



## Valerie Secures Parking Charges Debate



Valerie secured a debate in the House of Commons on the new parking charges in Walsall Town Centre. After the debate, she presented a petition of more than 700 names to Parliament.

The rigorously enforced charges were introduced on 7<sup>th</sup> March and since then local businesses have reported a significant fall in trade—some by as much as 50%.

Valerie said; “These parking charges have hit local businesses hard at a time when trading conditions are already challenging. It is vital that Walsall Borough Council reconsiders these charges in light of clear evidence that they hinder the very businesses we need to flourish in order for the economy to get back on track”.

### To Contact Valerie:

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### Valerie Attacks Women’s Pension Changes

The Government recently published plans to force women in their late fifties to wait 18 months longer to receive their state pension.

Valerie said; “When money and financial planning are tight, the impact of this is huge and very unfair. Many women in their late fifties are being forced to change their retirement plans with only a very few years notice. This is very unjust.”

On 20th June, the Pensions Bill received its Second Reading in the House of Commons.

### Valerie Challenges Minister Over “Medical Model” Sure Start Plans

Valerie asked the Education Secretary, Michael Gove MP, about plans to replace skilled outreach workers in Sure Start Centres with health visitors.

During Education Questions in the House of Commons Valerie explained that skilled outreach workers in Sure Start Centres have been very successful in driving outreach projects.

These include a Fathers’ Club held at Palfrey Sure Start that 84 fathers attended. It was the first in the country to be rated “Outstanding” by Ofsted.

### Valerie Hosts Walsall College Launch Event at the House of Commons



Valerie with Walsall College Principal, Amarjit Basi, ASFI Board member, Chris Hunt and ASFI Managing Director, Sue Reynolds.

Valerie hosted the launch of Walsall College’s Accredited Skills for Industry (ASFI) programme at the House of Commons.

The programme has been developed in partnership with SEMTA, the manufacturing skills council and employers, including Accord Housing Group, where a qualification supporting energy efficiency and retrofit technologies has been developed.

Valerie said; “I was delighted to welcome Walsall College to the House of Commons to celebrate their new qualifications programme. Chief Executive Amarjit Basi and his colleagues have worked hard to achieve this. The new links between education, industry and skills councils will be a great asset for the young people of Walsall.”

### Surgeries

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