

# BELL RIBEIRO-ADDY MP

## Monthly Report, October-September 2020



### Testing times in Streatham

With COVID-19 cases spiralling across the UK, constituents have been writing to me to complain that they cannot get a test. The week schools returned saw a particular influx of emails from people who were showing symptoms and either struggling to access testing or being sent to unfeasibly distant test centres.

Observing the rollout of the Government's outsourced test and trace system over the past few months has been like witnessing a slow car crash. After months of Ministers promising us a working NHS test and trace system, what we got was an outsourced mess cobbled together by corner-cutting private companies. This buckled right when we most needed it, as lockdown eased and schools returned. When teachers and doctors are among those unable to get a test, it's clear something is deeply and fundamentally wrong.

The crisis in testing is symptomatic of wider government failures to provide people with the policies they need to stay safe during the pandemic. As we head into winter, people around the country are really struggling. The chancellor's most recent statement failed to tackle low sick pay, failed to help the three million excluded from income support and failed to fix broken Universal Credit.

The lesson of the pandemic is that nobody's safe until everyone is. As Labour members, we must continue to oppose the Government's shameful cronyism, which sees funds diverted into the pockets of private shareholders and fight for public services and support for the many.

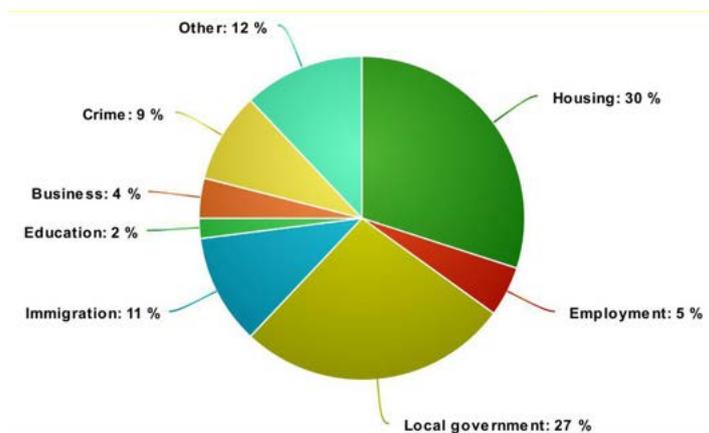
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# Casework

Throughout September and October, I have received several emails regarding housing issues and problems with disrepair. I have also seen a rise in cases relating to mental health issues, alongside other reports of antisocial behaviour.

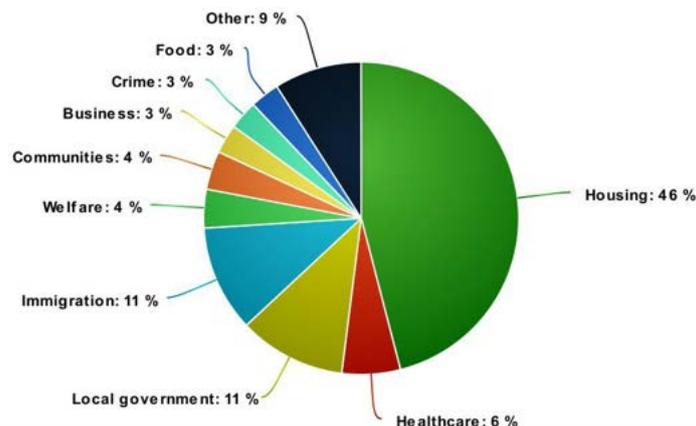
Since the end of recess, I have received several emails from constituents who are concerned by the implications of government legislation for human rights, civil liberties and the rule of law. I've also received a lot of correspondence about the rollout of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods and plans to construct the Hondo Enormo Tower just outside the constituency in Brixton.

October's correspondence was dominated by support for the Lords' Amendments to the Agriculture Bill and Immigration and Social Security Bill, along with opposition to the Covert Human Intelligence Sources Bill. I am very pleased to have stood against the Tories on all three of these bills.



## September Statistics

## October Statistics



## Unemployment in Streatham

The economic impact of the pandemic is starting to take its toll. It's tragic seeing so many people being laid off and left without support by a Government that has other priorities. On the 25th of September, I visited Streatham Job Centre at Crown House, where staff have been working hard to process an unprecedented number of claimants for Universal Credit during the pandemic, whilst also managing a range of claimants' additional needs. I was also pleased to see the serious social distancing measures carried out in the centre to keep people safe if they need to access services in-person. Staff at the Streatham Job Centre have had to adapt to a huge rise in demand - supporting both new young claimants and older claimants seeking by processing almost 30,000 cases - a surge from 7,000 back in March this year.

# In the Constituency



At Streatham Job Centre



Raising a mug for Macmillan

## Step-free access to Streatham Station

Streatham Station is currently inaccessible for wheelchair users, people with buggies or bikes and people with reduced mobility. Plans to make the station accessible were initially reported to take place in 2017/18, however, they were postponed to 2020. After a meeting with the Streatham South Councillors and the St Leonard's Councillors, I wrote to the Transport Secretary to ask for an update on the plans to make Streatham Station accessible, as well as an estimation of when these works will begin and when they will be completed.

## Macmillan Cancer Support Coffee Morning

In September, I headed to St Matthews Tenants Hall for Macmillan Cancer Support's World's Biggest Coffee Morning. Cancer is something that will affect all of us in one way or another and is incredibly difficult for anyone to go through, especially during a pandemic. I believe funding cancer research and treatment should be a top priority going forwards. With a worrying backlog of cases developing over the course of the current crisis, we must fight to ensure the NHS is adequately resourced to treat cancer patients during this difficult time.

## Low Traffic Neighbourhoods

Whilst I am generally in favour of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs), I do sympathise with residents' concerns over their implementation in our borough, including the ones in Streatham Hill and Tulse Hill in our constituency. I organised a meeting between my fellow Lambeth MPs and Councillor Claire Holland, who has spearheaded the initiative, to discuss some of the issues that have been relayed to us. Though the scheme has been introduced under emergency measures, I have been assured that a formal consultation will take place if they do become permanent.

# Streatham Festival

This October, I had the joy of participating in my first ever Streatham Festival as an MP. This year was supposed to mark the twentieth Streatham Festival and they had planned to make it the biggest one yet. Whilst current events altered the original plans, the festival organisers were still able to put on a truly spectacular event.

For those who don't know, the Streatham Festival was set up in 2002 by Streatham resident Mel Larsen to celebrate the work of various artists here in Streatham. Streatham has a rich well of homegrown poets, painters, writers, singers and musicians and it's always great to appreciate the talent we have right here on our doorstep, particularly at a time when arts funding is being slashed and arts appreciation from central government is scarce.

I was honoured to open the Festival with a live concert at St Thomas' Church, and was pleased to attend several events throughout the month, including the inaugural Streatham Literature festival at the Streatham Space Project and the farmer's market over at the Rookery.

I was also pleased to open Lou's Little Library in memory of local activist Louise Simonsen. Located on Pathfield Road, this is a community space where children can exchange books & learn about the world. It's a fitting commemoration of her activism and contribution to Streatham and beyond.

The Streatham Festival is a true joy of our constituency and I would encourage all to attend some of the events that they put on next year, you really won't be disappointed.



## Friends of Hillside Gardens

I was happy to accept an invitation on behalf of the Friends of Hillside Gardens community to visit their space and take a tour of the great facilities that they had on offer. I was guided by volunteer chair Tom Stanbury and introduced to all the residents who have served the local community in providing the beautiful parks and gardens there. Residents also invited me to their inclusive sports and activities day, where there was a range of fun events like children's theatre workshops held by Mhairi Grealis from the Clip theatre group, tennis, and walking football. Two young sisters invited me to play a game of tennis but I respectfully declined as I always struggled to keep the ball in the court at school (and I didn't want to endanger the children playing in the adjoining playground!)

In recent months, we've seen the importance of our green spaces as a source of entertainment, exercise and escapism during this ongoing pandemic. Many people in Streatham don't have gardens or access to exercise spaces where they can breathe some fresh air and enjoy a change of scenery. Therefore, we need to protect green spaces as both a public health and environmental imperative. I remain committed to protecting ours as part of a greener, cleaner Streatham.

## Blenheim Gardens RMO

I had the pleasure of attending a board meeting of the Blenheim Gardens RMO (resident management organisation) which serves the needs of the 440 households on the estate. This beacon of the community was distributing over 300 crates of food a week at the height of the pandemic. Danny Howcroft and fellow board members took the time to give me a tour, including a walk to the award-winning community garden. I have written to the Chief Executive of Lambeth Council on the RMO's behalf to support their call for maintaining the architectural and aesthetic integrity of the estate, prevent anti-social behaviour and request support with tree maintenance. I will also be questioning the Government in Parliament regarding their plans for the HM Prison Brixton site. Brixton Prison neighbours Blenheim Gardens and the RMO would like to be central to any future developments, especially as this is an opportunity to build more, much-needed social housing.



## Councillor Surgeries

As part of my visit to Hillside Gardens, I also accompanied local Streatham Hill councillors Liz Atkins and Rezina Chowdhury to their monthly surgery, the first in-person surgery for several months due to the pandemic. It was a pleasure to see our local councillors in action, supporting residents in their ward with concerns about housing and anti-social behaviour. I was also struck by the operation that was going on in the background of the surgery, which took place in the Norwood and Brixton Foodbank at St. Margaret the Queen Church Streatham. This was a stark reminder of how Covid-19 has affected our communities and how crucial these volunteers are in serving those who are in crisis. support from sectors that are unable to go back to business.



# Visiting Schools in Streatham



One of things that brings me genuine joy as an MP is talking to young people who have a keen interest in politics. Anyone who suggests that young people are not interested in or do not care about politics, haven't met the young people in our constituency. I regularly receive letters from young children concerned with issues such as climate change or youth services, and when I visit schools in the constituency, I am asked about matters that many would assume are of no interest to children.

This past month, I've visited several schools, both in-person and via Zoom. I met with pupils from Fenstanton and Glenbrook primary school to answer several questions from the students. During this meeting, the students were keen to put forward ideas for improving their local parks, something which was echoed by pupils from Streatham Wells Primary school, who pointed out that there are no skate parks in the Streatham constituency, something that should surely be rectified. I've written to the Council on their behalf to explore this idea further.

On Living Streets week, I joined Richard Atkins Primary to walk to school. We've seen reductions in air pollution in recent times but we have a long way to go. I hope more families in Streatham will follow in the footsteps of our schools on Living Streets Week and give walking to school a go.

I also met with the school council from Woodmansterne Primary and Secondary Schools where I dropped off some more laptops for students who have no access to a computer at home, with Councillor John Kazantzis.

## Down's South London charity walk

I joined Zephy (four) and Orla (three) on Rush Common as part of their ongoing fundraising efforts for Down's South London. They're hoping to raise up to £35,000 for the charity by walking, crawling, running, scooting, cycling and swimming, 300 miles to cover the equivalent distance from Land's End to Peckham in South London, where their therapy is based. The charity faces a £50,000 shortfall this year due to the impact of the pandemic. These children have already managed to raise £26,000 for the charity they love at an incredibly challenging time. I'm with them every step of the way and encourage everyone to get behind their campaign.



# Getting Devices to Streatham's Schools

## Holy Trinity Primary School

I delivered ten tablets to Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School (My old primary school) as part of my ongoing efforts to get devices to the most disadvantage students in our community and address the digital divide locally. I want to express huge gratitude to staff in Streatham Schools and across the UK who have been hit hard by funding cuts but have worked tirelessly to support pupils returning to school after missing months of education.



Since the onset of the pandemic, thanks to the generosity of our community, I've been able to make donations to Jubilee, Richard Atkins and Sunnyhill Primary Schools. I am delighted to have been able to work together with school management and teachers to get some of our most disadvantaged pupils the devices they need to carry on learning. This is only one part of supporting school management and teachers who now need the Government to step up and provide adequate testing, further guidance for schools on being COVID-secure. No child should be left behind as a result of further government incompetence.



This pandemic has not only revealed underlying fractures in our society, it has also further exacerbated digital exclusion. When schools have no safe option but to close, disadvantaged children who don't have access to a device and internet literally do not have access to an education. With household finances hit by COVID-19 and our schools still struggling for funding, hundreds of thousands of children in poorer households cannot access distance learning. To support local schools during the COVID-19 disruption I will be fundraising to get more laptops and tablets for all students who do not have access to one at home.

If you have any laptops to donate, please [get in touch with my office.](#)

# In Parliament

The past two months saw the return of Parliament, with MPs coming back in to vote in-person. This can only be described as reckless, discriminatory and a colossal waste of time when MPs should be using every spare moment to support constituents during this ongoing pandemic – not queuing for 45 minutes every time there is a vote.

Still more reckless has been the government's all-out assault on international law these past two months, bringing forwards several pieces of legislation with dangerous consequences for human rights, civil liberties and the rule of law.

## Black History Month

October is Black History Month in the UK! This is an opportunity to reflect and celebrate the contributions Black people have made in the UK and globally. Our constituency is well known for its long history of activism and community which has played an essential part in Black British history. That is why I believe it is so important to give a complete picture of British history which both confronts Britain's colonial history and the progressive strides made by Black Britons to achieve racial equality.

I was proud to join Labour parliamentarians as part of the Black History Month debate secured by Abena Opong-Asare MP on the need to reform our curriculum. In my speech, I reflected on my time at school where I never learnt about Black History and how much of my learning came from frequent visits to the Brixton library. Even today, many young people are being robbed of the opportunity to see a complete picture of British History.

Confronting the history of slavery and empire is not about past recrimination. We need to address our shameful past and shameful present in order to look to a future of racial equality. Nobody is born racist but if we are going to end racism, we have to be willing to confront racism past and present to inform and inspire the next generation. We must teach Black history in schools this month and every month.



You can watch my full debate contribution over on [Facebook](#)

I also contributed Black History Month articles to [Black History Month Magazine](#) and [Labour List](#)

## EDMs

I have tabled several EDMs, including an EDM calling on the Government to condemn Poland's President Duda and the anti-LGBTQ+ rhetoric used during his election campaign, an EDM calling for the Government to increase funding charities that conduct medical research and an EDM that called on the Government to introduce further protections against recurring payments from retailers. I have also signed several EDMs on a variety of issues this, all of which you can view on the Parliament website: <https://members.parliament.uk/member/4764/earlydaymotions>

# Bills before Parliament

## Internal Market Bill

Over the past two months, the Tories have been attempting to ram their ridiculous Internal Market's Bill through Parliament. This Bill offers further confirmation (if you needed it) that the Government is lurching towards a disastrous No-Deal Brexit which breaches international law, threatens the union and lowers the UK's global standing. At a time of economic recession, mass

redundancy and public health crisis, it paves the way for a monumental act of self-destruction which will leave people in Streatham and across the UK worse-off. I spoke against the Bill and have voted against it at every given opportunity. Any reasonable person would think that a Bill that has literally been declared as illegal would not pass through Parliament.



## Coronavirus Act

As we know, the Coronavirus Act gives the Government exceptional powers to enable them to manage the outbreak of the virus. When the Bill was first presented, the Conservatives wished for its first review to take place two years after its implementation. Labour argued that two years was far too long to provide the Government with such exceptional powers and pushed to have a review of the Bill within six months of its implementation.

I had serious concerns about the way the Bill reduced legal social care duties and safeguards, by allowing local authorities to apply "easements". This weakens protections for those in need of care and even leaves some without care altogether. In addition, I opposed giving the police powers to detain those they deem "potentially infectious" under Section 51 and Schedule 21 of the Act. Human rights and anti-racist campaigners have argued that the power to prosecute people under Schedule 21 has been used in discriminatory ways, particularly against Black, Asian and minority ethnic people (BAME). For those reasons, I supported amendments to the Act that would take those concerns into consideration during the renewal process.

On September 29th the Coronavirus Act came back before Parliament for consideration of its renewal. I supported amendments which would have led to greater scrutiny of the Government's plans but unfortunately, these were not selected for debates or votes in Parliament, and the Bill was renewed. However, the level of support for amendments did lead the Government to concede that Parliament will in future scrutinise and vote on Government regulations relating to COVID-19. While this is not good enough, I believe this is an important step towards giving Parliament greater powers to try and change the course of the Government's response.

## Overseas Operations Bill

In its current form, the Overseas Operations Bill effectively decriminalises torture, violates essential rule of law principles such as judicial and prosecutorial independence, and defies international human rights law. I could never, in good conscience, remain silent on a Bill that I wholeheartedly disagree with, and as such, myself and several Labour colleagues voted against it. The Tories introduced this Bill under the guise of patriotism and protecting the troops. If allowing those who represent the UK overseas to commit acts of torture and violate international human rights without consequence is patriotism, then I want no part of it.

I wrote about the dangers of the Overseas Operations Bill for [Labour List](#)

## Agriculture Bill

I wholeheartedly agree that we cannot tackle the climate emergency and reach net-zero emissions without radically transforming agriculture. The Bill at its Third Reading failed to include legal guarantees that animal welfare, food standards and environmental protections would not be undercut in any post-Brexit trade deal the USA. I was pleased to support Lords amendments to strengthen environmental protection, food safety regulations and animal welfare law. These would have upheld British food and animal welfare to a high standard in future trade deals, but were unfortunately rejected by the Government when the Bill came back to the Commons.

## Covert Human Intelligence Sources (Criminal Conduct) Bill

The Third Reading of the Covert Human Intelligence Bill, otherwise known as the SpyCops Bill was rushed through parliament in an attempt to wrest key scrutiny powers away from the judiciary, place British authorities beyond the law, and squash dissent. This Bill was brought forwards even as we await to hear from the Pitchford Inquiry – an inquiry commissioned after several allegations were made about the activities of undercover units, some of which had revealed that police had spied on campaigners fighting for justice for Stephen Lawrence.

I tabled several amendments to this Bill, which explicitly removed trade unions and blacklisting activity from the powers in the Bill and protected our diverse communities. Unfortunately, the Bill was voted through by this Government and my amendments were voted down. This is deeply alarming and as the Bill goes to the House of Lords, I will continue to stand with trade unions and victims of past undercover operations raise concerns about this legislation.

I explained exactly why the SpyCops Bill is so dangerous on [Left Foot Forward](#)

## Immigration and Social Security Coordination Bill

In October, the Lords Amendments to the Immigration and Social Security Coordination (EU Withdrawal) Bill were debated in the House of Commons. This Bill is intended to give the Tories sweeping powers to change immigration laws without scrutiny and extend the ‘hostile environment’ policy which led to the Windrush scandal. I could not support this and, along with my colleagues, tried at every step to oppose and reform this Bill. Although the Bill passed its final stages in the House of Commons on June 30th the Lords voted to make significant changes.

This included allowing unaccompanied child refugees to join their family in the UK, the right to a family life independent of the Minimum Income Requirement; securing a statutory report on the impact on the social care sector; ensuring the protection of European children in care in the UK, securing their right to settled status and introducing limits and other protections to Europeans in immigration detention centres. I supported every one of these amendments and spoke in the House to reiterate my support. Unfortunately, the Government voted them down, with worrying consequences.

## Better Broadband for Streatham

Since becoming an MP in December, I have consistently received emails from constituents who are having trouble with their home Wi-Fi connection. Towards the start of my tenure, I contacted the then Secretary of State for Digital Culture, Media and Sport, Nicky Morgan MP, who pointed to the Universal Service Obligation- (USO) as the solution to the problem. However, this initiative is deeply inadequate, and much more must be done. This is why I tabled an EDM on the issue, calling for the Government to increase funding available so that no one is made to pay the fees of building a new broadband network. I am pleased to see that MPs across the House have signed this EDM so far and hope that many more will do so.

## An emergency Universal Basic Income (UBI)



The Petitions Committee has now resumed petition debates and I was pleased to participate in the first one on support for households during COVID-19, calling on the Government to introduce a Universal Basic Income.

The pandemic has been financially difficult on everyone, but the reality is that the current Government support schemes simply aren't good enough.

A global pandemic is an unprecedented situation, bringing unprecedented problems. That's why I've argued for the introduction of a Universal Basic Income to give everyone the help they need.

Read my latest [South London Press](#) column outlining the case for a UBI

## Women & Equalities Select Committee update

The Women and Equalities Select Committee has resumed our inquiry into body image and as well as our inquiry into the unequal impacts of COVID-19. I was pleased to be able to raise concerns regarding the impact of the Ofqual algorithm on BAME students and their university prospects during the one-off inquiry into the impact of COVID-19 on children's inquiry.

In our evidence session for our inquiry into body image, I raised the issue of face changing apps on social media. Whilst these apps are quite damaging in the way they perpetuate gender norms, they are also slightly more sinister in that they reinforce Eurocentric definitions of beauty. For those who have tried these apps, you may find that they make your cheeks slimmer, your eyes bigger and more sinisterly, your skin lighter. These apps can be deeply damaging for those experiencing issues with their self-image and I am glad that we were able to discuss it in our committee session.

Though both inquiries are still ongoing, we are beginning to publish some of our reports, and you can view the interim report on Coronavirus, disability and access to services [here](#).

## British Sign Language EDM



The 23rd of September marks International Sign Language Day, an annual day of recognition to support and protect the linguistic identity and cultural diversity of all deaf people and other sign language users.

There are 11 million people in the UK who are deaf or hard of hearing and this shouldn't be an impediment to communication. Ahead of International Sign Language Day, I was proud to table an EDM calling for the Government to commit to teaching British Sign Language in schools from Key Stage one through to Key Stage three and also so look to introduce a GCSE in the subject.

The Government must also commit to providing sign language interpretation for its daily COVID-19 briefings to ensure those with hearing difficulties aren't left out of the loop on the latest information.

# Campaigns

## Women Connected - Labour Virtual Conference

I chaired a digital rally on Black Lives Matter and overcoming racial inequality with fellow Labour MPs Diane Abbott, Kate Osamor, Chi Onwurah, Unite the Union's Susan Matthews, and Councillor Jackie Taylor. This was an opportunity to join 5 amazing black women to discuss the importance of the Black Lives Matter Movement and why we need to put racial justice at the heart of policymaking. Since elected I have been very vocal and marched alongside constituents demanding for an end to violence and injustice here in the UK and across the globe.

### Don't Zap the Zip



Young people have been robbed by the Tories time and time again and now they are trying to use the pandemic as a smokescreen to end free bus travel and reduced train fares for under-18s. We know this will be disastrous for families who are already struggling. I signed an open letter and wrote to Grant Shapps MP to outline widely held concerns about the suspension of free and reduced-fare transport for under 18s. In addition to this, I am a signatory for Early Day Motion (EDM) #755 which calls on the government to drop these proposed changes to transport for young people.

I was proud to join young people and Lambeth Councillors on September 18th as part of the Don't Zap the Zip campaign. Young people and children have been hit harder than anyone by this pandemic. We cannot stand idly by while the Tories attempt to downgrade their futures.

### Orange Outrage



I joined aviation workers on College Green outside Parliament to highlight corporate attempts to slash jobs, pay and working conditions, aided and abetted by the Conservatives. Some unscrupulous companies have been using the current crisis as a smokescreen for rolling back previous agreements with their workforce, in some cases undoing settlements that took workers and unions years to negotiate. The most glaring examples of this are EasyJet and British Airways. But workers are fighting back with trade unions seeing a surge in membership.

With the aviation sector on its knees, the Government must course-correct and take action to protect jobs in the industry in the short-term and secure a long-term just transition. Any further government financial support for big companies must be conditional on support for jobs, a pause on dividends and compliance with environmental targets.

More coverage of the Don't Zap the Zip campaign on [Brixton Blog](#)

## Stand up to Racism Refugee Solidarity Rally

In a national day of action, I expressed my solidarity with Stand Up to Racism's national day of action. At such a perilous time for refugees and asylum seekers who have fled war-torn countries like the Middle-East and North Africa, it is shameful that these people have had to risk their lives to find safe haven in France and the UK. What is more, the recent events of channel crossings have sparked a rise in far-right groups attempting to interfere with rescue boats of asylum seekers docking safely in Kent and Dover.

I want to live in a country where we welcome the dispossessed and most vulnerable; where we treat them with dignity, respect and compassion. And even though the Government is set on blocking Channel boat migrants and branding asylum seekers as 'illegal immigrants', it was crucial for me, along with supporters, to express and show what kind of society I wanted to live in as a resident MP for Streatham.



## Panto Parade

Towards the end of the month, I joined creative workers in Parliament Square ahead of Prime Minister's Questions to highlight the plight of workers in the arts and the creative industries. The impact of COVID-19 on the people who work in the performing arts and entertainment industry has been devastating.

Many in this industry make their living on a freelance basis and have been left in dire straits by the limited support offered to the self-employed. The decision to cap the grant at 20% of average monthly income pales in comparison to the Job Retention Scheme (JRS) which offers 77% of an employed persons income.

With no new support for the three million who didn't even qualify for income support in the Chancellor's statement last week, it's imperative that we must keep fighting for theatre and creative industries workers.

I have signed Early Day Motion (EDM) #545 calling for Government support for the UK's cultural and creative industries as well as the introduction of a Cultural Sector Hardship Relief Fund to take invest in grassroots theatre, arts centres, community pubs, and other cultural spaces in our communities. I will continue to raise this matter in Parliament when the opportunity arises. Failing to act is not an option. The show must go on.



## End SARS

On the 21st October, I stood in solidarity with End SARS protestors in Parliament Square alongside other Labour MPs. Just the evening before, the Nigerian military opened fire on peaceful protestors at Lekki toll gate in Lagos. The Nigerian Government must investigate these reports transparently and thoroughly and put an end to the ongoing brutality inflicted on civilians by the Special Anti-Robbery Squad and other state actors.

## CWU Union Learning Fund

On the 20th October, I spoke at the Facebook live event organised by the Communications Workers Union about the recent Government announcements to cut the £12 million Union Learning Fund. This will not only have a detrimental impact on work opportunities but will take away career-relevant training for over 200,000 workers across the UK. At a time when unemployment is expected to soar, this is another poor decision by the Government which will be devastating for workers.

## Tackling food waste to feed the hungry

I visited FareShare's regional warehouse, to see first-hand how they are getting food to charities and community groups in our constituency. I was subsequently able to raise the great work they do in Ian Byrne MP's 'Right to Food in Legislation' debate in the Westminster Hall. There is more than enough food in this country to feed everyone, given all the waste we have and FareShare are taking an admirable step in the right direction by diverting this waste to where it is most needed. At a time when the Government has refused point-blank to fund free school meals for children, their work could not be more important.

## Excluded UK zoom - with constituents

As a proud member of the Excluded UK's All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG), I have been meeting with constituents in this campaign group on a weekly basis who have been excluded from the Government's financial support packages, to discuss how I may further support them during this crisis. Self-employed and creative industry workers play a vital role in the vibrant culture of our constituency and whilst Government support packages have been a lifeline for some, many others have been completely ignored by the Government and left with no financial help during this crisis.

## No Deal Brexit zoom - with constituents

On the 7th October, I held a virtual meeting with several of my constituents who expressed to me the concerns they had regarding a No Deal Brexit and the impact this would have on EU citizen's rights, supply of medicines and businesses, as well as the overall financial cost of preparing for a No Deal. With the Government intent on breaking international law in their ongoing negotiations with the EU, it was crucial for me to listen to my constituents and relay these concerns to both our local and national leaders within the Labour Party.





## Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill

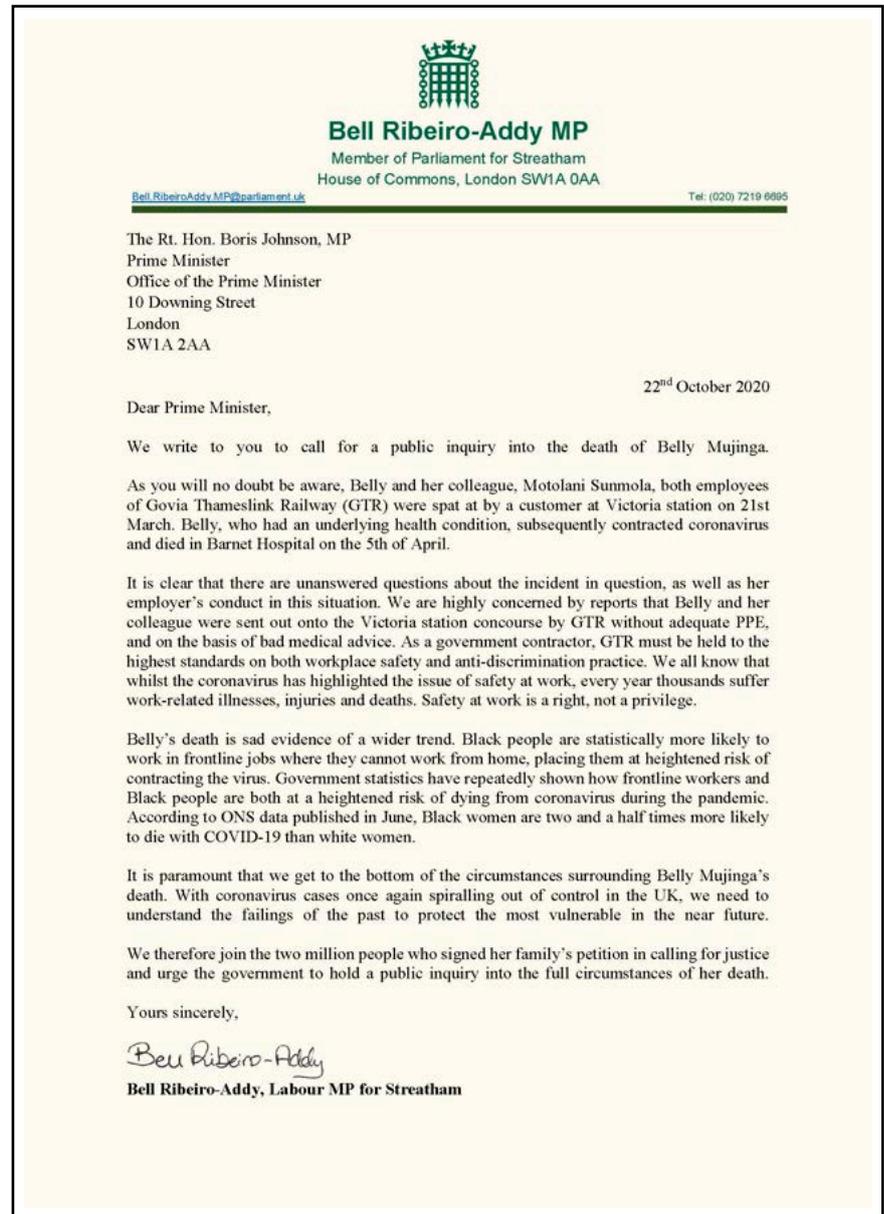
We must force the climate emergency up the political agenda, to do anything less would be negligent and foolish. With climate breakdown becoming more visible it is important we push ahead with our transformed Green Industrial Revolution which was a prominent feature of our 2019 General Election manifesto.

I was happy to sign EDM #832: Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill to ensure the UK commits to real climate leadership ahead of co-hosting the 26th UN Climate Change Conference in 2021.

The government need to do so much more to tackle climate change. To keep everyone safe we need faster action – that's why I have been campaigning for a Green New Deal which would see much bigger investment in renewable energy and reducing our carbon emissions.

## Public Inquiry into the death of Belly Mujinga

On the 20th October, I wrote to the Prime Minister along with 50 other MPs and Peers, calling for a public inquiry into the death of Belly Mujinga. With over 2 million people also signing the petition for an inquiry, it is paramount that we get to the bottom of the circumstances surrounding Belly's death. With coronavirus cases once again spiralling out of control in the UK, we need to understand the failings of the past to protect the most vulnerable in the future.



## British Overseas Territories Campaign

On the 8th October, I was happy to lend my support to the British Overseas Territories campaign, to put pressure on the Government to allow children born outside of marriage before 1st July 2006, to British Overseas Territories ("BOT") fathers to claim British Citizenship by their father's descent. It was a pleasure to hear from Trent and Dave Varney, where they discussed and shared how to bring forward legislation to the house to fix this ongoing gender, birth status & parents' marital status discrimination being endured. With Black BOT descendants disproportionately being excluded from citizenship, the Home Office promised to address this back in 2014, but have yet to take any action.

# It was always bound to end in tiers

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Over the past few weeks, we have seen a steep rise in COVID-19 cases across the UK. Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales have all introduced stricter restrictions to curb the rising cases and we saw several local lockdowns enforced across England. Meanwhile in London, the number of cases rose rapidly, and the Government dithered and delayed with deciding on whether to introduce stricter measures nationally.

We eventually had a decision from the Government to introduce a three-tiered system of local lockdowns, not that this made the situation any clearer. At the time of its introduction, I was very vocal about the fact that the system would not work and was far too confusing.

Fast-forward two weeks and with England heading back into full lockdown, it looks like the Government finally agrees. The devolved nations took drastic action to reduce their spiralling case rates by introducing lockdowns. Meanwhile, we were made to wait around for new announcements on which city would be placed into a new tier.

The lockdown comes too late again and comes with too little support once again. If there's one thing this crisis proves, it's that we must reject the false dichotomy between saving lives and protecting the economy and insist on putting public health at the forefront of our response. That means insisting on help for all who need it.

Stay safe and stay well.

In solidarity,

*Bell Ribeiro-Addy*

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