



VALERIE SPEAKS IN DEBATE ON THE QUEEN'S SPEECH

On Monday 9 June 2014, Valerie spoke in the debate on the Queen's Speech in the House of Commons.

Valerie said: "The Queen's Speech outlined a number of controversial measures including provisions relating to fracking. It is no coincidence that the Queen's Speech is silent on the NHS. Instead, the Secretary of State wants to punish the very people who have borne the brunt of the reorganisation."

"The Queen's Speech contains a statement about selling off-high value Government land. This is land and assets that belong to the British people and they will be gone for ever. The Government do not need to sell off high-value Government land for housing. Houses can be built on land where there is already planning permission."



Health Select Committee

On Tuesday 17 June 2014 the Health Select Committee, of which Valerie is a member, heard evidence on NHS complaints and raising concerns.

Valerie said: "This was the first time Professor Sir Mike Richards, the new Chief Inspector of Hospitals at the CQC, had been before the Health Select Committee. It was important to find out the themes and the general areas of complaints. Professor Richards told me that the complaints were about the care and treatment patients have received, staff attitudes, administrative failings, and even car parking."

"I noted that the CQC had been given £40 million by the Department of Health to address a high volume of complaints. Mr David Behan, chief executive of the Care Quality Commission, said that the CQC is currently in a recruitment campaign for 500 additional staff. The CQC are taking on 500 staff to deal with complaints, when in my view the money could be spent on more doctors and nurses on the frontline."

"The Committee also looked at the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS). The witnesses all touched on the role of schools and education. That seems to be a key area for intervention."

Success on School Street

Valerie successfully made representations to Walsall MBC against the proposed renumbering of School Street, Darlaston, WS10 9JB.

Valerie said: "This issue was raised by my constituents. Renumbering School Street could have caused confusion and inconvenience for residents, some of whom have lived there for over 70 years. I am pleased that Walsall MBC has listened to the views of local people and has abandoned its plans to renumber."

Insulin Patch Pumps



Valerie has called on the Health Secretary and the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) to make insulin patch pumps available to sufferers of Type 1 Diabetes on the NHS.

Valerie said: "I raised the availability of insulin patch pumps on the NHS in the debate on the Queen's Speech on Monday 9 June 2014. I also wrote to the Health Secretary and NICE."

"Many people who suffer from Type 1 Diabetes have to use an insulin pump which is attached by a cannula to the stomach. These pumps are uncomfortable and are difficult to wear under normal clothes. Patch pumps, which sit on the skin and do not use a cannula have the potential to vastly improve the quality of life of patients with Type 1 Diabetes. Unfortunately they are not available on the NHS and are prohibitively expensive for patients and their families."

"My constituent, 9 year old Grace Ryder, invited me to the Delves Community Baptist Church Fayre on Saturday 7 June 2014, where she was raising money for diabetes charities and increasing awareness of diabetes. Grace is one of many people locally who are potentially affected by the difficulty in obtaining patch pumps on the NHS."

Darlaston Town FC

On Monday 16 June 2014, Darlaston Town (1874) FC were approved re-entry to the West Midlands Regional League.

Valerie said: "I am delighted to hear the news that the club's application to re-join the League was unanimously approved by member clubs. The campaign to get the club going again has been a success and Darlaston Town FC have the 2014/15 season to look forward to."

Surgeries

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

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National Union of Teachers

On Friday 13 June 2014, Valerie met with members of the National Union of Teachers. Valerie said: "I support the calls from the teachers I met for a qualified teacher in every classroom, an end to testing the very youngest and an end to unfair performance related pay."

NEWS IN BRIEF

DSA Cuts

At BIS Questions on 26 June 2014, Valerie asked the Secretary of State about cuts to Disabled Students' Allowances. Valerie said: "Two-thirds of students on disabled students allowances are dyslexic. Cuts to DSAs affect both the students and the institutions, and penalise both. Will the Secretary of State think again about reversing these cuts?"

The minister's responded: "We are talking directly to the representative groups involved and students will not lose out by these changes."

Education Questions

On Monday 16 June 2014, at Education Questions, Valerie asked: "Will the Minister say what support he will give care leavers to access high-quality apprenticeships?"

The minister's responded: "Apprenticeships are part of our programme of ensuring that every young person in our country has the opportunity to reach their potential."

Phone Hacking Trial

At questions to the Leader of House, Valerie asked: "For an urgent debate to publish the legal advice given by the Attorney General to the Prime Minister who may have inadvertently placed himself above the law?"

NHS Investigations

At the statement by the Health Secretary on Jimmy Savile's criminal activity in the NHS, Valerie suggested if the SoS "could speak to the Prime Minister about appointing a Minister who would be able to coordinate these reports across the public institutions."

Finance Bill Committee

The Finance Bill committee, of which Valerie is a member, met for the final time on Tuesday 17 June 2014. Labour tabled important amendments to the Finance Bill, including one on the accountability of the banking sector. The Government voted against each of them. The Bill has now entered the Report stage.

International News

Burma Debate

On Wednesday 25 June 2014 Valerie intervened in the Westminster Hall Debate on the situation in Burma. Valerie said: "Rohingya in Burma have not even been counted in the census" adding "earlier this year, a priest was murdered in Kachin state, and that a 17-year-old girl was raped? While on the face of it, things look as though they are going well, there are still people who are arrested arbitrarily."

Kenya and Sudan Women MPs Delegations

Valerie attended a meeting with women MPs from Kenya and met with a Parliamentary delegation from Sudan at the House of Commons. Valerie said: "Our discussion included how to ensure that the numbers of women MPs should increase. Visits such as these play an important part in how parliaments from different countries work towards democracy."

Prof. Lesley Yellowlees and Women in Engineering

Valerie hosted a Parliamentary Event on Tuesday 10 June 2014 to celebrate the tenure of Professor Lesley Yellowlees as the first woman president of the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC).

The RSC released a report into chemistry education in schools at the event. "We discussed the diversity in science. From the discussions that took place an Action Plan is being drawn up. This will include points on the need for an evidence based approach to tackle diversity in science, as well as ways to improve employment and the wider science industry."

On a similar theme, Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) Campaign held an event at Walsall College on Saturday 28 June 2014 to promote careers in engineering to young women.

Valerie said: "I was pleased to help WISE promote the event to local schools. It is encouraging that 50 young women attended. It is a waste of talent that women are so underrepresented in science, technology, engineering and mathematics professions."

Dora Street

Valerie said "When I met Dora Street residents on Friday 20 June 2014 they told me that there are problems with prostitution and drug dealing in the local area. Concerns were also raised about vans parking on the street. I have made representations to Walsall MBC and West Midlands police asking that steps are taken to address these."

Gala Baths

Valerie said: "A number of constituents have contacted me again having heard rumours about the future of the Gala Baths. I raised these concerns with the Chief Executive of Walsall MBC. I have been informed the Council is investing in improving facilities and 'at this stage there are no plans to close Walsall Gala Baths.'"

Schools in Walsall South

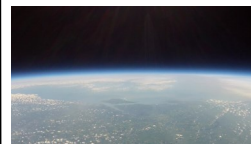
Whitehall Juniors and Butts Primary

This month, Valerie welcomed pupils from Whitehall Junior School to Parliament and visited Butts Primary School.

Valerie said: "I was delighted to meet with the members of the school council from Whitehall Juniors. There were some excellent questions asked by the children, including what was the most difficult decision I had to take. I replied by saying that there had been some situations where I had to balance competing interests from my constituents."

"When I visited Butts Primary School the pupils were engaged in many activities about World War Two. They showed me the gas masks they made. Another ongoing project related to the Egyptians. It was good to see the new ICT suite."

Queen Mary Grammar School Space Programme



Valerie said: "Pupils at Queen Mary's Grammar School in my constituency are attempting to beat the altitude achieved by Felix Baumgartner, who skydived from 39,045m, for a fraction of the cost with their own atmospheric probes. The initiative shown by this group of student to design and build the probes and computer systems, while at the same time raising money for the project through sponsorship, is commendable."