

View from the House.

News about the economic recovery is premature. Many people have told me they do not have an improved standard of living. There are many factors that contribute to the debate. Not needing a visit to a food bank. Or the nightmare for many vulnerable people who have to prove that they cannot walk to an unqualified assessor to access support. And in the West Midlands unemployment is rising now to 8.2% .

I welcome the announcement that a future Labour Government will enact a Bill to repeal the "Bedroom Tax". This law has caused hardship and distress to those caught by it. Forced out of a home they have known for a long time or to find extra money is an impossible decision for many of the most vulnerable.

The recent announcement that the Government plan to implement standardised packaging for tobacco products before 2015 is welcome. I was pleased when the minister answered my question of when this would be enacted, that if the decision is to proceed, the House could make a final decision before the summer recess.

My adjournment debate on the Green belt in Walsall South set out why the green belt is crucial to the quality of life. Residents' views on the Great Barr Park application appeared to have been ignored. So too has the planning policy framework. It is there to protect the green belt for all and prevent speculators from concreting over the green space for their own economic gain. In my view this application is a real abuse of the planning process.

Those developers could learn about community from the fans of Darlaston Town FC. The fundraising auction raised £2000: £140 for a Tea for two at the House at my expense.

I wish you all a happy and peaceful Easter.

VALERIE VAZ MP
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