



# Mark Hendrick MP

Labour & Co-operative Member of Parliament



## Newsletter

### CONSTITUENCY NEWS

@MpHendrick

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Dear Constituent

Welcome to my first newsletter of 2014. We have returned straight back into the swing of things in Westminster debating the issues that are negatively affecting people in real terms here in Preston.

I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Cllr Tom Burns who died suddenly on 8th January. Tom was a dedicated family man and staunch socialist who served his community to the end and he will be dearly missed by colleagues and friends, all of whom have fond memories of him.

Best Wishes

## Ashton Primary School



Mark with Year 2 pupils at Ashton Primary School with Larches & Savick City Councillors, Mark Yates and Phil Crowe.

Mark received a number of letters from pupils who raised their concerns about local issues. They participated in a Question and Answer session with Mark and the Larches & Savick Councillors.

## Foxton Centre



Mark with staff and volunteers at the Foxton Centre

Mark visited the Foxton Centre on 10<sup>th</sup> January. He met with the centre's manager, Rev Tim Keithley and staff.

Mark Hendrick said: 'It was heart-warming to see such a fantastically well run centre in the heart of the City with so many caring individuals dedicated to obliterating homelessness from our City. The sad reality is that we still have many people sleeping rough on our streets, but I am encouraged by the good work that is being carried out by the centre's dedicated workers and volunteers. The centre also undertakes fantastic work with young people and sex workers.'



## Fixed Odds Betting Terminals

On 8th January 2014, Mark raised the issue of the rise of Fixed Odds Betting terminals in towns and cities with high levels of unemployment and deprivation. Addressing the House he said:

*'Many of us on both sides of the House who represent poor and working-class constituents can see the effect that these machines are having on lives and families, and their impact on our inner towns and cities, especially where a proliferation of betting shops provides an opportunity to play the machines, or where category B1 and B2 machines are to be found in clubs. Any Labour Members who attend trade union and labour clubs, and any Government Members who attend political and sports clubs, will regularly see people pouring hundreds of pounds into these machines, while often getting very little back.*

*Communities are becoming poorer. We have heard from the Government about an increase in employment, but there has been a large increase in part-time employment, and low pay is the problem it always was. Poor people are being drawn in initially to try to make money for essentials, rather than just coming along for amusement, and are then getting drawn into habitual gambling, which we are all seeing on our high streets.' People know what is happening with high-stake, fixed-odds machines*

## Syria

Speaking in the House on 13th January during a debate about Syria, Mark spoke about his meeting with the Chief of Staff to the President of the opposition group, the Syrian National Coalition, Mr Monzer Akbik:

*'I had a meeting earlier today with the chief of staff of the Syrian National Coalition, who claimed he had evidence that the Iranian and the Assad regimes are providing covert support for ISIS—the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant—and Islamists operating in Syria. He said that the target of ISIS is not the Assad regime but the Free Syrian Army. Is the Foreign Secretary aware that all attacks are taking place on the Free Syrian Army with the support of Assad? If he is and believes it to be true, does it not put a totally different complexion on the war in Syria in that the Free Syrian Army is on its own? We should look at more ways to support it and not just provide humanitarian assistance.'*

For the full text of speeches and written questions and answers on Hansard go to:

[http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmhansrd/cmlfiles/mps/commons\\_hansard\\_926\\_home.html](http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmhansrd/cmlfiles/mps/commons_hansard_926_home.html)

## Lobbying Bill

The Transparency of Lobbying, Non-Party Campaigning and Trade Union Administration Bill was voted on in Parliament on 22nd January. In a recent statement to constituents, Mark outlined his views:

*'David Cameron promised to fix our broken politics but this Bill makes things worse, not better. The Bill will do nothing to ensure greater transparency in the Government's relationship with the 'Big Six' energy companies and it would also do nothing to stop lobbyist Lynton Crosby from advising the Prime Minister on tobacco policy - but it could stop an organisation like Cancer Research UK from campaigning about it. With no code of conduct, or sanctions for bad behaviour, the Bill is a step backwards from the current voluntary register that already governs parts of the industry.*

*The Bill is a gag on charities and campaigners in the run-up to an election and it will have a chilling effect on the quality of our national debate. This is a cynical attempt by the Government to insulate their record and their policies from legitimate, democratic criticism. Labour supports transparency for third party campaigners. We originally set a cap on third party spending in the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 to ensure that we could never become like America. But this isn't about transparency, it is about gagging charities and campaigners.'*

