



Kate Osborne MP
April 2022 Monthly Newsletter

Dear Constituent,

I am writing to you with an update of some of my work throughout the month of April. As always, much of my work goes on behind the scenes so these newsletters give me the opportunity to share some of the highlights from the month – both in the commons, and in the constituency.

In April, Parliament was at recess, so this newsletter includes both my work in the Commons after returning from recess, and many of the constituency visits I was able to attend while away from Parliament.

Contributions in the Commons April

P&O:

With the appalling situation ongoing with P&O Ferries, I asked the minister if the Government plans to bring forward legislation to ensure that other businesses are not able to take advantage of employees in the same way in the future. I also asked if the Government is planning to impose an unlimited fine on P&O. You can see my question and the Ministers response in full [here](#).

Women and Equalities Questions:

There must be an outright ban on all forms of conversion therapy but that is not how the Government see it. I asked the Minister what the Government is doing to ensure there is adequate provisions in place for a full conversion therapy victim support service and what the Government are doing to ensure that no consent loopholes are in the ban – to ensure this disgraceful practice is stopped entirely. You can see my question in full [here](#).

The Government have since revealed that they intend to push forward with a ban on conversion therapy but excluding trans conversion therapy. This is unacceptable and I will continue to push the Government to implement a comprehensive ban of conversion therapy without loopholes and for all. No one should be made to feel that their sexual or gender identity is wrong, and I will continue to support calls for a trans inclusive ban of conversion therapy.

**NO EXCUSE
FOR ABUSE**



#BANCONVERSIONTHERAPY

Health and Social Care questions:

In December, the Department of Health and Social Care promised three urgent actions to tackle the gender health gap: the appointment of a Women's Health Ambassador; legislation to ban hymenoplasty; and the publication of the Women's Health Strategy for England. We are still waiting to find out when these vital actions are actually going to happen, so I put the question to the Minister. You can see my question in full with the Minister's response [here](#).

Westminster Hall

Colombia Debate held by Paula Barker MP (Liverpool, Wavertree)



Despite the historic peace agreement being reached in 2016, Colombia remains a country plagued by high levels of violence, with attacks against trade unionists, community leaders, human rights defenders and often women. I contributed to a Westminster Hall Debate on these issues led by Paula Barker MP and you can see my contribution [here](#) – if you would like to watch the debate in full you can watch it on [ParliamentTV](#)

[here](#).

Recruitment and Retention of Foster Carers

I was able to lead a debate in Westminster Hall on the Recruitment and Retention of foster carers this month. As a foster carer before I became an MP, I was pleased to also be able to host a drop in event for The Fostering Network ahead of the debate which MPs were able to attend ahead of their contributions.



Fostering services and carers have long been under-supported and undervalued. We now need to address these issues to make a real difference to foster carers, people who support them, and most importantly, the children and young people who desperately need and deserve the best from us all.

If you would like to watch the debate in full, including both my opening and closing remarks you can catch up on [ParliamentTV here](#). If you would like to hear my contribution alone, you can watch it via my YouTube channel [here](#).



In the Constituency:

Advice Surgeries:

I have continued to hold regular surgery appointments with constituents where I can offer support and advice with both local, regional, and national issues. I advertise information about my surgeries across my social media channels. To stay up to date and to get information about upcoming surgeries and info on how to book an appointment make sure you follow me on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), or [Instagram](#)!

Campaigning

Alongside my colleague Emma Lewell-Buck MP (South Shields), Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner Kim McGuinness and Leader of South Tyneside Council Tracey Dixon – I was pleased to attend the campaign launch for South Tyneside Labour ahead of the local elections on the 5th of May.

It has been a very difficult time for our local authorities, but they do carry out so much good work locally every single day, and they deserve much praise as we look to a brighter future.

No matter what happens next Thursday on the 5th of May, councillors need to put the people they represent at the forefront of every single decision they make. They must represent their constituents with honesty, integrity and respect and I wish all candidates the very best of luck.

If you would like to see footage from the launch you can click [here](#).



For one of my columns in the Shields Gazette, I discussed the important work that our local councils do, and ahead of the elections in South Tyneside and Gateshead I urge all constituents to use their vote to ensure your council can continue to work hard in making our communities the best they can be. Read my column in full [here](#).

It was great to get out on the doorstep this month with Phil Toulson, Labour's candidate for Cleadon and East Boldon. Vote Labour on the 5th of May.



I am also pleased to have joined Fellgate and Hedworth Councillors at a street stall this month alongside Northumbria Police Crime Commissioner Kim McGuinness at Fellgate Metro. Labour Candidate Cllr Geraldine Kilgour does great work for the Fellgate and Hedworth ward and I encourage constituents to vote Labour on 5th May.



While at the South Tyneside Labour campaign launch, campaigners from the Save South Shields Driving Test Centre (SSDTC) joined to wish the candidates luck in their campaigns. Both Labour and SSDTC campaigners have worked closely together in recent weeks and months to fight the closure of the driving test centre on the Bede Industrial Estate in Jarrow. Now, unfortunately the test centre has closed its doors,

I will continue to campaign on behalf of our community to reopen this much needed service and ensure that our community has access to safe and timely driving tests.



Gateshead College:

I was pleased to visit Gateshead College and speak with staff and students about their experiences there. I was pleased to meet the Principal David Alexander and also speak to students like Jarrow constituent Michael, about the projects that they are working on.



Places of Welcome+ at St Peter's Church Centre

It was excellent to visit Places of Welcome+ at St Peter's Church Centre this month. They do fantastic work in the local community, tackling loneliness, isolation, debt, and mental health within our local area, spread across four locations Monday-Thursday 11am-1pm where there is no money required and is a free drop-in session where everyone is welcome.



St James Primary School, Hebburn

I had a fantastic visit to St James RC Primary School in Hebburn this month. It was a pleasure to meet with the school council and listen to their thoughts on the environment, art, and food banks.



Visit to the Lord Nelson:

I was pleased to visit The Lord Nelson this month. It was great to see the investment into the pub and discover who Abbie and the rest of her team are and what they can offer to Jarrow's community. I believe that the refurbishment has enhanced the customer experience and Abbie's team is doing a phenomenal job at keeping up the standards of the pub and of our local community. I had a wonderful time at The Lord Nelson, and I look forward to my next visit.



Red Ellen at the Northern Stage:

It was an absolute pleasure to attend the Northern Stage Theatre for the press night of 'Red Ellen' this month. It was a wonderful representation of the story of the iconic Ellen Wilkinson. I was pleased to attend with Mary Kelly Foy MP (City of Durham) and Andy McDonald MP (Middlesbrough). I was able to meet some of the cast (pictured below bottom left: Bettrys Jones who plays Ellen). A great performance and a privilege to watch!

For one of my regular columns in the Shields Gazette, I discussed some of the stark comparisons that can be made, as Wilkinson's fight for social justice is still relevant to this day. You can read this in full [here](#).



South Tyneside Adult Carers Service.

In April I met with carers supported the South Tyneside Adult Carers Service. It is undeniable that we have a crisis in Social Care. Austerity and treating care workers with contempt by not offering a real living wage and protections has real life consequences. We need a publicly funding National Care Service.



West Fellgate Farm

I was pleased to visit West Fellgate Farm to meet farmer Geoff and Anna from the National Farmers Union. We discussed a huge range of issues that are affecting farmers, from the war in Ukraine and the cost-of-living crisis to issues regarding anti-social behaviour. I am grateful to have been invited for a tour of the farm and

getting the opportunity to learn more about what it means to be a farmer in the Jarrow constituency and beyond.



A&P Tyne

After the recent government announcement of the National Ship Building Strategy, it was great to visit A&P Tyne this month, located on the old Palmer's shipyard in Hebburn. Ship building should play a vital part in British manufacturing once again and companies such as A&P in the North East should be at the heart of it!



Council of Europe

As a member of the Council of Europe, I attended meetings in Strasbourg as part of my duties. The Council was created in the wake of WW2 with the purpose of upholding human rights, democracy, and the rule of law in Europe. We discussed a range of issues from the war in Ukraine to democracy, and disability.



DVSA and HM Passport Office

I have been increasingly contacted by constituents regarding issues and long delays in applications for driving licences and passports. My team have been working hard to help constituents resolve their issues and will continue to do so.

The Prime Ministers 'threat' to privatise the departments responsible for issuing passports and driving licences is ridiculous. These are government bodies that his own ministers have a responsibility for – the government need to resource these departments properly rather than punish them.

Regarding passports specifically, I have written to the Home Office about the long delays and the Prime Ministers threat of privatisation. You can read the letter in full below.

Kate Osborne MP

Member of Parliament for the Jarrow constituency



House of Commons
London, SW1A 0AA

The Rt Hon Priti Patel MP
Home Secretary
Home Office

(Correspondence sent via email)

27th April 2022

Dear Home Secretary,

I am writing today to raise concerns about the unacceptable delays that my constituents are facing whilst awaiting for their passport applications to be processed by HM Passport Office.

A growing number of Jarrow constituents have got in touch with me as their local MP, worried and frustrated that they and their family might have to cancel their long-awaited holiday, and also lose out on money, due to the delays on processing their applications.

Some constituents have reported to me that they have spent hours trying to get in touch with HM Passport Office for updates but haven't been able to get through or lines have been cut off.

With this spring and summer being the first time since the start of the pandemic that people can travel without or with few travel restrictions, it has long been anticipated that there would be an increase in new passport or passport renewal applications, and this is something HM Passport Office should have prepared for.

Instead, as reported by the Public and Commercial Services Union (PCS), the backlog in processing passport applications is due to a number of issues at HM Passport Office including a lack of staff, poor management, new staff being employed on agency contracts with inadequate training, and failures on part of the contractor, Sopra Steria.

It is therefore deplorable that yesterday, the Prime Minister's answer to the chaos in HM Passport Office is to privatise the service. We have seen a rich history of the trouble that privatisation of public services causes through other services that the Government have privatised.

I therefore like to call on you as Home Secretary to ignore the Prime Minister's calls to privatise HM Passport Office and instead listen to PCS' calls to adequately resource and fund the passport service by recruiting additional staff and bringing services in-house. I also ask

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Kate Osborne MP

Member of Parliament for the Jarrow constituency



House of Commons
London, SW1A 0AA

that you do all you can to ensure that passport applications that are currently in the system are being processed as quickly as possible and to ensure that constituents like mine in the Jarrow constituency, are not suffering and having to cancel holidays and potentially lose money due to the Government's inability to resource services properly.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kate Osborne'.

Kate Osborne MP

Member of Parliament for the Jarrow constituency

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Advice Surgeries:

As always, keep an eye out on my social media channels for information about upcoming surgeries, alternatively, you can contact my office to request an appointment.

Yours sincerely,

Kate Osborne MP

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