

Dear Kate,

Thank you for contacting me recently about the Government's decision to drop its obligation to the Dubs amendment– a pledge to resettle unaccompanied child refugees in the UK. I believe the Government's decision to scrap our commitment to child refugees is shameful, especially when so few children have safely reached the UK under the scheme.

The amendment was proposed by Lords Dubs as an amendment to the Immigration Bill, a Labour peer who fled persecution from the Nazis as a child refugee. After initially refusing to support the amendment, the Government later changed its position and accepted the Dubs amendment in June last year. Charities estimated that the scheme could help around 3000 unaccompanied minors living in camps across Europe, but since the amendment was accepted only 350 children have arrived to the UK.

Last month, the Government chose to quietly scrap their commitment to child refugees via a written ministerial statement. I spoke out on this at the time – you can watch the clip on my [website](#). Many of the constituents who contacted me afterwards were aware that another amendment similar to the Dubs amendment was to be voted on today in Parliament, as part of the Children and Social Work Bill.

The amendment would require councils to let the Government know whether they have spare capacity to house unaccompanied child refugees. In Lewisham, our council has previously offered 23 foster places for Dubs child refugees but 22 of these places are yet to be filled. Other local authorities across the country have made similar offers. Gloucestershire has offered 10 foster places but has only received two children. Bristol has also offered 10 places and is yet to receive even one child. If councils are making offers which are being ignored by the Government, it makes no sense for MPs to vote against local authorities housing refugees when the will and the capacity is clearly there.

As a Labour Whip, I worked hard in attempting to get this amendment through today, but unfortunately we lost the vote by 287-267. I am extremely disappointed by this result. We were expecting more Tory rebels to vote with us, but in the end only three Conservative MPs decided to vote for the Dubs amendment.

I can assure you that my Labour colleagues and I will continue to keep the pressure on the Government in regards to their responsibility to child refugees. I will update my [website](#) with any developments on this issue.

Thank you once again for contacting me.

Kind regards,

Vicky

Vicky Foxcroft
Member of Parliament for Lewisham Deptford