



## GP closure crisis: my meeting with Jeremy Hunt

I'm worried that Islington's GP surgeries may be heading for crisis with 3 practices having announced plans to close.

By changing the funding formula in a way that has disadvantaged practices in deprived, inner London areas, the Tory government has helped create the mess Islington's GP surgeries are in.

In response I have organised a group of London MPs and inner London GPs to meet with the Health Secretary, Jeremy Hunt today.

A large number of my constituents have contacted me to share their concerns about this issue. More worrying still, when I wrote to NHS England about one of the practices earlier this year, I was warned that the resignation of two single-handed GPs is likely to cause further disruption to the provision of these vital services.

GP practices are at the heart of a well-functioning NHS, and as the last five years has shown, patients often face no choice but to go to A&E if they're unable to get an appointment to see their GP, further increasing the strain on our already overburdened hospitals.



I will be asking Jeremy Hunt to review the funding for London GPs and to spend the afternoon with one so that he understands the pressures they are under.

## London Group and Backbench Committee

Yesterday I became Chair of the London Group of Labour MPs. I am also representing backbench MPs to the leadership having been elected to the Backbench Committee.

These positions will allow me to take a leading role in the fight back against the Tory Government changes, which will have such a devastating impact on my constituents and across London.

# Voters Registration and Disenfranchisement

On Thursday 11 June I led a debate in Parliament on “Voter Engagement and the Franchise”, taking on the Tory government for policies that have made it harder for people to register to vote.

I also called for voting rights to be extended to everyone who is settled in the UK, regardless of where they come from. You can read a transcript of the debate and watch the video online on [parliamentlive.tv](http://parliamentlive.tv) or on my Facebook page.

There’s a serious need to improve levels of voter registration and turnout at elections. In Islington South and Finsbury there are still almost 24,000 voting age adults who either could register to vote but haven’t, or would love to register but aren’t allowed to. This second group includes more than 8,000 EU nationals who can vote in local elections, but have no say in who represents them in Parliament. In my view, that is quite wrong.

At a time when there is wide agreement on the need to improve people’s trust in politics and politicians, we should be looking at radical new ways to improve participation in elections. There are many thousands of people in Islington who work hard, pay tax, and are barred from voting simply because of where



With a portrait of Thomas Slingsby Duncombe, MP for Finsbury. Who introduced the People’s Charter, signed by 3.3 million people, to Parliament in 1842.

they come from. Not only do I believe we should we extend voting rights to these groups, we should also have a requirement that everyone who is eligible to vote should be automatically registered.

Worryingly, we have a Tory government which is taking us in the opposite direction – making it harder to register to vote while also unfairly changing the boundaries of MPs’ constituencies to lock in their Parliamentary majority by creating a permanent bias against densely populated urban areas represented by Labour MPs. These proposals would be terrible for Islington.

I hope that the debate helped to raise the profile of these important issues, and I will continue to fight as hard as I can to stop the Tories in their tracks.

## Hungerford Primary School

On Friday 12 June I attended Hungerford Primary School assembly to talk to the pupils about a project called ‘Send your friend to school’, which helps school children here understand the lack of education in some parts of the world. I shall be raising their questions with the Minister.



# What are we fighting for?

Last month I spoke in a Parliamentary debate for the first time since my re-election, with a greatly increased majority.

The question 'what are we fighting for?' came to me at a dinner at the Honourable Artillery Company. I was sitting next to an artillery officer who has the same first name and age as my eldest son. When he said he had not met an MP before, I asked him what his one question to an MP would be. This lad, who is prepared to put his life on the line for us, said, "What are we fighting for?" I said that I did not know.

A few years ago I would have said, "You are fighting for Britain, which has reached a time in its maturity when it is coming to terms with its colonial past. It has a place on the Security Council, is close to America and is part of the European Union. We have close relationships with the Commonwealth and friends across the world. We feel that our role is to promote human rights and international law. We have definitely made mistakes but we are a force for good internationally and we have a strong national identity." I would have said that then, but I do not think we can say it now, and I really do not know where we are going.

The debate followed the Queen's speech, which outlined the government's legislative proposals for the coming term. The Conservative government have proposed scrapping the Human Rights Act, which I warned could mean that some of our fundamental rights are threatened.

There's no doubt the next few years are going to be tough for Islington, with a government that has already pledged to lower the benefit



cap still further 'to reward work' – even though all the evidence from the last two years has shown it's done nothing of the kind.

I'll be working hard every day over the next five years to make sure the Tories know they've got a fight on their hands if they continue to threaten the hard won rights and freedoms – not to mention the livelihoods – of Islington's families.

You can watch my speech on my website at:

<http://www.emilythornberry.com/news/139/17/What-are-we-fighting-for--my-speech-on-human-rights/d,Detail>

## New Members Meeting

On Thursday 11 June I hosted a reception in Parliament for newly signed up members of Islington South and Finsbury Labour Party.

Over 30 were able to join me and discuss how we can lead the fight back against the Tory Government.

I have passed their details onto wards and look forward to seeing them on the doorstep soon.

# My Diary - May/June 2015

## Constituency Work

- Held regular surgeries at the Town Hall and St Luke's Community Centre
- Attended the Mayoral Installation at the Town Hall
- Was updated on progress of Crossrail tunnels beneath Farringdon.
- Attended the unveiling of a plaque to commemorate the North London Synagogue.
- Attended other vents in the constituency, such as Holloway Hullabaloo, and Crumbles Castle.
- Attended the refugee day celebrations at the Town Hall.

## Campaigning

- Hosted a Ward Organisers, and key campaigners dinner.
- Hosted a Thank You Party for all those who helped in the election.
- Hosted and chaired a meeting with Yvette Cooper for leader.
- Met with Leader and Deputy Leader candidates.

## Parliamentary Work

- Had a number of meetings about saving the Human Rights Act

- Held a roundtable from companies from Tech City.
- Spoke during Health Questions about Islington's GP crisis
- Spoke during the Scotland Bill.
- Spoke during the debate on the Queen's Speech
- Held and adjournment debate in Westminster Hall about voter engagements and the franchise.
- Hosted a new members reception.
- Met with Climate Lobbyists about a range of issues.
- Led a group of Labour MPs and Doctors to meet with Health Secretary, Jeremy Hunt

## Media Appearances

- BBC Week in Parliament, local news, Sunday Politics.
- Weekly Huffington Post Blog, Independent

Tom sends out emails each week with details of upcoming campaigning. If you are not receiving these, please email him on: [tom@islingtonlabour.org.uk](mailto:tom@islingtonlabour.org.uk) or call him on 0755 711 5196.

You can also contact the office about campaigning on 0207 607 8373