

It is important that the victims of Worboys' crimes and the wider public have faith in our justice system – Richard Burgon

Richard Burgon MP, Labour's Shadow Justice Secretary, responding to reports that the UK Justice Secretary is seeking legal advice over John Worboys' release, said:

"It is important that the victims of Worboys' crimes, as well as the wider public, have faith in our justice system. So it is right that the Ministry of Justice seeks advice on a Judicial Review of this case, as the rules permit.

"A Judicial Review would look at whether the Parole Board's decision was taken properly, but there are wider questions that must also be answered. The Worboys case raises many serious questions that anything less than an independent end-to-end review into the handling of the case—from the first report to the police of an attack right through to the Parole Board hearing—would let down the victims and the wider public."

The parole case

A number of constituents have written concerning the Parole Board's decision in the Worboys case to express concern about his release. I have explained that Parliament too has expressed concern and has asked the government to reconsider. We have an independent Parole Board to make individual case decisions where Ministers do not intervene. Following the concerns expressed in the country and in Parliament we learn today that the government is seeing if there is any basis for them to intervene in this case through a Judicial Review. That will require evidence that the decision has not been properly made by the Board.

Government climb-down is further proof

that Labour is winning the argument on housing

John Healey MP, Labour's Shadow Housing Secretary, responding to the Government's housing announcement, said:

"This welcome Government climb-down is further proof that Labour is winning the argument and making the running on housing.

"When Conservative Ministers voted down this Labour proposal previously they described it as 'unnecessary regulation' which 'will deter investment and put up rents'.

"The Government must now rethink its ideological refusal to help renters in other areas too, starting by backing Labour's plans for longer tenancies and controls on rents."

Karen Buck MP, who proposed these measures in a Private Members Bill, said:

"I am delighted that the government have agreed to back this important Bill this time around.

"One million rented homes are unfit for occupation- plagued by problems such as damp, mould or extreme cold. This Bill requires landlords to ensure that all homes are fit to live in and gives tenants new rights to challenge them if they do not.

"Everyone should have the right to a decent home and this is one step towards making that happen."

Money for social care and health

During last week's statement on the winter pressures in the NHS I asked the Secretary of State for Health and Social care to look again at the money coming to West Berkshire and Wokingham Councils for social care. The settlements have been tight, with a dispute over our entitlement when the system of calculation changed. He gave a friendly reply, and I will follow up again in writing to see if we can do better in future years. I am glad there should be more co-ordination of social care and health care, given the need to provide good quality care to elderly patients on discharge from hospital.

Tory promises: often made, rarely delivered

The Tories have a habit of making promises to the people of Scotland and then never delivering on them; this week was no different.

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