



Constituency Report (July 2021)

Statement on UK-Australia Trade Deal

On June 17 in the House of Commons, I challenged the hypocrisy of a government which said it would not allow British farmers to be undermined by cheap imports produced to lower standards of animal welfare and environmental protection, but has now done exactly that in its deal with Australia.

Despite the fact that Liz Truss said in April she would show her 'inexperienced' Australian counterpart 'how to play at this level', it is Australia that has secured the best deal in the country's history. A deal which came at the expense of Britain's farmers, and a deal which has proven that it is Liz Truss who is not up to the job.

Opposition Day Debate on Steel

On 21 June, during the Opposition Day Debate on steel, I set out the choice between a Labour Party which wanted to give our steel industry the safeguards they need to build for the future with confidence, and a Tory Party which was willing to let them sink or swim in a flood of cheap imports from China, with a Secretary of State who did not even bother to show up to the debate.

The government's plans to slash safeguards and open the floodgates to cheap steel imports would have been devastating for steel plants across our country and damaging for our wider economy.

That is why I urged those MPs who care about the British economy, our industries, our critical infrastructure, our national security, and the protection of the tens of thousands of jobs that depend on steel, to vote for a motion which would have enabled us to overrule the removal of safeguarding measures for domestic steel production.

Although we fell short on the Opposition Day, I welcomed the government's subsequent u-turn on the issue, and their decision to retain steel safeguards. More than anything,

this was a hard-won victory for Britain's steel communities, and their Labour representatives in Parliament, who fought so hard against the Government's plans over the last month, and successfully forced their last-minute reversal.

The government finally agreed with us that the newly-created Trade Remedies authority was quite clearly not up to the job, as proved by its response to the steel crisis.



Speaking in the Commons, 21 June

Campaigning for Batley and Spen



Canvassing in Batley and Spen, 26 June

On 26 June, I went to Batley and Spen to campaign for the by-election. I spoke to many people - about unity, equality and change. I was struck by just how many recognised that there was no one better than the brilliant Kim Leadbeater to fight for that. She is local, strong and takes no nonsense.

It was tough as there were those who saw this election as an opportunity to try to sow lies, hatred and division, but Kim's victory has shown that ultimately, truth, hope and decency will always prevail.

I am so proud to have her join me on the green benches.

CPTPP Debate



CPTPP Debate, 24 June

On 24 June, I was proud to speak in the Commons on the UK's ascension to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP).

Earlier that week, the government had launched negotiations to join CPTPP, which, according to their own figures, will add just £400 million – or 0.017 per cent – to UK GDP, over a 15-year period.

In spite of this, Liz Truss is rushing into this agreement with no demands, exemptions or protections – let alone any scrutiny or proper consultation. The move raises serious questions about our food standards, drugs prices and NHS patient data, as well as the impact of investor state dispute settlements (ISDS) on our democratic processes.

At a time when we are haemorrhaging trade with Europe as a result of red tape, customs checks and restrictions on movement from the government's botched EU deal, the government have shown they simply won't listen to the businesses affected. Instead of trying to work with British business and our European counterparts to fix those problems, the Liz Truss is ignoring them, and saying that is not their current priority when it comes to trade.

Air Pollution Outside Peregrine House

This week, the Islington Tribune published an article about the pollution outside Peregrine House, caused by emergency generators used at the site of a former gin factory on Goswell Road.

Residents have had to put up with this pollution for three decades. We are now demanding action from the government, who claims to have a Clean Air Strategy.

The government doesn't allow Councils to properly regulate the emissions produced by emergency generators until 2029. I've written a letter to DEFRA about this issue, urging Ministers to do something about this now.

You can read the article in the Islington Tribune [here](#).



*Former Gin Factory, Goswell Road
Photo courtesy of Islington Tribune*

Institute for Government Trade Panel



IfG Trade Panel, 13 July

Yesterday, I had the pleasure of speaking at the Institute for Government's Trade Panel, alongside some excellent panellists.

We discussed whether the Department for International Trade has a strategy and whether that strategy – should it

exist – is the right one for Britain. I believe this conversation is hugely important, since we are presented with a historic opportunity to re-set our trade policy after almost 50 years of it being determined at a European level.

I spoke about the importance of marrying our economic interests with our values, taking innovative steps in key export sectors like services, and ensuring our future trade deals always promote high standards and protections for workers and the environment.

I questioned whether the government's all-consuming focus on the trans-pacific partnership (CPTPP) makes sense while we continue to have glaring holes in our deal with Europe, and whether the miniscule benefits of these deals are worth the regulatory risks we are accepting, from investor state dispute settlements to food standards.

Finally, I asked whether, in abdicating responsibility on issues such as human rights, workers' rights and the climate crisis, the government are not just missing a trick in forging an independent trade policy, but also fundamentally failing our moral obligations.

International Trade and Work in Parliament

17 June: [Statement on UK-Australia Trade Deal](#); Meeting with UK Steel; Speaking to Newbury CLP

18 June: Vaccines Briefing with Nadhim Zahawi; Meeting with Trade Unions Congress (TUC); Meeting with Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry; Meeting for London Boundary Consultation

21 June: [Opposition Day Debate on Steel](#)

22 June: Meeting with Wellcome Trust

24 June: [CPTPP Debate](#)

25 June: SCG/GLA Covid-19 Briefing

26 June: Campaigning for Batley and Spen By-election

27 June: Speaking at Labour Women's Conference

28 June: Speaking at CAAT Panel on Yemen

2 July: Vaccines Briefing with Nadhim Zahawi;

5 July: Meeting with New Zealand High Commissioner

7 July: Meeting with Paul Alger, Export Partners UK; Speaking at Labour Peers Group

8 July: Institute for Government Panel Discussion; Meeting with the Taiwanese Representative

9 July: Vaccines Briefing with Nadhim Zahawi; SCG/GLA Covid-19 Briefing

12 July: Meeting with Former Labour MEPS; CityUK Roundtable;

13 July: [Speaking at Institute for Government Trade Panel](#)

In the constituency

30 June: [Letter to DEFRA on Air Pollution in Islington](#)

2 July: Surgery at St Luke's

5 July: NHS Day Celebration at Islington Town Hall

7 July: Violence Reduction Roundtable

10 July: Visit to Pop-up Vaccine Centre, St Clement's Church

Media

21 June: [BBC Radio 4](#), Today Programme; Sky News; Times; LBC; ITV; BBC Radio Humberside; BBC Radio Sheffield;

25 June: Any Questions

1 July: [Newscast](#)

8 July: [Commons People Podcast](#)



Labour Women's Conference, 27 June



Newscast, 1 July



Meeting some pirates on the way to Batley and Spen, 26 June



Celebrating NHS Day at Islington Town Hall, 5 July



Any Questions, 25 June



Visiting St Clement's Church Pop-up Vaccine Centre, 10 July