



# Ruth Cadbury

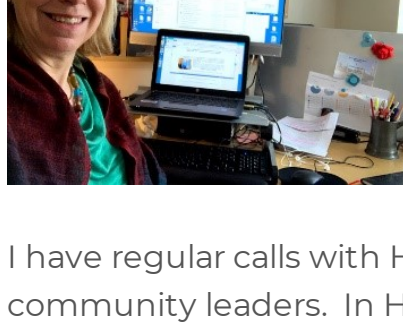
Member of Parliament for Brentford & Isleworth

## MP's REPORT TO RESIDENTS: MAY 2020

I provide regular updates on my work to local residents.

You can find previous reports of my work on my web site: [www.ruthcadbury.co.uk](http://www.ruthcadbury.co.uk) I also report regularly on my [Facebook page](#) and via [Twitter](#) and [Instagram @RuthCadbury](#). You can see full details of my questions and speeches in Parliament, and get Regular updates about my Parliamentary activities on [TheyWorkForYou](#) in [Hansard](#) and on [YouTube](#)

See my special [Coronavirus Web-page](#) for information on local and national services, help-lines and volunteering; and to sign up for Hounslow Council's daily updates.

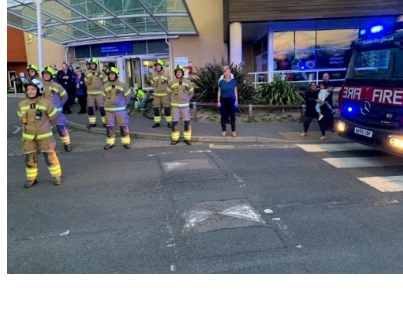


My last report was my first since lock-down began.

A month later, my team and I are more used to working on-line; on constituency issues and now back in "virtual" Parliament, holding the government to account. The hours are as long as usual, but the workplace has changed.

I have regular calls with Hounslow Council, the Police, the GLA, Health and community leaders. In Hounslow the emergency response appears to have worked well, with food and medicines being delivered to those in isolation. West Middlesex Hospital and care homes have not been overwhelmed, although there is no doubt it has been a tough 6 weeks and supplies of PPE are only just keeping up with demand. The challenge now is that many who would not have described themselves as vulnerable are struggling. Already the food banks, Open Kitchen and faith groups are seeing an increasing demand for food and other help and advice.

It's been a difficult month for everyone, and for some much more. We all know people who have sadly passed away through Covid-19, and family and friends we cannot grieve for properly. So many have lost their livelihoods and will be lucky if they have any income at all in the weeks or months ahead, and for so many, staying at home has been very tough.



But each week we thank all those who are there to help us during this challenging time; NHS and care workers, teachers, Council staff, transport workers, emergency and utilities workers and many many more.

Thank you!

### LOCAL JOB LOSSES

Hounslow appears to be one of the worst hit boroughs in London for job losses; Heathrow is operating at 10% of normal levels, and there are so many hotel, hospitality and media jobs based here. Tens of thousands of Hounslow borough residents work at Heathrow and in the supply chain and many have been furloughed, or have already lost their jobs. This crisis exposes just how dependent our area is on a single workplace, as aviation will take longer than other sectors to recover. Hounslow Council is working on a strategy to mitigate the worst effects and, with other local Councils and the business community, will be seeking support from the Government to support new jobs and quality training.

However, some companies should be better able to weather the storm than others. I was particularly concerned with British Airways' announcement to permanently cut 12,000 jobs (30% of the workforce) and severely cut pay and conditions for remaining staff, to come into effect once staff return from furlough. There is no case for punishing loyal staff and undermining the future of the nation's flag-carrier at this time, when BA's parent company IAG secured a €1bn loan backed by the Spanish State bank, and the company has such a strong credit line. I have had hundreds of emails from worried BA staff, and have met Unite and BALPA, the two main unions that represent BA staff. And as a member of the Transport Committee I have been calling BA's Willie Walsh to account.

Of course it is to be expected that the pandemic will have a long-term impact on aviation, and that is why I have joined with other Labour MPs to demand that the Government sets up a high-level task-force with aviation business leaders and unions to develop a coherent strategy for UK aviation that takes account of the need to link the regions with London and the UK to the world whilst also addressing our climate commitments and developing opportunities for diversification.

### APRIL CONSTITUENCY WORK

Whilst there have been no community events or face-to-face meetings to attend, my team and I continue to respond to issues raised with us by, or on behalf of, constituents generally coming to me because they fall through the cracks of the various Government schemes. I am receiving an average of 20 new requests for help and support every day.

We continue to respond to calls for help from constituents stuck overseas. The Foreign Office were clearly not prepared with a system for getting people home to Britain, unlike other countries that seemed to get their citizens home quicker. After our pressure, flights were put on from Amritsar, but at the time of writing I am aware of constituents still stuck in India, some running out of essential medication.

Students living in the Paragon student accommodation owned by Notting Hill Genesis contacted me when they were being told they were liable for the summer term's rent, despite the fact they could not travel back to clear their rooms, there were no classes to attend and they no longer had any work to pay for their rent. Unlike other student landlords, including other housing associations, NHG would not pay refunds. However the University of West London has recognised the inequity, and supported all the Paragon student residents who were in hardship.

A large number of constituents have told me that the various Government Covid loan and grants schemes do not help them. As a result of pressure from MPs there were some improvements announced, such as the scheme for very small businesses. However too many people are falling through the quite large cracks. What's more, anyone needing to apply for Universal Credit will have to wait five weeks for the first payment, and with rents for many being well above the assumed housing allowance part of the benefit – many families will be left with less than £100 per week for all other costs. This is why Labour is demanding a release of the benefits cap and a number of other changes to UC.



Following a request from a teacher at a local special school that all their bicycles had been stolen, I put out a call via Twitter and Facebook and collected 10 bikes kindly donated by local residents. Brian from Hounslow Cycling Campaign ensured they were safe to ride and they are now being enjoyed by the children.



I've been supporting and promoting our Covid Mutual Aid Groups who are doing an amazing job linking those in need with volunteers, and collecting food and household essentials for the local foodbanks. I also helped out at Hounslow's Community Hub food collection and sorting centre, and learnt about the range of ways that the Council is supporting vulnerable people.

If you can **volunteer**, please do; with your local Covid19 Mutual Aid Group, or the NHS or Council volunteer services. If you can **spare money** to hard-pressed charities – then please do that too. Many vital charities may not survive the loss of income as normal charitable giving collapses. And now there will be the exponential growth in demand for some such as foodbanks, advice and information services and domestic charities.

If you can – please give generously of your time or your money!!

### CONTACTING ME AND MY TEAM

Although I am no longer able to meet with you in person for the time being, my team and I are still working to assist you. Please understand that we will have to deal with the most urgent situations first and then any relating to COVID-19. Other emails and calls may take longer to receive a response. Please email [ruth@ruthcadbury.org.uk](mailto:ruth@ruthcadbury.org.uk) including your full contact details (& any relevant reference numbers e.g. DWP, Home Office, and/or my ZA reference) if we've responded on the same issue before. Without all the above information, there may be a delay processing your enquiry.

Phone: **020 8581 3646** between 10am - 2pm Monday - Thursday and we will do our very best to assist you or **020 7219 8590**.



Parliament is now up and running again, albeit in a slightly changed format with a minimal number of MPs in the chamber, and the rest of us using Zoom to challenge Ministers and speak in debates.

During April I:

- Challenged the Foreign Secretary standing in at Prime Minister's Questions to learn lessons from other countries and past delays to improve the UK's response to Covid-19
- Co-signed a letter from Seema Malhotra with neighbouring Labour MPs calling for a meeting with BA over job losses
- Wrote to the Housing, Communities and Local Government Secretary re business grants- raised the concerns of local business and called for changes to make sure those not fulfilling existing criteria could get support
- Wrote to the Food Voucher Scheme after Chiswick School raised concerns about delays
- At an Urgent Question session, asked Health Secretary Matt Hancock to invest in short & long term mental health support including for PTSD for NHS/Care staff and those affected by Covid-19
- Signed an Urgent Day Motion (EDM) calling for BA to stop job cuts & to work with trade unions and Government to get a solution that protects jobs
- Signed an EDM calling on Government to take urgent measures around free school meal vouchers to make sure that new voucher system is working fully



### KEIR STARMER

Keir was elected at the start of the month, but already he has built a strong front-bench team from across the Parliamentary party, who bring with them a wealth of experience and energy to their portfolios. For the first time we have a woman shadow Chancellor in Anneliese Dodds, developing a progressive economic policy that is strong on jobs and the environment, targeting income support on those who need it most, and committing to go tough on the tax havens.

It's been good to see Keir committing to work with the Government to improve the Covid response, whilst saying he won't be afraid to constructively criticise and call out problems that emerge.

Thanks again to all who are working and volunteering to keep us safe and supported through this crisis and my best wishes to all constituents

UNSUBSCRIBE