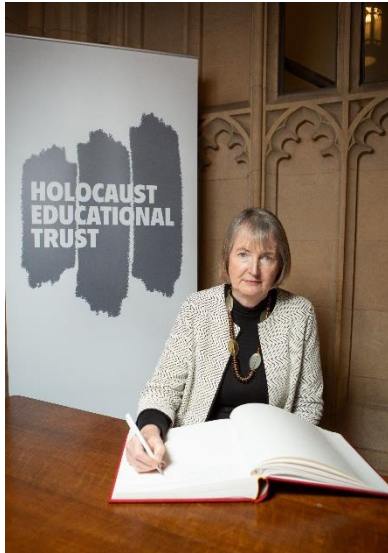


Rt Hon Harriet Harman KC MP
Member of Parliament for Camberwell and Peckham
Mother of the House of Commons

Parliamentary Report

January 2024



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This is my January 2024 report in which I:

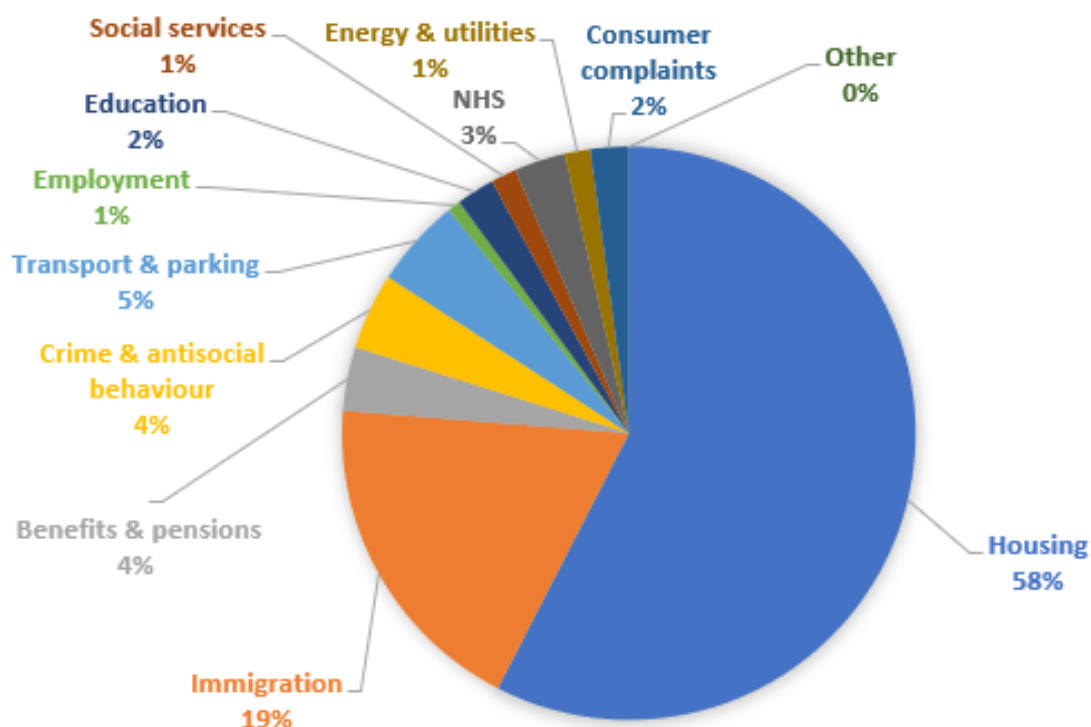
- share with you how I'm going about my work as MP,
- hear from you if you agree with how I'm approaching things and
- what further issues you think I should be addressing.

Haniel Hamman

Constituency problems – update

New cases breakdown – December 2023

In December I took action on 697 cases and recouped £7405.08 for constituents. In 2023 I recouped £261,159.69 for constituents. In 2024 so far I have recouped £733.06 for constituents.



Case summaries:

- A Nigerian woman from Old Kent Road asked for my help as she had applied to renew her Leave to Remain in June 2022 but nearly two years later had still not received a decision. She urgently needed a decision on her application so that she could travel to Nigeria in order to care for her mother because her brother, who was previously caring for their mother,

had sadly passed away. I wrote urgently to the Home Office on her behalf to ask them to expedite their decision and the Home Office responded to confirm that her application would be prioritised. I shared this response with my constituent who let me know that she has now been invited to her biometric appointment and her application is being processed.

- I was contacted by the daughter of a constituent in Peckham because her mother's boiler had broken and she had been without heating and hot water for over a week. Southwark Council, her landlord, was aware of the situation but had not arranged for engineers to urgently attend the property. I wrote to Southwark Council to ask for the heating and hot water to be fixed as a matter of urgency. The Council then confirmed that the repairs had been completed and my constituent had been compensated for the time spent without heating.
- A Peckham woman emailed me because she was having problems with her landlord, Hyde Housing. She had applied for a housing transfer but retracted her application because the new property she was offered was much smaller than she had expected. Due to a lack of communication from Hyde, she had been accumulating rent arrears for the property she had turned down. I wrote to Hyde Housing on her behalf and they replied to assure me they would be investigating how this situation had occurred and that they had written off the £459.06 of accrued rent arrears and the deposit of £100.
- A woman from Peckham contacted me regarding outstanding repairs at her Southwark Council property caused by a leak from the flat above. The leak had been unresolved since 2020 and had caused damage to the plumbing and the interior of her flat, resulting in persistent damp and mould. I urgently wrote to Southwark Council to ask that contractors carry out the necessary repairs as soon as possible. The council have confirmed that the 'leaks from above team' had visited the property and repairs have been carried out. They also confirmed that further works are due to take place and I have asked my constituent to let me know if there are any ongoing issues.
- A Southwark Council tenant in Peckham contacted me about the uneven flooring in her kitchen and bathroom. The woman told me that she and her husband have Lymphedema in both their legs, and she believed that the uneven flooring had contributed to her husband's recent fall. I wrote to Southwark Council asking for a full report and for the necessary repairs be carried out as soon as possible. Southwark Council have now contacted me to confirm that new flooring has been fitted in the kitchen and the bathroom.
- A caseworker from the Independent Workers Union of Great Britain contacted me on behalf my constituent because his Uber account had been suspended without an explanation meaning he was unable to work. I wrote to Uber to request a full report into this situation and as a result Uber decided to undertake a review of their decision to suspend the account. My constituent's account has now been reactivated following

their investigation.

- A man from Peckham contacted me because he had been waiting more than 15 months for a decision on his asylum application, and he explained that the lack of a decision was severely affecting his mental health and exacerbating the symptoms of his epilepsy and sleep disorders. I wrote to the Home Office on his behalf to request an update on the progress of his application. In response, the Home Office apologised for the delay in his asylum application and explained why his application had been delayed. I shared this with my constituent who let me know that his asylum claim has now been accepted.
- A Nunhead resident contacted me because she had no heating or hot water in her property due to a faulty gas boiler. I wrote to Southwark Council to ask for the necessary repairs to be completed as soon as possible. In response, Southwark Council informed me that the repairs had been completed, however my constituent wrote to me again to say the repairs had not worked and she was still having issues with her hot water. I urgently wrote to Southwark Council again and received a further response to confirm that further repairs had taken place. I shared the response with my constituent who confirmed that the heating and hot water had returned in her property, and she had received compensation of £174.

In December 2023 I received 1,324 emails from constituents on policy issues including:

- Oppose the offshore Petroleum licencing bill – this bill undermines action on climate change and will not cut energy bills or increase energy security. I opposed it at its Second Reading in the House of Commons
- Cat theft & the Pet Abduction Bill – I recognise that pet theft is not a simple matter of theft of an item and it should not be treated as such by the law.
- Raise standards in the media – Labour will be examining the question of regulation ahead of the next election.
- GMC regulation of Anaesthesia Associates and Physician Associates – Regulation must come alongside comprehensive workforce planning. Labour are committed to ensuring the NHS has the staff it needs to ensure patients are treated on time.
- Support the Animal Welfare (Livestock Exports) Bill and vote in favour of a livestock export ban – I have long supported a ban on exporting livestock from Great Britain for fattening and slaughter. Long journeys on which animals suffer are not acceptable.
- Concern about the mounting pressures faced by British farmers due to the unfair practices of supermarkets – I am concerned by producers' reports of a problematic and unpleasant dynamic in the relationship between buyers and suppliers and share concerns over the tiny proportion of the profits that primary food producers often receive.
- Ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas. We must keep working towards the release of all hostages and a cessation of fighting as quickly as possible. See my statement [here](#).

Labour Culture, Media and Sport Away Day

On Monday 8th January I joined the Shadow Culture, Media and Sport Team Away Day to speak to them about my experience as Former Shadow Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport and my experience in government, and shared my advice on how to prepare for government.

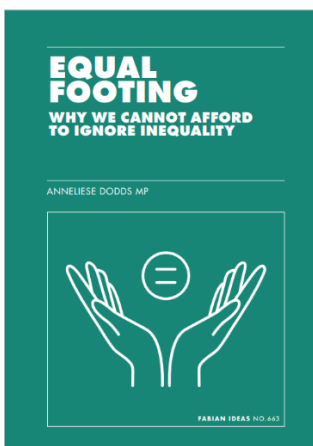
Labour is ambitious for this country and for the arts. If elected as Prime Minister Keir Starmer will lead a decade of national renewal and the arts will play a key role.



Thangam Debbonaire MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, Barbara Keeley MP, Shadow Minister for Music and Tourism, Lilian Greenwood MP, Shadow Minister for Arts, Heritage and Civil Society, Steph Peacock MP, Shadow Minister for Sports, Gambling and Media, Chris Bryant MP, Shadow Minister for the Creative Industries and Digital, Lord Bassam, Shadow Minister for Culture, Media and Sports (Lords), and Baroness Thornton, Shadow Minister for Culture, Media and Sports (Lords).

Launch of Anneliese Dodds MP's 'Equal Footing' pamphlet with Fabian Society

On Monday 9th January, Shadow Secretary of State for Women and Equalities Anneliese Dodds launched her pamphlet 'Equal Footing: Why we can't Afford to Ignore Inequality', in partnership with the Fabian Society.



Tackling inequality is at the heart of Labour's mission, as the benefits of equality do not only accrue to those who suffer from its absence. They result in a stronger and more sustainable economy for us all.

You can read the pamphlet [here](#).

Southwark Maternity Commission

This month marks the launch of Southwark Maternity Commission formed by Councillor Evelyn Akoto, Southwark Council's Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing.



The Commission has been set up to assess the local inequalities in the access, experience and outcomes for maternity services, specifically for those parents from ethnic minorities and/or socially disadvantaged backgrounds, in particular, for those from a Black ethnic background. The Commission will assess the implementation of national recommendations for maternity services to reduce inequalities in access, experience and outcomes, and will identify additional areas for improvement in Southwark.

Before the first meeting of the commission on Tuesday 23rd January, I wrote to Councillor Akoto to express my full support for her initiative in establishing the commission and to make a written submission.

You can find out more information about the Southwark Maternity Commission [here](#).



We need mothers to come forward and share their maternity care experiences



This month marks the launch of Southwark Maternity Commission formed by Councillor Evelyn Akoto, Southwark Council's Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing.

I fully support the establishment of this commission and look forward to reading the commission's final report, recommendations and action plan to

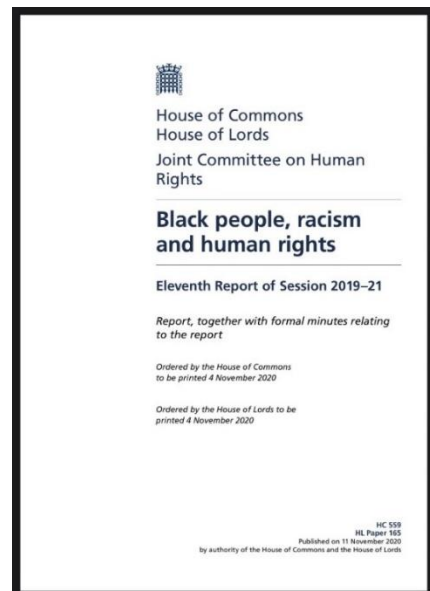
support change in Southwark to reduce the drivers of inequality in maternity care and maternal morbidity.

One of the most pressing concerns is that black women are most at risk during childbirth and the most recent data shows that black women are 3.7 times more likely than white women to die. This is totally unacceptable and must be tackled urgently.

This is of particular concern in Southwark, where there is a high proportion of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents. In Southwark, 25% of residents are from a Black, Black British, Caribbean or African ethnic background compared to 4% across England and Wales.

When I was chair of the Joint Committee on Human Rights in 2020, we produced the report '[black people, racism, and human rights](#)'. This report showed:

- 78% of black women do not believe that their health is equally protected by the NHS compared to white people.
- While deaths in childbirth in the UK have fallen since 2010, there are significant variations in these statistics based on race. Asian women, mixed ethnicity women and black women are all more likely to die than white women during childbirth, with black women being most at risk.
- The NHS's Maternity Transformation Programme, "Better Births" which began in 2016 made no specific commitments in relation to women from Black, Asian and ethnic minority backgrounds and there are no targets to end this disparity.
- The Joint Committee on Human Rights proposed that a target must be introduced to end the disparity in maternal mortality between Black women and white women.



Those are shocking statistics, particularly as so many black women play such a crucial part in providing NHS services. Those figures are based on the experiences and expectations of black women in a society where black people are not treated equally.

To remedy this situation the NHS must set a clear target to close the gap in the ethnic disparity of maternal outcomes. We must address the differential delivery of care that is the experience of too many black women. We must have regular and publicly accessible monitoring of the ethnic disparity in maternal mortality rates. This monitoring is important, so it is particularly disappointing that King's which serves a very diverse community are not collecting or not reporting their maternal mortality disparity data. King's must publish this important information so we can be aware of the situation and make progress if necessary.

I hope everyone who has experienced maternity care in Southwark to come forward and share their experience to help the commission. Whether you are a frontline professional, or have had a recent pregnancy in Southwark, or have supported a family member with a pregnancy, sharing your experience will help to inform the commission as it works towards it's vital aim in reducing the ethnic disparity in maternity care across Southwark.

Welcome back Luciana Berger!

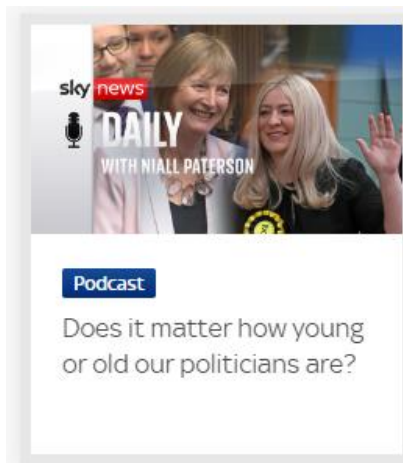


On 14th January 2024, Keir Starmer announced that Luciana Berger would be returning to work with the Labour Party to lead a Mental Health Strategy Review.

I am pleased to welcome Luciana back to Labour in such an important role, helping Labour to make sure fewer lives are lost to suicide.

Welcome back Luciana!

“Whether age matters in politics”: Talking to Niall Paterson for Sky News Daily Podcast



Following the announcement of France's new Prime Minister, 34-year-old Gabriel Attal, and the likelihood that Americans will have to choose between 81-year-old Joe Biden or 77-year-old Donald Trump in November's presidential election, I joined Niall Paterson for the Sky News Daily podcast, along with Amy Callaghan, SNP MP, to talk about whether the age of our politicians matters.

I talked about my experience of becoming an MP aged 32 years old to now being the Mother of the House, and discussed the benefits to our democracy of having both

young MPs with fresh ideas and older MPs with lots of experience. The important thing is for both young and old leaders to be age respectful.

I also talked about the difference in perception of men and women at different ages. Men at any age are always viewed as being in their prime while women are never perceived to be in their prime – either too old or too young.

It is important for Parliament to contain a wide variety of people, with different life experiences, as no one MP can represent every aspect of life in this country.

You can listen to the full episode [here](#).



Delivering the 2024 Sue Lloyd-Roberts Memorial Lecture at St Hilda's College, Oxford

On Thursday 25th January I visited St Hilda's College, Oxford to deliver a lecture, 'Striving for Further Advances for Women and Fighting the Backlash' for their annual lecture series in memory of the late award-winning broadcast journalist Sue Lloyd-Roberts, an alumna of the college.

Sue Lloyd-Roberts was born in the same year as I was. Our generation of women were born into a society where men were regarded as being more important than women and if women did work it was denigrated as being "just for pin money". Sue broke into the male domain of broadcasting, and she was quite explicit about how she realised that she could, as a woman, tell stories that had not



before been told and could lift the distortion that comes with only seeing a partial picture through men's eyes.



In recent years, I have taken the opportunity to get to know women from parliaments abroad. In my lecture, I talked about the experiences of women MPs from around the world who are breaking down the barriers for women in their countries, sharing the struggles that they face and their achievements.

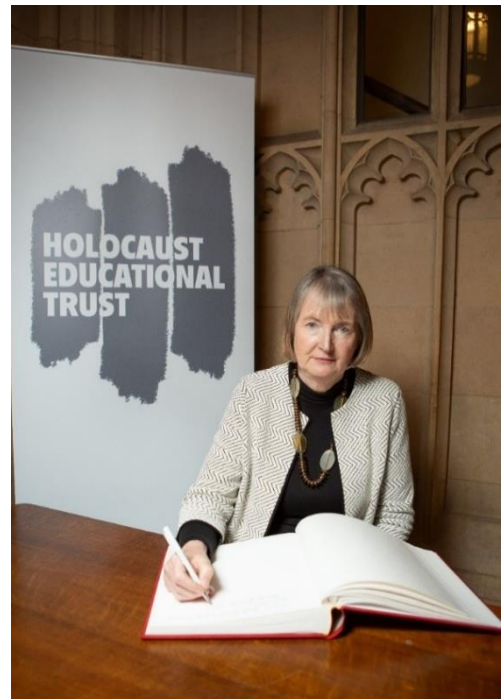
You can watch my full lecture [here](#).

Signing the Holocaust Educational Trust's Book of Commitment

On Wednesday 24th January I signed the Holocaust Educational Trust's Book of Commitment. In doing so, I pledged my commitment to Holocaust Memorial Day and honouring those who were murdered during the Holocaust as well as paying tribute to the extraordinary Holocaust survivors who work tirelessly to educate young people today.

Holocaust Memorial Day falls on 27th January every year, the anniversary of the liberation of the infamous former Nazi concentration and death camp, Auschwitz-Birkenau, in 1945. Across the UK – and world – people will come together to remember the horrors of the past.

Holocaust Memorial Day is an important opportunity for everyone to reflect on the darkest times of European history. Today, I pledge to remember the six million Jewish men, women and children who were murdered in the Holocaust and speak out against all forms of antisemitism, which in recent months has risen exponentially and which needs to be tackled.



Southwark Wreath Laying for Holocaust Memorial Day 2024

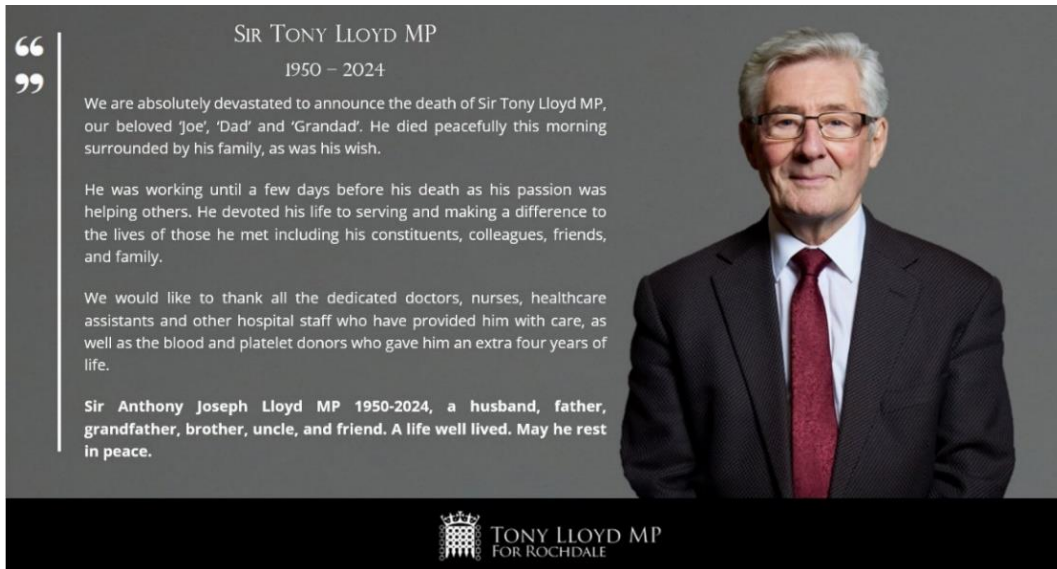


On 24th January Holocaust Memorial Day was marked in Southwark with a wreath laying ceremony at the Holocaust Memorial Tree, to commemorate the victims and survivors of the holocaust.

Thank you to leader of Southwark Council, Kieron Williams, for laying a wreath on my behalf on this solemn and important occasion.

RIP Sir Tony Lloyd MP

This month we also heard the sad news that Sir Tony Lloyd, MP for Rochdale, has died. Tony was an example of honesty, principle and kindness in politics, a champion for social justice. In over 40 years of working alongside him I never heard him say anything mean or unkind. He was such a decent man and his loss will be felt by all those who knew him. My thoughts are with his wife, Judith, his children, Siobhan, Angharad, Kieron and Ali, and his grandchildren Carmen and Carys.



Dave Lewis RIP

Dave was a warm-hearted, intelligent and caring representative of everyone in Sceaux Gardens.

I greatly appreciated working with him over many years particularly after the tragic loss of life in the Lakanal fire.

He will be sadly missed.



RIP Camila Batmanghelidjh

I was very saddened to hear of the death of Camila Batmanghelidjh. Camila was the founder of Kids Company, a charity she set up to help distressed, abused and abandoned children and teenagers in south London.

So many children and young people benefitted from her big heart. RIP.



Campaigning for Damien Egan in Kingswood

On Monday 29th January I campaigned in Kingswood with local party members and Labour activists in support of Damien Egan ahead of the by-election on 15th February 2024.

We spoke to local residents to listen to their concerns and to talk about the difference that a Labour constituency MP, and a Labour government, could make. There was a lot of disappointment and dismay at the terrible impact of the current Conservative government.

If elected, Damien will be an excellent Labour MP for Kingswood.



Exit interview with Matt Chorley for Times Radio

This month I spoke with Matt Chorley as part of his Exit Interview series in which he interviews MPs who are standing down at the next election.

During this interview, I reflected on my experiences as an MP over the past 40 years, from my election at a by-election in 1982, to my time in Government in the 90s and 2000s, and my chairing the Privileges Committee inquiry into Boris Johnson last year. And I looked back on each of the Labour Party leaders I have worked with during my time in Parliament.

We talked about my late husband, Jack, and about widowhood. And I looked forward to the work I will be continuing to do as the Chair of the Fawcett Society when I stand down as an MP.

You can watch my Exit Interview [here](#).



Continuing my work as Chair of the Committee on Standards

I am continuing my work as the Chair of the Committee on Standards as we undertake our inquiry into House of Commons standards landscape.

This month, we have held several evidence sessions. On the morning of Tuesday 23rd January heard evidence from Lieutenant General Doug Chalmers, the Chair of the Committee on Standards in Public life, and Professor Gillian Peele, Independent Member of the Committee. On the same day we heard further evidence from Thea Walton, the Director of the Independent Complaints and Grievance Scheme and the , Lucinda Maer, Director of the Cultural Transformation Team at the House of Commons.

On the afternoon of Tuesday 23rd January we heard evidence from Richard Lloyd, Chair of IPSA, Louise Edwards, Director of Regulation and Digital Transformation at the Electoral Commission, and John Pullinger, Chair of the Electoral Commission.

On Wednesday 24th January we heard evidence from Professor Robert Hazell, Professor of Government and the Constitution at UCL Constitution Unit, Dr Hannah White, Director of Institute for Government,



Daniel Bruce, CEO of Transparency International UK, and Professor Meg Russell Professor of British and Comparative Politics and Director of the Constitution Unit.

You can read more about this inquiry [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](#).

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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