



JOHN'S CAMPAIGN MEETINGS

On Thursday 26 February 2015 Valerie met with the Rt Hon Norman Lamb MP, Minister of State for Care and Support, and the Rt Hon Andy Burnham MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Health, with members of John's Campaign.

Valerie said: "The aim of John's Campaign is to allow carers of people with dementia the right to accompany them in hospital, just as the parents of sick children do. These carers could feed them, keep them mobile, be their voice and memory bank, and anchor them to the world."

"Both the Minister and the Shadow Secretary of State said they would implement the aims of John's Campaign as an added right to a commitment to carers' rights. The right for a carer to stay with a patient with dementia would be included as an indicative right."



NATIONAL LIBRARIES DAY

"I marked National Libraries Day at Darlaston Library, which is a wonderful community resource, on Saturday 7 February. There are many activities going on in Darlaston Library and a play area for children. We must use our libraries to show how much they are valued."



RALEIGH STREET, PLECK

"I visited Raleigh Street in Pleck to hear from residents about the issues that matter to them. Residents said that even though there is a cricket pitch and a football pitch at Reedswood Park, these cannot be used at the same time because they overlap."

"Other residents were concerned about plans for a Housing development of up to 100 homes on the former Harvestime Bakery site and the impact this could have on traffic and parking. A further concern which was raised was the lack of street cleaning and the amount of litter on the street. I have written to Walsall MBC regarding all the issues raised."

YOUR RIGHT TO VOTE

"Following the change to the system of Individual Electoral Registration, it is important that everyone ensures that they are registered to vote."

"It is now possible to register to vote online at <http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote>."

INEQUALITY IN PRISONS

"Women in prisons are discriminated against by the Incentives and Earned Privileges Scheme which limits women to only one parcel of clothing after conviction. I raised this during Justice Questions."



EPILEPSY DEBATE

On 26 February 2015 Valerie, Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Epilepsy, spoke in a Backbench Business Debate on Epilepsy.



Valerie said: "This was a timely debate and it came between two important dates and the publication of

a number of excellent reports. Epilepsy is a life-threatening neurological condition that can affect anybody at any age without warning. I hope during the debate we brought epilepsy out of the shadows of stigma and discrimination, and into the spotlight of knowledge, awareness and hope for the future."

"The World Health Organisation adopted a resolution on 2 February this year, and world epilepsy day is on 26 March, when we are all urged to 'colour it purple'. The WHO launched a campaign on 9 February 2015 to improve the epilepsy treatment gap and it urged member states to look into the matter."

"During my speech I covered different stages of epilepsy services: those for young people; the transition from young person to adult; and adult services."

"For young people a recent report, 'Improving epilepsy care for children and young people', published by Young Epilepsy, University College London and Whittington Health highlighted unacceptable levels of misdiagnosis, inadequate communication, a variation in care and a fragmentation of services."

"During the transition from young person to adult, Epilepsy12 found that there were inadequate services and transition arrangements for young people."

"For adults, a report by Epilepsy Action on clinical commissioning groups and commissioning in November 2014 found that only three out of 140 health and wellbeing boards are making plans for people with epilepsy."

Surgeries

Valerie holds regular surgeries. To arrange an appointment, please call the Constituency Office on 01922 635835

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NO TO PRIVATISING THE STAFF OF THE NATIONAL GALLERY



"I chaired a PCS meeting to stop the transfer of the National Gallery staff to a private company. The Committee room was packed with supporters of Candy Udwin the sacked PCS representative who was just doing her job trying to negotiate a settlement. The meeting heard from Polly Toynbee, the Guardian columnist who wrote a brilliant article on the dispute and the General Secretary of the Public and Commercial Services Union Mark Serwotka who pledged the backing of the Union for the staff and Candy. I subsequently tabled an EDM in support of the National Gallery Staff."

MAYFIELD PREPARATORY SCHOOL

"I met with students of Mayfield Preparatory School when they visited the House of Commons. The pupils asked lots of interesting questions. One pupil asked me if I had one thing to change what it would be: I said that I would like everyone to be treated as equals, regardless of who they are."

"The Mayfield students and myself were able to see the four 1215 Magna Carta originals which had been brought together for one day in Parliament to celebrate their 800th anniversary."

"These were the documents that established the principle of the rule of law in the UK, and this has been adopted around the world. The four copies of the 1215 Magna Carta manuscripts were loaned to Parliament for one day by the organisations that



hold and display them on a permanent basis – two from the British Library, one from Salisbury Cathedral and one from Lincoln Cathedral."

HARRY HINSLEY

Valerie said: "I am supporting calls for a Blue Plaque to commemorate Walsall resident, Harry Hinsley. The son of a miner, he lived on Rowland Street in Birchills and studied at Queen Mary's Grammar School and went on to study at St John's College Cambridge."

"In October 1939, he was recruited to Bletchley Park and was involved in the decoding of German submarine messages. After the war he returned to Cambridge and became Professor of History and International relations and ultimately Vice-Chancellor of the University."

MEMORIAL TO THE SADDLERS AND TANNERIES

Valerie said: "I met a constituent at my surgery who told me about Walsall's little known contribution to the First World War. In support of the mounted units of the Army, Walsall's saddleries and tanneries produced 1.7 million sets of equestrian equipment. This was 85% of the total used for the Army."

"I agree that this should be recognised and I will do all I can to help ensure that there is a memorial to Walsall's Saddlers. Hopefully at the Walsall Leather Museum."

NHS

In the House of Commons Valerie asked the Health Minister about the shortfall in the number of GPs in the NHS.

Valerie said: "Will the Minister tell us how many GPs, in addition to those who have retired, have left the profession and how many have gone to work abroad?"



"The Minister could not answer my question. It shows that the Department of Health does not have the basic information to plan for the future."

"The Opposition was also granted an Urgent Question to ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on Robert Francis' latest Report on the treatment of NHS Whistleblowers."

"I asked the Secretary of State for Health what support will he give trusts to ensure that safe staffing levels are implemented given that they might need extra resources for that."

INTERNATIONAL — BURMA



"I called for an Urgent Debate in the House of Commons following the rape and murder of two teachers in Kachin state by the Burmese Army. The two women Maran Lu Ra, aged 20 and Tangbau Hkawn Nan Tsin, 21, were teachers from Myitkyina, working with the Kachin Baptist Convention. Burma Army soldiers raped them and then beat them to death. The local police have taken no action."

"I was told in response to a Written Parliamentary Question that the British Government was giving over £100,000 a year to the Burmese Army. I asked the Leader of the House to look into this matter."

"The Leader of the House is also the Prime Minister's Special Representative on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict. Burma have signed up to the initiative but so far they are not living up to it. The British Government must demand more of the

BIRMINGHAM AIRPORT

"The Airports Commission's consultation on future airport capacity has now closed but plans for a second runway at Birmingham Airport were not included. This decision was short-sighted. Airport capacity should be increased where it can provide a gateway to the research and manufacturing heartlands of the West Midlands, not in the already well served South East."

"Instead of an even greater focus on London and the South East, we need a national network of long-haul airports."