

# Emily Thornberry MP

ISLINGTON SOUTH AND FINSBURY

June 2023 Report



## Boris Johnson Misled Us

This time last year, I was forthright in criticising Boris Johnson's lockdown-breaking parties, the culture of rule-breaking he has cultivated in Government, and most importantly his lies in the House of Commons.

The Report of the Privileges Committee was clear and unequivocal that Boris Johnson misled parliament.

Yet many Tories didn't turn up to vote. Seven of them even voted against the report.



Sky News, 19th May 2022

The stench of Boris's rot will linger for as long as the Tories continue to denigrate our democratic institutions. We have a Prime Minister in Rishi Sunak that promises integrity in public office but like so many of his promises, proves empty. His absence on Monday speaks volumes about the man that Rishi Sunak is.

The privilege of being elected as a Member of Parliament comes with huge responsibility. This was never clearer than during the pandemic. Lockdown was an incredibly difficult time for everyone. During the pandemic, my office saw first hand the struggles of people across the constituency as we dealt with an enormous increase in casework. We made sacrifices that we believed right.

As the pandemic reaffirmed our belief in community, solidarity and the role of state, the Tories's belief in the rule of law was never lower. Their belief that they were above the law. Their belief in the enrichment of buddies. Their belief in their own unimpeachable entitlement. Boris made a mockery of us, our values and our Parliament. Yet the Tories find it difficult to even turn up to condemn his actions.

The report confirms what many of us knew already — Boris Johnson is a liar.



# Visit to Pentonville Prison

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Recently I had the opportunity to visit Pentonville Prison for the first time since the pandemic. When “The Ville” opened in 1842, it became known as the model for British prisons with its now iconic architecture and dramatic appearance. Nearly 200 years later it is more known for being overcrowded, unsafe and unfit for purpose.

I have visited Pentonville many times since becoming the MP for Islington South and Finsbury and have seen the prison at its worst. In 2015 the then Justice Secretary Michael Gove described it as “the most dramatic example of failure.”

The Prison is clearly not viable with the numerous issues of poor standards, escapes, corruption, drug smuggling, murders and suicides. I had been braced for grim conditions on my visit but there have been some improvements of G wing with a neurodiverse sensory overload room and a functioning drug recovery wing. It is clear that the staff try to make the best of the situation. However, Prison Officers are leaving the service in droves as the Tories starve prisons of essential staff. The total number of Officers has dropped by 3,000 since 2010.

Conditions at Pentonville are still extremely dire and vast improvements still need to be made. Following a murder and two escapes in 2016, the Ministry of Justice reduced numbers in the prison but recently they have increased numbers to over double the original Victorian capacity.

# Visit to Central England Law Centre

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The incredible staff at the Central England Law Centre

Recently I visited the Central England Law Centre in Coventry to see the essential support the centre provides to those who would otherwise miss out on legal advice.

It was great to hear from the Centre's CEO, Elayne Hill, about the central role they play in supporting the local community.

It is clear from my engagement with legal aid providers that the sector is at capacity with many vacancies in centres going unfilled because the Tories have cut legal aid funding drastically over the past 13 years.





# Campaigning in Northampton North

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I am a strong believer in the benefit lawyers bring to Parliament in scrutinising legislation, advocating for justice, and bringing experiences from their legal careers to law-making.

I spent Sunday supporting a lawyer, terrific Labour candidate and former Holloway Councillor, Lucy Rigby, who is standing to be the next Labour MP for Northampton North.

The sitting Tory MP, Michael Ellis, is a former counterpart as he was Attorney General during the short-lived Lettuce Premiership of Liz Truss. He might be remembered most for admitting the truth of scale of police cuts, or that he dodged Monday's vote on the Privileges Committee Report.

Lucy is a fantastic Labour activist who will be a great advocate for Northampton North.



With Lucy Rigby on the campaign trail

## Questions over Rape Charge Statistics

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Attorney General Oral Questions on 25th May

I have asked the government to investigate their statistics on the official rape charge rate as an investigation by the NationalWorld seemed to show that suspected rapists charged with non-rape crimes were being used in the statistics, thereby inflating the charge rate.

There is grave and widespread concern that already exists over the abysmally low charge rate for rape, and it would be incredibly serious if the rate is even lower than we currently think.

I have put these concerns to the Attorney General in Oral Questions with the Royal Statistical Society also calling for greater transparency on the data.



# Diary

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## Constituency

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### May

24 - Meeting with Proportional Representation Campaigners  
24 - Drop-in surgery meeting with Deputy Mayors on Policing, Crime, Fire and Resilience

### June

9 - St Luke's Casework Surgery  
10 - Islington Town Hall Surgery  
10 - Laycock Picnic at Paradise Park  
12 - Visit to HMP Pentonville with the Independent Monitoring Board

## Parliament and Shadow Attorney General

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### May

18 - Oxford Union Debate on This House Believes that Class Defines British Politics  
20 - Islington South & Finsbury CLP campaign in Kensington  
25 - Attorney General Oral Questions  
25 - Meeting at the Central England Law Centre

### June

7 - Italian National Day Reception  
8 - Labour Students & LGBT Labour Fundraiser  
14 - Rose Network Summer Reception  
18 - Campaigning in Northampton North with Society of Labour Lawyers  
19 - Fundraiser for Northampton Labour  
20 - Mentoring session for Labour TULOs

## Media

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### May

24 - Post-PMQs Politics Live  
24 - World At One on BBC 4  
24 - [My comment on unduly lenient sentence for West End murder](#)  
25 - ["Rape charge rate: Emily Thornberry calls for government enquiries into NationalWorld crime statistics investigation"](#)

### June

7 - [Pod Save the UK](#)  
9 - [Sky News](#)  
9 - [Newsnight](#)



DJing with Mynxie at the RVT for a Labour Students & LGBT Labour Fundraiser



Speaking at the Northampton Labour Fundraiser

