

Monthly Report

Bell Ribeiro-Addy MP

February 2020

Streatham stands together

After the horrifying incident on the High Road, Streatham stood together. Along with Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, it was a pleasure to get Streatham together to celebrate the things that make this area great: faith, diversity, activism and strength in the face of adversity.

A big thank you to local group, Streatham Singing Mamas, for organising a mass acapella procession up the High Road. It was a joy to raise our collective voice and stand in unity against attempts to sow the seeds of division within our community. Terror attacks in diverse communities like ours are always designed to create dividing lines. But I know Streathamers are tough. Seeing our community remained united and unafraid in the aftermath of such a shock made me proud to be the Streatham MP.

Since the attack, the Government has introduced emergency legislation to end the release of people convicted of terrorism offences halfway through their sentence, and I have been scrutinising this closely.



In the Constituency



Visiting Spires Centre

Spires was set up in the 1980s by members of the local faith community to provide the basics for people forced into a life of homelessness: washing facilities, food, clothing and emergency healthcare. Rough sleeping has seen a major increase in the UK since 2010, with 726 people dying on our streets last year. To try and stop this from happening, they do amazing work linking people up with mental health services, addiction support and housing advice.



Reopening of the Hand in Hand

It's been great to see Brixton Hill pub The Hand in Hand throwing its doors open once again after the shutters went down last August. Last weekend, I cut the red tape of the new-look venue and had a chance to chat to staff and some of the regulars. The spot on New Park Road has been a community hub for as long as I can remember. It was great to see it busy with locals and we even found time to play a couple of frames of pool.

The last Labour manifesto recognised that all across the country, too many pubs are being forced to close due to financial burdens. Labour has great policies to help, including permitting community groups to buy pubs threatened with closure, listing pubs as assets of Community value and introducing business rates reform.

EDAROTH (Everybody Deserves A Roof Over Their Head)

EDAROTH is an amazing subsidiary of Atkins bringing a refreshing new approach to social housing. Utilising brownfield sites and off-site manufactured housing, EDAROTH are not only closing the gap between supply and demand but are creating truly affordable housing.

I had the pleasure of speaking at their launch event in Parliament as well as joining them at their hand-over ceremony at the newly built Hillside Gardens properties as they handed over full ownership of the homes to Lambeth council. In a time where housing prices are skyrocketing and the demand for social housing overtaking the supply, I am pleased to see initiatives such as EDAROTH filling the gap and providing the affordable homes that so many need.

Streatham Girl Guides

I joined the Streatham Girl Guides to celebrate diversity, equality and equity for World Thinking Day.

The Girl Guides initiative aspires towards a world of equality where girls can make a positive difference, be happy, safe and fulfil their potential. It's great to see youth initiatives such as Girl Guides still operating after 100 years and giving young girls in our constituency a chance to flourish.

Sign Live Launch

I was invited to the Launch event of a spectacular app that provides immediate British Sign Language interpreters for customers visiting Lambeth Customer Centre. This app is paving the way for equality and accessibility, allowing members of the British Deaf community to access the services they need. It was truly an honour to be invited to this launch event and I look forward to seeing what more is produced by the developers.

Charity Shop Royal Trinity Hospice

Our high street is the longest in Europe, and despite my obvious biases, I'd like to think it's the best. Where else can boast about it's amazing selection of independent stores and charity shops? The Royal Trinity Hospice shop is one of our proudest jewels on Streatham High Street. Recently a recipient of Charity Retailers Interior of the Year award, the Royal Trinity Hospice store is a clear example of how fashion can be stylish and sustainable. Promoting a message of "Reuse, Relove, Rewear" the Royal Trinity Hospice recycles all donations through its various stores across the country and any unsold items find their new home at a textile's factory, all whilst raising money for charity. When you have the time, do stop by the store to raise money for a good cause, whilst saving the planet and looking good as you do it.

British Kebab Awards 2020

Speaking of jewels in Streatham, Orient Express Turkish Kebab, Grill & Meze has been nominated in the category of Best Takeaway in London for a British Kebab Award 2020.

The British Kebab Awards were established in 2003 by none other than Lambeth restaurateur and Mayor of Lambeth Council Ibrahim Dogus.

The winners of this years' awards will be announced on the 3rd March and we hope that another of our high street stores can take home an amazing prize.



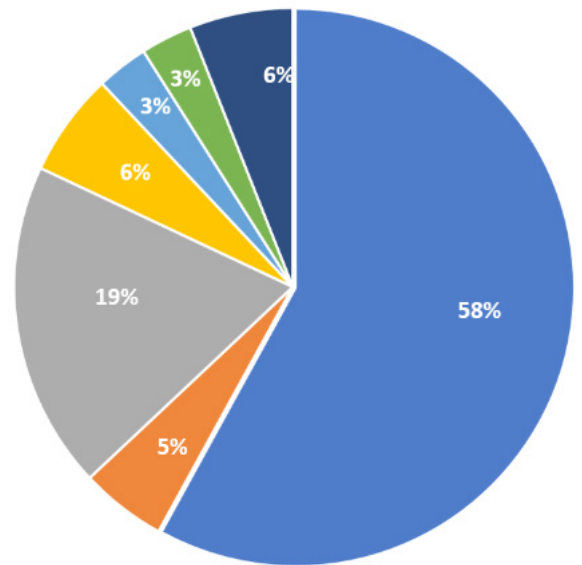
Constituents' Concerns

Constituents write to me on a frequent basis regarding all manner of issues surrounding policy areas. Some of the key topics that have arisen this month were surrounding immigration and the environment.

The upcoming Global Oceans Treaty negotiations and whether the Prime Minister will be sending a senior minister to represent the UK was a key matter of concern to many constituents. I have written to the Prime Minister, urging him to do so and am waiting a response.

Regarding immigration, many constituents wrote in concerned about the deportation flight to Jamaica and other flights of this nature. They have urged the Home Secretary to delay such flights until the Windrush Lessons Learned review is published. I signed EDM #185 - Deportations ahead of the Windrush Lessons Learned Review Publication which calls on the Government to immediately suspend all deportations of residents who have been in the UK since childhood, and to publish and implement in full recommendations of the Windrush Lessons Learned Review as a matter of urgency.

Casework Statistics



- Housing and Planning
- Local Government
- Asylum, Immigration & Nationality
- Health Services and Medicine
- Crime, Civil Law, Justice and Rights
- Education
- Other

Cases Opened: 88

Cases Closed: 41

New Members' Events



This month, I held two new members' events to welcome all those who have joined the Party since the General Election. Our movement relies on the power of hundreds of thousands of members, representing communities across our country.

Here in Streatham, we've now had over 500 new members join us since the General Election, with more and more of you joining us every day. We are everything Boris Johnson hates, and with your help we will continue to be an effective force against Tory cuts and cruelty in our community.

Thank you to all the members of the EC and Councillors who came along to greet the new members and make them feel welcome into our Labour family.

Roaming Surgeries

I'll be bringing my constituency work out into the community with Roaming Surgeries starting this coming month.

If you know anyone who needs my help please keep an eye out for details - I'll be getting to Streatham, Brixton, Tulse Hill, Balham and Clapham!

In Parliament

Maiden Speech

On 31st January, I delivered my maiden speech during a debate on Global Britain. I thanked our former MP for his service to the constituency (and encouraging me to join Labour in the first place – I know who's happier about that now). My speech was mostly about racism, discussing how Britain's colonial past still haunts our politics today in the wake of Brexit. As I argued in the House, tackling racism at its root will mean confronting the brutal legacy of Empire, apologizing properly and making meaningful reparations for the historic wrongs of slavery and colonialism.

You can watch the full speech on my brand new YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kmx6Z8wvXI8&feature=youtu.be>



Windrush Debate

On February 10th, the Windrush Compensation Bill had its second reading in the House of Commons. Labour did not oppose the Bill (it's only right that we move forwards towards compensation) but we did highlight the many flaws in the current scheme. Of the 8,000 people who applied, just 3% have received compensation.

There are serious questions to be answered about the wider attempts to publicise Windrush compensation, particularly to other Commonwealth-born British citizens outside the Caribbean community and those born to them, who have also suffered mistreatment under successive governments.

We also believe it's indefensible for the government not to reimburse victims for the legal costs they incur during this glacial process. Many people have died before receiving so much as an apology, let alone compensation. The suffering continues as the Government continues to drag its feet and hold onto the results of its much-awaited review into the scandal.

People died without receiving so much as an apology, let alone compensation. As I said then, The Labour Party will not rest, and I will not rest, until this extraordinary injustice has ended.

What's being debated in Parliament:

Environment Bill – The Environment Bill went through its second reading in Parliament this week.

Prisoners (Disclosure of Information About Victims) Bill – This Bill went through its second reading in the House of Commons this month.

Windrush Compensation Scheme (Expenditure) Bill – This Bill went through its second reading in the House of Commons this month.

Emergency Legislation – The Government has introduced the Terrorist Offenders (Restriction of Early Release) Bill which has now cleared both Houses.

Home Office Statement – Priti Patel made a statement on the Government's new points-based immigration system this month. As Shadow Immigration Minister, I challenged the Home Secretary on this policy and the many flaws within it.



Jamaican Deportation Charter Flight

This month, and to no surprise to anyone, the government continued with its attempts to maintain its hostile environment by deporting 50 people to Jamaica on Tuesday 11th February 2020. Mass deportation flights of this nature are deeply concerning and have no place in the everyday function of the State. I joined protestors outside Downing Street on Thursday 6th February to demand that the government halt the charter flight, along with any other of its kind scheduled to take off, until the Government publishes its Windrush Lessons Learned Review.

Many of those scheduled to be deported on that flight had lived in the UK for years, some of them since childhood. The details of those who were kept on the flight are scarce and we fear that many of those deported on the 11th February were being so for minor crimes, the sentences for which they had already served. We must fight the government on all attempts to maintain the hostile environment and carry out unjust deportations, and I will continue to do this as the MP for Streatham.

Racism has been in the news a lot this month. After a spate of mix-ups between myself and other black women MPs, a survey was published showing that 96% of BAME MPs have experienced workplace racism.

The culture of racism prevalent throughout the House of Commons, where other black MPs have been confused with cleaners or asked to hold bags, typifies the way racism in society comes from the very top. I penned a comment article for the Guardian looking at the current situation in Parliament: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/feb/18/black-minority-ethnic-mps-racism-abuse>

The Guardian

Being an MP doesn't make any difference - I still face racism in the workplace

Bell Ribeiro-Addy

In my experience, minority ethnic MPs don't feel equal to other members. This rotten culture comes from the very top



▲ 'There is a culture in parliament and the media that is largely unchanged by the fact of increased diversity.' The House of Commons chamber. Photograph: Jessica Taylor/AP



LGBTQ+ History Month

February is LGBTQ+ Month and to celebrate I went along to a UNISON reception to celebrate how far we've come on LGBTQ+ equality and acknowledge how much further we have to go to rid society of the prejudices and bigotry that remains. When the current Prime Minister thinks it's acceptable to call gay men "bum boys", it is important that the whole labour movement remains on the frontline of the fight against anti-LGBT+ prejudice.

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