



Andrew Dismore Member of Parliament for Hendon

Constituency Report # 11
21st December 2006– 24th January 2007

May I firstly wish you a happy and prosperous New Year!

House of Commons and Westminster

The first week back after the Christmas recess was very hectic indeed!

Firstly, my “10 minute rule” private member’s Bill came up – the **Human Rights Act (Interpretation) Bill**, which aims to ensure the protections of the Human Rights Act include those who use the services that are effectively public services, but provided by the private sector. This was the original intention of the Human Rights Act, but court decisions have cast doubt on this: my Bill will clarify the position. Although a Conservative MP spoke against it, the Bill was not pushed to a vote, and goes forward to the second reading, in June. You can read my speech proposing the Bill, just [click here](#).

I succeeded in the ballot for **Prime Minister’s Questions**, when I raised the poor performance of Barnet Council, in applying for **anti-social behaviour orders**. For my exchange with the Prime Minister [click here](#).

I also secured the Speaker’s agreement to a full debate on **Cyprus**, which I led. For my speech on the debate [click here](#).

I was in Parliament, as many constituents had requested, for the **Sustainable Communities Bill** second reading. This is another private member’s Bill. I made a number of interventions during the debate. The aims of the Bill are entirely laudable, but I am concerned about the potential cost of the bureaucracy it will create to administer it, falling on both the Council Tax payer and central government funds alike. Also there are insufficient safeguards to protect the position of vulnerable minority interests, as opposed to “those who shout the loudest”.

Nevertheless, the Bill has merits, and despite the debate being brought to a premature close by the Bill’s promoter (which I opposed, with at least 45 minutes left – I never got to make my speech!), the Bill was given an unopposed second

reading and proceeds to committee stage, where I hope some of its shortcomings can be ironed out. For the second reading debate [click here](#).

The **Joint Select Committee on Human Rights (JCHR)**, which I chair, is continuing its inquiry into the treatment of **asylum seekers**. We called to give evidence to us, the editors of national newspapers and the Press Complaints Commission, to discuss with us how asylum issues are reported. The transcript of the hearing can be seen on the committee's website [here](#).

we also held a private meeting with **Lord Carlile**, the independent reviewer of the operation of the Terrorism Act; and we visited **Yarl's Wood immigration removal centre**, where failed asylum seekers (single women, families with children) and other immigration detainees are held, pending their removal from the UK.

We also had some good news. In our report on **people trafficking**, last autumn, we recommended the Government should sign up to the European Convention against People Trafficking. I am pleased to say the Prime Minister has just written to me, praising my campaign about this issue, and agreeing to this recommendation. This means that we will both prosecute the traffickers more effectively, and also have a much more supportive approach to the victims of this modern day slave trade.

As Chair of the London Group of Labour MP's, I met with the **Environment Secretary David Miliband MP**, to discuss the **Greater London Authority Bill**, presently going through Parliament, with particular reference to its provisions (or lack of them) on disposal of waste.

The London Group also met with **Polish community leaders**, to discuss how we can engage, as individual MPs, with Polish people living in our constituencies.

I hosted one of my meetings for **Hendon's head teachers** at the Commons, which was an opportunity for me to discuss education issues in the constituency, and to hear from them at first hand, about any concerns. I also organised, as guest speaker, **Sports Minister Richard Caborn MP**, to talk about opportunities for school sports generated around the Olympics; and for the **British Library** education department to make a presentation on their facilities for school visits.

I joined the lobby organised by the campaign group, mainly people from India, over the retrospective changes to the **Highly Skilled Migrant Programme**, which put them at a serious disadvantage. I attended the annual dinner of the **Indo-British Parliamentary Group**, addressed by the **Indian High Commissioner**.

I met with various campaign groups, over the issue of the exclusion of **deaths in custody** from the **Corporate Manslaughter Bill** – see previous reports for the detail – to discuss what we can do to raise this issue in the House of Lords, where the Bill is currently under consideration.

I attended the lobbies organised by the **British Heart Foundation**, the **Zionist Federation**, **Remploy workers**, and chaired a meeting of the **Fire Brigades Union** parliamentary group.

I met with the new Foreign Office official responsible for the **Cyprus desk**, to brief

her; and with the **Cyprus High Commissioner**, at a Friends of Cyprus meeting.

I was also pleased to host a “tea and tour” for the winners of my Christmas and Chanukah card design competitions, with their families.

I have sponsored and signed the usual wide range of **Early Day Motions**, to see them [click here](#).

To see my written **Parliamentary questions** use the [Parliamentary Search Engine](#), which you can use to see them all, or just those that you have a particular interest in.

Constituency

I seemed to spend most of the holiday period updating my report on **pensions, law and order, health and international development** – each of which was two or three days solid research and writing! If you would like copies of any of these, just [email me](#) saying, which one you would like.

I am also holding a series of **‘report back’ meetings** linked to the reports. They all at my constituency office, St George’s Lodge, 79 The Burroughs, [map here](#) and will be held at the following times:

THEME	DATE	TIME	RSVP NOW
Pensions	Sunday 28 th January	10:45am- 12.15 pm	HERE
Law and Order	Sunday 28 th January	3:00- 4:30pm	HERE
Health	Sunday 4 th February	2:00- 3:30 pm	HERE
International Development	Thursday 1 st February	7:30- 9:00 pm	HERE

If you would like to attend ALL the meetings, please RSVP [HERE](#) – space is limited, so confirmation of attendance is requested.

I am continuing my consultation throughout the constituency, as to whether we should renew the **Trident** nuclear defence system, a decision on which we will have to vote in the Spring. If you’d like to participate and haven’t received the response questionnaire, please [email me](#).

I am also ‘out and about’, at weekends, with my Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning **doorstep work**, this month calling on residents mainly in the **Burnt Oak** area.

I met with the **Metropolitan Police Borough Commander** and his new officers, to discuss policing in the constituency: much of his briefing is reproduced in my law and order report (see above).

I visited the **National Newspaper Library** in Colindale, to meet staff and hear the

British library's lobby for resources.

I gave out 'A-level' certificates, at **Copthall School's** 6th Form achievement evening; and spoke to English language students at **Barnet College**.

I attended **Hendon Area Forum**.

I met with the campaigners over the redevelopment of **Oriental City**, the Chinese restaurant and shopping complex just over the Edgware Road, in Brent. I am concerned about how they are being treated and I am lobbying on their behalf.

I spoke at the retirement for **Edgware United Synagogue** Rabbi Rabinowitz, who is emigrating to Israel. He has been a good friend and enormously helpful to me, over the years I have been MP.

I held a 'report back' meeting on **Cyprus**, at my constituency office.

Last but by no means least, I met with Barnet Council's **electoral registration officer**. I am concerned about two issues. Firstly, the low level of registration in Barnet, compared to other boroughs. Secondly, how Barnet intends to implement the new postal vote rules. From the start of this year, all existing postal votes are being cancelled. Those who wish for a postal vote will need to reapply on the new forms, which Barnet must produce and send to existing postal voters. Needless to say while other Councils like Westminster, (Conservative controlled, so not a party political point) have sent out the letters and forms, Barnet haven't! If you'd like to be registered for a postal vote please [click here](#), and when Barnet gets its act together, I will report back to you further!

Further Afield

I was the only MP from the whole of London, to attend the London Assembly's **Holocaust Memorial Day** event, at City Hall – to be fair to the others, it was held at a time that clashed with the committee stage debate on the Greater London Authority Bill (see above), so many colleagues were tied down there.

I was also guest speaker at Westminster North Labour Party's monthly meeting, on the subject of **Corporate Manslaughter**, on which, after much campaigning, I am now something of an expert!

Media

I featured in the **Evening Standard**, over the deaths in custody issue; and was quoted in **The Times**, on the Highly Skilled Migrant rule changes.

I was interviewed for **Today in Parliament** on Radio 4, over the Human Rights Committee hearings with newspaper editors, and our session was directly reported on **Today and Yesterday in Parliament**. It was also reported in the **Independent** and

the **Daily Express**.

The full range of press releases I have issued to the local and specialist press can be accessed by [clicking here](#).

Support

In response to these monthly updates, quite a few people have responded, asking how they can get involved in my campaigning work, or make a donation to support the costs of what I do, or join the Labour Party. If you are interested in any of these please [click here](#) and I'll get back to you, on how you can help!

I would be very interested to hear any feedback on the issues raised in this report. I have now started a series of occasional meetings for constituents, on Sunday afternoons, to receive feedback, both from these reports and more generally on what is going on in and around the constituency. Please let me know if you would like to have invitations to such events, which will be held at my constituency office next to the Town Hall in Hendon. To register your interest, email me with your name and address; just [click here](#).

I hope that you have found this report of interest, and if you would like to receive my specific subject based reports just [click here](#). If you have any comments, please do not hesitate to let me know by emailing me at updates@hendonlabourparty.com.

If you have any friends or neighbours in Hendon who might be interested in this report, please feel free to send it to them. If they would like to be added to my email list please ask them to email updates@hendonlabourparty.com.

Best wishes,

Yours sincerely,



Andrew Dismore
Member of Parliament for Hendon

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