

Dear friend,

Well, we finally have some summer weather and it's only just getting to August!

### **Summer Recess**

Parliamentary recess began this week, but this doesn't mean we're all off on holiday for two months. While we do get a break, it also gives MPs an opportunity to spend more time in their constituencies, meeting community groups, attending events and getting involved in projects that parliamentary commitments often keep us away from.

This year I will spend some time in Sierra Leone as a volunteer with the international development charity VSO. Sierra Leone was ravaged by a civil war between 1991 and 2000, and there is still a lot of work to be done to rebuild the country. I will be working at the Centre for Democracy and Human Rights helping locals improve their para legal and advocacy work, which is vital to the re-development of civil society in the country.

While I'm away my staff will keep my office open to take your queries and continue with casework – they will be able to contact me if it is necessary.

Recess allows much more flexible working arrangements, so once I'm back I'm looking forward to spending lots of time with my family. I have two young daughters (Anisah aged 8 and Ammarah aged 7) and they both assure me that the main reason they love the summer holidays is they get to spend more time with dad while mum's at work! Last year they both learned how to swim and the year before it was how to ride a bike; we haven't yet decided what challenge awaits us this year but I'm really looking forward to finding out!

But it's not just a couple of weeks of relaxation (it's a common misconception that just because MPs are not in parliament we're not working!). I'll be continuing with my constituency surgeries and casework as normal, and will carry on campaigning on the issues that matter most to you.

### **Welfare Reforms**

The Government's new welfare reform plans announced this week prove that though it's recess, we're still working hard for you. I've personally been hugely impressed by the proposals, which will make a big difference to those who are out of work.

In Tooting there are still 1382 people without jobs. Although this is a massive improvement since 1997, when unemployment was over 4000, it is still not good enough.

One of the reasons I joined Tooting Labour Party as a 15 year old in 1985 was to fight mass unemployment. This has become entrenched in certain parts of society into an ongoing cycle of worklessness in many communities.

The new plans will help break the cycle; easing people who have been out of work for a long period back into working life by making them help their local community in return for their state benefits.

The plans also propose new support, training and funding for those on incapacity benefit. This will include help in dealing with long-term pain management and depression, which are amongst the biggest causes of incapacity amongst Britain's workers.

Disabled workers will benefit from the Access to Work scheme, which will double funding for specialised equipment, wheelchair lifts, sign language interpretation and transport. This aims to bring about a culture change in the approach of employers by making it easier for them to employ those with disabilities.

Other proposals include plans to help drug addicts get jobs, keep them and beat their addictions. The plans will also place more emphasis on responsible parenting, with the aim of lifting a further 200,000 children out of poverty.

I have strong hopes for these plans. It is time we made people to take more responsibility for their lives and their children's lives – these measures will help people help themselves, and improve their lives immeasurably.

Please stay in touch over the summer period. If you want me to visit any events or community groups please do contact my office, as I would be delighted to come along.

As ever, if there are any other issues or concerns you have feel free to write to me using the contact details at the bottom of this email.

Best wishes,

**Sadiq**

To read more about my work in our community and in Westminster, read my diary by clicking [HERE](#)

## **CONTACTING ME**

I hold four advice surgeries every month around the constituency. For more information about making an appointment and how to contact me click [HERE](#).

Whether it's a local issue or government policy, I'm here to help (whatever your politics). Click [HERE](#) for details of how to contact or meet me.

For more details on my work for Tooting constituency residents, please see my website: [www.sadiqkhan.org.uk](http://www.sadiqkhan.org.uk).

If you've been forwarded this email by a friend and would like to sign-up to receive it directly in future, please email [sadiqkhan@sadiqkhan.org.uk](mailto:sadiqkhan@sadiqkhan.org.uk) with 'Sign me up' in the subject box.

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