

Stopping the small boats

I am pleased to report one of the hotels being used for migrants in my constituency will be vacated by the Home Office soon. The Minister reported progress with stemming the flow. He argued that it was not fair that groups of young men sought to circumvent the legal ways of entry and to take more of the places available for asylum seekers by refusing to use the legal channels.

He was able to tell us that numbers crossing from the continent are down by a fifth this year compared to last. The French authorities have co-operated more in stopping boats from departing French shores. The new arrangements with Albania have stopped most of the flow from there and have enabled the return of many to that safe country. The government awaits the result of the appeal to the Supreme Court over sending people to Rwanda who seek illegal entry to the UK. The processing of claims has been improved.

They have intensified work to find, charge and prosecute the illegal gangs operating the boats. It is good there has been some progress but clearly more is needed by pursuing all these options, and processing claims more rapidly.