



## Saddle up, we're going to Wembley!

"What a fantastic achievement by the players and manager Dean Smith and what an atmosphere there was last night. The club and supporters have done Walsall South proud. The Saddlers are making great strides in our local community, and are now raising Walsall's profile nationally: reaching Wembley, hosting UEFA U17 Championship matches, even staging Elton John. I have tabled an Early Day Motion in Parliament to recognise this."



## Valerie opposes Fracking

"On Monday 26 January 2015 Labour forced the Government to agree to 13 new conditions to be met before shale gas extraction can take place as well as a ban on fracking in national parks. Other conditions include a requirement for environmental assessment and the need to consult residents on an individual basis."

"I am personally opposed to shale gas extraction in the UK and believe that efforts should be concentrated on achieving Labour's commitment to a 2030 decarbonisation target for the UK power sector. We need to make climate adaptation a national priority to protect the country from extreme weather caused by climate change."

"Labour state that shale gas extraction should only go ahead in the context of robust regulation, comprehensive monitoring and strict enforcement. The Government has chosen to ignore genuine and legitimate environmental concerns. There are issues relating to the protection of national parks, the integrity of the wells, the monitoring of fugitive emissions and other areas that have been completely ignored by a Government which simply opposes further regulation of this industry, no matter the evidence that this is necessary."

## Valerie Opens Facilities at Delves



Valerie said: "I was delighted to be able to cut the ribbon to open the new facilities at Delves Baptist Community Church. The Church has now been able to widen doorways to enable wheelchair access, install a disabled toilet and to open a counselling room. It is remarkable what has been achieved by the members of the church who have ensured that the least advantaged members of community have benefited."



## Meeting on Inclusion in Sports

On Friday 16 January 2015, Valerie chaired a roundtable meeting on inclusion in sport at Wolverhampton University's Walsall Campus between the Khalsa Football Federation (KFF) and representatives of Sport England, the West Midlands County Sports Partnership, BeActive and Sporting Equals.

Valerie said: "I arranged this roundtable meeting to open dialogue between grass-roots organisations and national groups to see what support can be made available to improve inclusion in sport. Women, young people and people from BAME backgrounds have found they do not have easy access to the teams and tournaments they need to play in to realise their full potential. It is crucial that this is addressed at the level of national funding organisations."



## Health Select Committee



The Health Select Committee, of which Valerie is a member, is conducting an inquiry into Accident and Emergency Services. Witnesses the Committee heard evidence from included Dr Clifford Mann, President, College of Emergency Medicine.

Valerie said: "It appears from the evidence of a trust that NHS staff have been coming in early and staying late to help their hospitals cope with extreme winter pressures. If it was not for the hard work and dedication of NHS Staff then the current situation in the NHS would be a lot worse. I am concerned that people are working in the NHS for nothing. This is not acceptable and I asked the Department of Health to look at this."

### Surgeries

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

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## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Burma Debate

At a debate in Westminster Hall, Valerie spoke on the Rohingya community in Burma.



Valerie said: "I am alarmed by the plight of the Rohingya people in Burma. It is crucial that the British Government puts all possible pressure on the Government of Burma to ensure that human rights abuses cannot continue. I asked the Minister whether he agreed that crimes against humanity had been committed against the Rohingya people. He said that was a matter for the international criminal court."

### Specialised Services Debate



During a Westminster Hall Debate Valerie raised the national commissioning of epilepsy services.

Valerie said: "Epilepsy Action's "Epilepsy in England: The local picture" report is quite alarming. Only 10% of CCGs have a written needs assessment for people with epilepsy; just three out of 140 health and wellbeing boards are making plans for people with epilepsy; and 78% of CCGs have not developed, or do not intend to develop, a needs assessment for people with epilepsy."

### Foreign and Commonwealth Questions

At FCO Questions Valerie raised the kidnapped schoolgirls in Nigeria. Valerie said "I asked what steps have been taken to secure the release of the kidnapped schoolgirls in Nigeria?"



"The Foreign Secretary said that while support was being provided, the capacity of Nigerian forces on the ground in that region is not as great as we would like."

### John's Campaign Update

"A meeting between myself, the Health Minister and John's Campaign has been agreed for February."

"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. Some hospitals already provide this option for carers, such as the University Hospital Bristol, but this is not the case across the country."

### "Je Suis Charlie"

Valerie said: "I attended the vigil in Westminster Hall for the victims of the attack on the Charlie Hebdo Magazine in Paris. It is crucial that we reaffirm the importance of free speech."



### NHS A&E Crisis

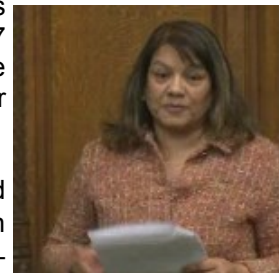
"I asked the Secretary of State for Health why the £700m set aside to assist with winter pressures is not reaching A & Es."

"At the beginning of the month, Walsall Manor Hospital declared a major incident which the hospital has now come out of. I have since met with Richard Kirby, the Chief Executive of Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust. The closure of Stafford A & E between 10pm and 8am in December 2011 has led to an increase in patients to Walsall Manor Hospital of between 6-10%. From September 2012 – 2013 there was a nearly 40% increase in emergency admissions from Staffordshire residents. I raised this with the Secretary of State for Health in the Chamber and I have also written to him."

"This Government has spent £3bn on a reorganisation of the Health Service that no one wanted. Added to which £3.6bn from the Health budget was handed back to the Treasury from 2011-2013. Spending on management consultants has more than doubled from £313m to £640m. This money is enough to run three hospitals or employ 2,000 extra nurses."

### Governance of the House Debate

As a Member of the House of Commons Governance Committee, which met 17 times, often 3 times a week, Valerie spoke in the debate in the Chamber on the Committee's Report.



Valerie said: "The Committee decided that we should have two separate roles in the management of the House of Commons. The Clerk's role is unique and the skills required are extremely important."

"Parliament is a place of work that should be accessible to those who need to understand it and who send us here—but sometimes it is not accessible. We should be able to conduct our work on behalf of our constituents in an efficient and timely manner."

### The Speaker's School Council Awards

Valerie was on the panel of judges for the Speaker's School Council Awards 2015.

Valerie said: "I was delighted to participate in the shortlisting of these awards. The Education Service did a great job shortlisting the large numbers of entries and the panel judged the entries with the final decision made by Mr Speaker."

### Valerie Supports #UnitedAgstEbola

On Thursday 22 January 2015 Valerie attended the #UnitedAgstEbola event in Parliament.

Valerie said: "Set up by Akosua and Michael Essien, the Campaign promotes preventative and educational awareness to stop the spread of Ebola in West Africa. The Campaign is working with Health Africa International and smaller organisation in each of the affected countries."

