverpool. The reception was a chance to reflect on the achievements of women in the Party over the past century and to look to a bright future for Labour with women at its core. It was great to be invited by Abena Oppong-Asare MP, Chair of Labour Women's Network, to say a few words.

My speech at the National Women's Conference

I gave a speech and opened Labour's National Women's Conference 2023, where I was joined by a thousand women from across the Labour movement.



My speech to Labour's National Women's Conference in Liverpool on Saturday 7th October 2023:

Thank you, Ruth, and thanks to all of you for that warm welcome. I'm truly delighted to be here with you. The truth is that I wouldn't have been able to carry on without the incredible solidarity you have shown me over so many years. We're a whole generation of women fighting together for equality.

We are gathering here today, in the great city of Liverpool, at a pivotal moment,

for women, for Labour and for this country, with a common, iron determination that this will be the last time we meet as the opposition. And that next time we meet we will be in Government.

All of you, here in this hall, represent infinite commitment, deep passion and energy, for our values and our principles and a combined total of millions of hours on the doorstep.

And that is what is going to make us win:

- *Our determined women members*
- *Our trade union sisters*
- *Our dedicated women councillors*
- *Our pioneering women mayors*
- *Our outstanding women MPs*
- *Our new wave of women candidates*

Hope and Pride for The Future

All of us share a sense of excitement! And I feel a huge pride in all the women in Labour's top team.

Who wouldn't, watching Angela wipe the floor with the Tories at Prime Ministers Questions, or hearing Rachel, a woman Shadow Chancellor telling women's conference about what she as chancellor in a Labour government will do for women in this country.

We've never had that before.

Delivering for Women in the Country

The point about the women in our Shadow Cabinet is that they are not there just for themselves, they're there for all the women of this country. Our more than 100 Labour women MPs are in Parliament not just to get themselves into positions but to use those positions to liberate women in this country from the oppression and discrimination that still blights their lives.

Labour Political Wing of Women's Movement

And it is an iron fact that the long march for women's equality stalls under the Tories and advances when Labour is in Government. Labour is, and always has been, the political wing of the Women's Movement.

We have big demands. Our task is to help get Labour into government and ensure that Labour government delivers for women.

Male Allies

We have women now playing their part in all aspects the party. But no one has handed you your seats on the council, your seats in parliament, your place in the shadow cabinet. As women, and still in the minority, you've had to fight for it. And we need to see Labour men fight for women's rights too.



It's true that in the early days we kept men out of the women's movement. We needed the space for ourselves. But we are stronger now and can now challenge men to play their part. It is not only women who should fight to end inequality for women, men should do it too. It shouldn't just be down to us women to fight for equal pay, childcare and, even for paternity leave!

So, I want to see all Labour men become male allies of women's equality. Not just passive by-standers as we fight for women's rights. Labour men must step up and be active champions of women's rights.

Making A Labour Government Happen

The polls are brilliant and after such a dreadful period of Tory government, the country is seeing, in Keir and the Shadow Cabinet, the prospect of a better future. But we're realistic too about the scale of the task to get us into Government. This time we are not going to let it slip through our fingers.

We can be optimistic but it's down to us to turn that into reality. There are no givens in politics. It's what you fight for and work for. I have total and complete confidence that Keir and his team will do an excellent job in Government. We've just got to do everything we can to make sure he gets there.

So I want to thank you for all that you put into the Party which you do on top of all that you do for your kids and your older relatives, not to mention your jobs. And I want to thank you for what you will be doing between now and the next General Election.

Catching up with Labour friends and colleagues at Labour Conference in Liverpool

It was great to catch up with a number of Labour friends and colleagues at Labour's conference in Liverpool. Including:

- Jo Baxter, chair of Labour's National Executive Committee
- Cllrs Steph Cryan, Catherine Rose, Sunil Chopra, Jason Ochere and Evelyn Akoto
- Mayor Sadiq Khan
- Miatta Fahbulleh, my successor as the Labour candidate for Peckham
- Nan Sloane, author and pioneer of the Labour women's movement
- Hannah Lazell from the Local Government Association and a former member of staff in my office.



Speaking at the AI Fringe

On Monday 30th October I gave a speech at the AI Fringe summit at the British Library.

I'm pleased to be invited to join you today and chair this very interesting and expert panel discussion. I hope, like you, to learn a great deal.

Like most people my age, I'm not an expert on Artificial Intelligence, or indeed on anything tech. My experience has been in Parliament and government on policy making and regulation, and particularly on equality.



The developers of AI and the regulators are different generations. And that's a challenge to be recognised and surmounted.

I'm now chair of The Fawcett Society. We campaign for gender equality and women's rights at home at work and in public life. It's clear that AI will profoundly reshape all of these and so it is vital to ensure its benefits are properly shared by women as well as men and that we guard against bias entrenchment or fuelling discrimination. This issue will be a focus for Fawcett in the coming years and I will say a bit more on that in a moment.

Like I guess most of you here, I am very hopeful about the opportunities AI provides, and I am determined that those opportunities should be shaped in a pluralistic, accountable and fair way and that the dangers should be identified and mitigated. And that's not just dangers for the future, but right here and now.

Benefits And Challenges

Promoting the development of AI and mitigating its dangers are two sides of the same coin. I think we should all be working on both rather than defaulting to two camps, those for and those against.

It is happening. And it will need to be regulated. I suspect there's lessons to be learned from the development of social media here. Take the issue of the impact of social media on women. Social media has given women the opportunity to engage directly with each other, to work together, to campaign together, to share debate unmediated by the traditional male hierarchies that prevail in communications. It enables them to work from their homes, to be in meetings in their homes. These are transformational advances for women.

And not least for women in politics. Here and around the world. I no longer have to communicate with my constituents or with the Women's Movement through male political editors who are at best ignorant or at worst hostile to my agenda. I just tweet and I'm directly in touch with everybody who wants to be in touch with me.

But at the same time, social media threatens women, particularly young women and most particularly black women and ethnic minority women: women and young girls

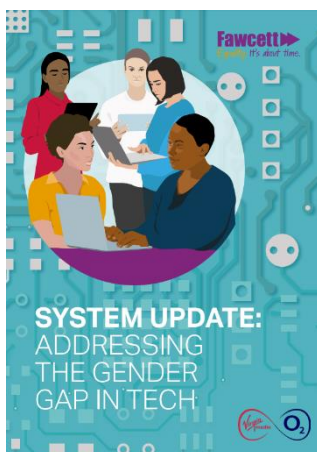
tormented by threats, abuse, harassment, racism, preyed on by perverts, exposed to self-harm sites.

And social media tech companies are dominated by men, as is AI. In fact, the Fawcett society has new research out tomorrow which highlights the "tech bro" culture. 1 in 5 men in tech thinks women are less suited to jobs in the sector. Well, I would say that makes those 1 in 5 men unsuitable to be working in the tech sector.

42% of these "bros" said the sector wouldn't benefit from a gender balance in the workforce. The women are noticing this, not surprisingly. 72% of women in tech roles have experienced at least one form of sexism at work, including questioning their skills and ability, as well as unequal pay and the usual "banter".

So it's not surprising, but it's got to be worrying, that over 40% of women think every week about leaving the sector.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission ought to conduct a formal inquiry into the AI sector, set targets and if the sector doesn't meet those targets it should impose quotas and have new powers to fine companies for not meeting them.



Policy Making: Pace of Change

There are lessons from social media for AI on the issue of complexity too and the pace of change. Public policy-making on support for and regulation of social media, in government and Parliament has been painfully slow and has struggled to face up to the challenges even where there is a broad consensus in Parliament and when it hasn't been a divisive party political issue.

The Online Safety Act has just passed into law. But it started with an announcement of an intention to regulate in a speech by the then-Prime Minister David Cameron way back in 2013.

Then fast forward, or rather slow forward, to 2017, there was an internet safety Green paper. Then, 2019, there was an Online Harms White Paper. The draft Bill was only published in May 2021 and the Bill didn't become law until just a few weeks ago. That is 10 whole years. That sort of timeframe just cannot work with AI which is developing at a rapid pace.

Government's and parliament's response to Covid showed us both possibilities and pitfalls when dealing with pace and complexity.



Parliament is notoriously slow to change, but faced with the mounting Covid deaths, we changed our processes literally overnight, meeting remotely, voting remotely. We agreed a process for retrospective approval of law changes in order not to cause any delay. That was impressive.

But the accountability was thin, aside from the work of the Treasury Select Committee, the Health Select Committee and the Joint Committee on Human Rights.

I think we need to power up our Select Committees that are in the front line of work on AI. And they will need more resources to match up to the challenge of their scrutinising role on this important and emerging technology.



Because AI development is unimaginably rapid and Parliament's processes are slow yet there needs to be real time scrutiny of government and new rules put rapidly into law, perhaps we in Parliament should be thinking about whether we can have accountability delegated to Select Committees on AI, so through them Parliament can continuously and expertly carry out our Parliamentary scrutiny, and play our part regulation, without causing undue delay or without making Parliament feel that it's being ridden over roughshod and without the executive being properly accountable. So that would be Parliamentary delegation to scrutinise regulations and scrutinise executive action.

Public Private Partnership

And of course AI is a classic case of the private sector and public policy having to work together. That too needs to be reflected in government structures. I remember when the internet was just starting to gather pace when Labour was in government. We had a specific aim of promoting what was a completely new thing, which most people had never heard of, and we called it e-commerce, and had government structures to actively promote it. The point was we were determined to be ahead of this. On AI, Government can't be left behind and business can't be held back.

Equality For Women

There's major implications for equality. And there's a vital role for government to work with the education sector and private sector to develop the AI workforce. We hear a great deal rightly about developing the NHS workforce, we need to hear as loud a volume on developing the AI workforce and we should be ensuring inclusion, particularly of women. We can see that left to its own devices it will not happen, it has to be driven purposefully.

The inclusion of women is important. It's important for the individual – because no woman should be discriminated against if she has a contribution to make. It's important for society. It's really an indication of modernity that women are fully included, if you think of the most backward societies they are the male-dominated ones that don't understand and include women in their society. And of course it's important for the economy.

And it is important for the sector because it will benefit from a meritocracy. This is not the sector doing women a favour, this is women doing the sector a favour. This is not anti-meritocracy it is about meritocracy because it is about including all the talent in the country rather than being limited to just that half of it which is men.

So we really must have, wherever decisions are being taken, in the public or the private sector, no men-only rooms, in planning for the development of the AI workforce or indeed anything else to do with the development of and regulation of AI, otherwise we risk entrenching bias. And this is not about the male decision-makers listening to, or thinking about, women. It's not about women's voices being heard by a male sector. This is about women being able to share the decision making equally. And that will only happen if there is an express commitment and its delivery is engineered.

Levelling Up

We also need to make sure that there's a regional spread of AI. Once again that's a question both of equity and getting the best talent. We've heard a lot about levelling up, we need levelling up embedded in AI. Clusters are important but they should be throughout all regions, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, not just emanating from one region.

Datasets As Infrastructure

Without data, we would have no AI, so just as we have recognised that broadband and childcare are part of a modern infrastructure, so we have to see datasets as infrastructure. And we need to ensure that we make them clean and free from prejudice and bias and not engines of discrimination, as left to their own devices that will be the default position. That means a massive focus on the quality of data and at the same time a sharp focus on the algorithms not perpetuating and entrenching unfairness.

All public sector bodies need to consider the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act, from right now, when thinking about how they are using AI. And all public sector bodies are thinking about their use of AI, from big national organisations like the NHS right through to local councils.

Vigilance Rather Than Blind Trust

AI seems very complex so we need to be wary of the Emperor's New Clothes syndrome that we had in the Global Financial Crisis. There was not a proper understanding in government or Parliament of what was going on in the financial markets but we thought that at least some of those in the financial markets did know. So that was reassuring. Except that they didn't.

That was, as it turned out, overoptimistic - with catastrophic consequences. Even most of those in the system seemed to have no visibility down the chain of derivatives and then the whole system collapsed. So we've got responsibility not to think "this is complex for us as Government or Parliament, but we're sure somebody out there knows that its all fine". We've got to actually work it out for ourselves and be part of it.

Whole World And Whole Country Approach

AI, and the data upon which it relies, knows no national boundaries so we have to look outward to other countries, not just those in the global north but in the global south too. And again that is not us in the global north doing the global south a favour, this is about recognizing that there is all sorts of innovation going on in the global south that we in the global north can learn from. And because of the influence that UK legislation has on Commonwealth parliaments it is very welcome that the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association is coordinating work on how parliaments in Commonwealth countries are responding to the challenge to regulate this sector.

And as well as looking outward to the rest of the world we need to look down to local communities and their councils. Just as in central government there are opportunity and accountability challenges in local councils. AI can help with better services. They too are making decisions about how their services are provided and to who. There needs to be help for them and coordination for them in them doing that. I don't think that's happening yet but it really needs to be happening now.

The opportunities are roaring ahead so after those preliminary thoughts, I'd like us now to turn to our very expert panel, Linda Bonyo and Adrian Joseph.

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](#).

Residents who receive certain benefits and need urgent financial support can apply to the Southwark Emergency and Hardship Support, 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

- [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

- [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

- [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

- [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 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 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 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

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](#)



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