



TULIP SIDDIQ MP

APRIL NEWSLETTER



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I know many of my constituents are still struggling with the cost of living as prices soar and inflation continues to rise. This month, thousands of households across my constituency will have seen their bills hiked as council tax, energy bills and broadband costs rise. I have been doing everything I can to support those struggling, including calling on the Chancellor to introduce a proper windfall tax to stop the energy price cap from rising. Whilst I am pleased that the Chancellor listened to these calls and that the Energy Price Guarantee will remain at £2500 a year for a typical household, I will continue to call on the Government to provide more support for those finding it difficult to make ends meet and to introduce a proper windfall tax to pay for it.

Anyone who has found themselves needing to use the health service recently will know that it is also struggling to cope, with waiting times at a record high, patients waiting hours for ambulances, A&E departments overstretched, and more than seven million people waiting for treatment. This month we have seen another round of industrial action by junior doctors, with nurses also due to go on strike this weekend. I know that many workers feel that they have no choice but to strike, as they are pushed to the brink and services are stretched to breaking point. I will continue to stand up for our public sector and the hard-working NHS staff and call on the Government to listen to our struggling workers, so that we can fix the problems of recruitment and retention in the NHS and start to deliver the care people deserve.

On a more cheerful note, I've been lucky enough to meet lots of my young constituents recently, visiting politics students at University College School in Hampstead and hosting young people from UCL Academy in Parliament. I've really enjoyed speaking to students about a range of topics from politics and the role of an MP, to the progression of women in sport. I've also been busy outside of Parliament, including supporting women in literature and judging this year's Women's Prize for Fiction alongside Bella Mackie, Louise Minchin, Rachel Joyce and Irenosen Okojie. I was also lucky to visit the Roundhouse to watch a brilliant performance by Dave Okumu and I was really impressed by the work Roundhouse CEO Marcus Davey is doing there to encourage creativity in the community. Read on to hear more about my work and engagements as the Member of Parliament for Hampstead and Kilburn and as Labour's Shadow Economic Secretary to the Treasury.

I know this month was full of celebrations for many of my constituents as Easter, Passover, and Ramadan all happened around the same time this year. I hope everyone who celebrated Easter had a joyful Sunday with family, loved ones and lots of Easter eggs! I would also like to wish Muslims in Hampstead and Kilburn and beyond Eid Mubarak as they mark the end of Ramadan. Finally, Chag Pesach Sameach to all of my constituents who celebrated Passover this month.

With best wishes,

Tulip Siddiq MP

Member of Parliament for Hampstead and Kilburn

Shadow Economic Secretary to the Treasury and City Minister

Speaking in Parliament about the infected blood scandal

One of my constituents sadly contracted hepatitis C from a botched blood bag in the 1980s. She died last year, 7 weeks before interim compensation was paid and her daughter and carer has been left with nothing. She wrote to me last year about how angry she was that the Government had grudgingly decided to pay interim compensation after her mother had died.

In addition to all the horrors that my constituent and her mother went through, the daughter is not eligible for compensation as she is not a bereaved partner. This month the Government gave a statement in *Parliament* on the Infected Blood Inquiry and I got to [ask](#) the Minister if he thought this was fair. Unfortunately, my constituent is just one of thousands of those affected by the appalling scandal and the failure over many years to deliver justice.



Welcoming the Camden Eat Club to Parliament

It was a pleasure to host young people from UCL Academy in Parliament for a great discussion over a delicious tea organised by the Camden-based charities Eat Club and the Winch.

I met some incredibly bright, young women and we got the opportunity to speak about the progression of women in sport and some of the barriers to sport they have faced themselves.

We all agreed on the importance of living a healthy lifestyle by eating good food and playing sports! The cost-of-living crisis has plunged thousands of families into food poverty and I know from my time as Shadow Children's Minister just how important it is that children don't go to school hungry, which is why I called on the Government to provide free school meals during both term time and school holidays.



Supporting the UK FinTech sector

As Shadow City Minister, I have been championing the UK FinTech sector and I was delighted to give the keynote speech at Innovate Finance's Global Summit 2023, where I got to meet some incredible people shaking up the financial services sector. It was great to meet Innovate Finance's inspirational Chair Louise Smith and Earthchain UK, a climate action platform who are utilising blockchain tech in the fight against climate change.

As I set out in my speech, Labour has ambitious plans for the FinTech sector. Through embracing new technologies, and boosting skills and investment, we will ensure that the UK is the best country in the world to start and grow a FinTech.

I also visited the Wise office in Shoreditch and we had a useful discussion about the hidden cost of sending money abroad and how protected groups are disproportionately affected. A Labour government would work hard to make finance work better for everyone.



Visiting Spring Grove Care Home

I was delighted to visit the Spring Grove Care Home in my constituency to talk to residents about my work as their MP. They asked some really insightful and interesting questions and I had some lovely conversations with residents.

I would also like to take this opportunity to say thank you to the wonderful staff for all the great work they do to make Spring Grove such a warm and welcoming place.

I know it has been a very difficult time for many pensioners and they have been amongst the hardest hit by this devastating cost of living crisis. I will always stand up for my constituents who have been let down by the broken system of social security in this country and this is why I've been pushing the Government to maintain the triple lock and increase the State Pension together with pensioner benefits such as Pension Credit.



Speaking to local school students

I visited University College School in Hampstead and I really enjoyed speaking to students about politics, the role of an MP and the leadership of the Labour Party. I was pleased to see so many bright students engaging and asking questions about politics and there were some excellent questions about my day-to-day life as an MP and my duties in the Shadow Treasury team. I look forward to visiting more of our brilliant schools!

Parliament also has an excellent educational programme on offer and my office can help arrange tours and lessons at the Parliamentary Education Centre. This is a great opportunity to engage students with Parliament by exploring its role and how they can get involved. If you are a local parent or teacher, please do get in touch and I can help to arrange this as I am always keen to speak at local schools.



Calling out Government vanity projects

I've been calling for months for Rishi Sunak to drop his plan for a Government non-fungible token – unique digital collectables, like drawings or music, that exist on blockchain technology – and now he's finally listened! I was one of the first to criticize this vanity project and strongly opposed the continuance of this unsustainable fad and as I told the [Guardian](#), I am pleased that the Royal Mint finally rejected the crypto gimmick.

As I say [here](#), the Government shouldn't have been wasting taxpayers' money on this in the first place during a cost-of-living crisis. Under the Tories, millions of people's savings have been put at risk by the collapse of cryptocurrencies and the surge in scams. We need a new approach that considers the positive uses of blockchain technologies.



Holding the Home Office to account on missing asylum-seeking children

Back in January, I asked Rishi Sunak at PMQs why on earth 200 asylum-seeking children were missing from Home Office-run hotels. Three months on, the Government has finally admitted [here](#) in response to a Parliamentary Question that I tabled that almost 200 children are still missing.

When I raised the issue with the Prime Minister he assured me that action was being taken to find the children, so it is shameful that they haven't been located. As I say [here](#), these vulnerable children are at high risk of exploitation by criminal gangs and Ministers must act now to stop these children being exploited.



Foreign Affairs Committee Report on Hostage Taking

This month the Foreign Affairs Committee published their report on combatting state hostage diplomacy. It confirmed what I've been arguing for years – that Ministers have suppressed state hostage cases, causing victims like my constituent Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe needless suffering. As Nazanin's MP, I submitted evidence to the Committee on the handling of Nazanin's case and I'm glad to see that the report drew on this.

Vahid Beheshti, a British Iranian journalist and human rights activist, is currently on hunger strike outside the Foreign Office to put pressure on the Government to designate Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) as a terrorist organisation. Nazanin was held hostage in Iran by the IRGC for 6 years, so this month Richard Ratcliffe and I visited Vahid to support his effort to call on the Government to act now and proscribe the IRGC.



Community bulletin

- Local elections are taking place on Thursday 4th May in some parts of the country. While there are no local elections in London, please do let your family and friends in other parts of the country know that from May they will need photo identification to vote at polling stations in local elections in England; UK Parliamentary by-elections and Police and Crime Commissioner elections in England and Wales. From October 2023, this also applies to UK Parliamentary general elections. The full list of accepted ID can be found here: <https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter/voter-id/accepted-forms-photo-id>
- Advice for Renters are an organisation based in Brent that support people living in private rented accommodation. They are currently running a match funding campaign and are looking for donations to help them deliver their new project, the Mobile Advice Centre. The Advice Bus will offer housing, financial and wellbeing advice across several boroughs assisting hard to reach communities, including in Brent. Find out more information and about how to donate here: <https://www.avivacommunityfund.co.uk/p/mobile-advice-centre>
- Kilburn State of Mind are a charity working to address the problems of inequality and isolation in the community by tutoring, offering support and running community events. They will be back in Queens Park bandstand on 1st July between 12pm-5pm with their 'Into the Park' event. This will be their third year running the event and they still have stalls available for anyone that would be interested in selling any crafts or homemade goods at the event. To get in touch, please email Kilburnstateofmind@gmail.com or call 0203 802 3175.