

Emily Thornberry MP

ISLINGTON SOUTH AND FINSBURY

November 2023 Report



Terrible events in Israel and Gaza

Since the appalling October 7th attack and Israel's invasion and bombardment of Gaza, many constituents have shared heart-wrenching stories of friends and family members who have been killed, or whose lives are still at risk. My heart goes out to all of those with loved ones still under threat and I hope the global calls are heeded for the attacks on Gaza to stop, and for all hostages held by Hamas to be released.

I am gravely concerned by the intolerable and unacceptable humanitarian crisis and loss of civilian life we've seen in Gaza. As Shadow Attorney General, I will continue to call for all parties to this conflict to follow international law and for allegations of breaches to be treated with the utmost seriousness. I will always stand firm in my belief that Israel has a right to defend itself, but that right is not a blank cheque and they must urgently take concrete steps to prevent further civilian loss of life. And we urgently need a full, comprehensive and immediate humanitarian pause in the fighting across the whole of Gaza to ensure food, medicine, fuel and water can get to Gazans who desperately need it.

Those are the immediate priorities Labour is working towards, but I will also continue - as I always have done - to urge the international community to restart efforts to finding the lasting peace and a two-state solution that we so desperately need to end this cycle of violence once and for all. Neither Israel's security nor justice for Palestine can be delivered by bombs and bullets. We must seek a path to negotiations that can lead us to two states - a secure Israel and an independent Palestine.



Remembrance Sunday



The Islington community comes together every year to remember those whose lives have been taken by war. It is estimated that 2000 people from Islington died in service during World War II, and around 1400 Islington residents died in bombing across our borough.



So I was honoured, as I am every year, to lay wreaths marking Remembrance Sunday at Islington Green and Spa Green. And I was also delighted to be able to volunteer with members of my team to sell poppies in support of the Royal British Legion's vitally important annual appeal on the Friday before remembrance weekend.

The King's Speech

The King's Speech is meant to be an opportunity for the government to set out a bold, ambitious agenda for the next year in Parliament. But instead what we got from Rishi Sunak was incredibly thin gruel. As ordinary people up and down the country struggle with inflation and crumbling public services, it's shocking that there was nothing from the Prime Minister about the cost-of-living or the NHS.

This is a government that is so out of touch and out of ideas that it thinks bringing back David Cameron is the answer voters are looking for! But we all know that what we really need is a general election so the public are finally allowed to give their verdict on thirteen years of Tory incompetence and chaos.



Byelection and Hackney Mayor victories

This has been another bumper month for Labour victories around the country.

We gained two new Labour MPs in Tamworth and Mid Bedfordshire - seats that people said were unwinnable for Labour! - and it was particularly special to see Caroline Woodley elected the new Labour Mayor of Hackney last week. Thank you to everyone in the CLP who put in the hours on the doorstep to get Caroline elected.

These victories are testament to the hard work of Labour activists month after month in constituency after constituency. Voters around the country are crying out for the change that only Labour can deliver.



Opening St Mary's Primary School Library



I had a fantastic time last week visiting St Mary's Primary School to open their new library and take some great questions from the school council.

It's so important that primary school pupils across our borough have access to extensive school libraries like St Mary's, which has a special section for children with dyslexia and dyspraxia. I was pleased, too, to see St Mary's focus on the importance of oracy - something that is a big focus of Labour's education plans in government.

Thank you to the teachers, parents, governors and, of course, pupils of St Mary's for welcoming me



Championing access to justice for women

Earlier this year, I had the pleasure of hosting the Women's Budget Group in Parliament to spotlight their paper on Gender Gaps in Access to Justice. The report highlights that across the board, from housing, to benefits, to domestic violence, women are reaching crisis point before they have access to the help they need.

We know that in some areas of the country, legal aid 'deserts' mean some women will never receive legal support. That's why, at Attorney General Oral Questions last month, I raised the findings of the report with the Government directly, calling on them to address the disproportionate impact of legal aid 'deserts' on women across the country.

What else I've been up to this month



Speaking at a fundraiser for Labour candidates Rachel Blake and Claire Hazelgrove



Speaking at a fundraiser for Helena Dollimore, Labour candidate for Hastings & Rye



Planting a tribute for Islington South and Finsbury in the Speaker's garden of Remembrance



Meeting with the CPS at Highbury Corner Magistrates Court



Meeting the licensee (and sampling gin!) at the Alpaca Pub on Essex Road



Speaking at a fundraiser for Derby Labour



Diary

Constituency and campaigning

19 Oct - Campaigning for the Tamworth byelection

20 Oct - Visit to the Anna Freud Centre

26 Oct - Visit to the Highbury Magistrates Court

26 Oct - Canvassing in De Beauvoir ward with Meg Hillier MP

31 Oct - Meeting with Medical Aid for Palestinians

3 Nov - St Luke's Constituency Surgery

9 Nov - Visit to North Bridge House, Canonbury

9 Nov - Campaigning in the Hackney Mayoral byelection

9 Nov - Visit to the Alpaca Pub

10 Nov - Opening the St Marys Primary School Library

10 Nov - Selling Remembrance Sunday Poppies

11 Nov - Town Hall Constituency Surgery

12 Nov - Spoke at the Islington Remembrance Sunday Service

14 Nov - Interviews with City University journalism students

Parliament and Shadow Attorney General

19 Oct - Attorney General Oral Questions

23 Oct - Meeting with the EU Ambassador

25 Oct - City Century Event

26 Oct - Meeting with Mexican Ambassador

8 Nov - Meeting about LGBT+ rights in the Caribbean

7 Nov - King's Speech and the State Opening of Parliament

7 Nov - Meeting about whistleblowing with the Institute for Business Ethics

13 Nov - Meeting with the Society for Labour Lawyers

Campaigning with local members for the Hackney mayoral election

