

# Kevan Jones MP

Member of Parliament for North Durham



Parliamentary Update

November 2023

## The King's Speech

On 7 November the King opened Parliament for a new session and delivered a speech outlining the Government's programme for the year ahead.

The Government's programme lacks content and vision. In my response in the House of Commons I raised the Government's failure to include long overdue reform of the Mental Health Act. This was a manifesto promise by the Government and I share the disappointment of many that this has been broken.



I spoke about transport, where the Government has been letting us down for a long time, the smoking ban and leasehold reform. I also spoke about plans to reform the leasehold system. Leaseholders have been waiting for change for many years and it is frustrating that the Government's plans do not go far enough.

In conclusion, I spoke about proposals to update investigatory powers. As a member of Parliament's Intelligence and Security Committee, I agree that powers for the services that keep us safe need to be kept up to date, as do the safeguards that go alongside them.

Watch my full response to the King's Speech: [fb.com/KevanJonesMP](https://fb.com/KevanJonesMP)

**The Northern Echo**

### Kevan Jones MP takes aim at levelling up after Durham's bids fail

22nd November

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

POLITICS

DURHAM



Kevan Jones

## 'Levelling Up' Funding Round 3

On 20 November the Government unexpectedly announced the allocation of the third and final round of 'levelling up' funding. Disappointingly, there was no new money for County Durham.

I believe this whole process has been a sham. In round two, Durham County Council spent hundreds of thousands of pounds of taxpayers' money to bid for funding. Then, once the bids were submitted, the Government changed the rules meaning the bids were disqualified.

The Government should compensate Durham County Council for this scandalous waste of money.

Read my article in the Northern Echo [here](#).

## Autumn Statement

On 22 November the Chancellor delivered his Autumn Statement. On the same day, the Office for Budget Responsibility downgraded forecasts for economic growth over the next two years.

After 13 years of economic failure, working people are worse off. Prices are still rising in the shops, energy bills are up and mortgage payments are higher after the Government crashed the economy. In the last two years, prices have risen by 16% and food bills by 28%.

From freezing personal allowance thresholds to forcing local councils to raise council tax, working people have been taxed more and more by stealth. Taxes are now the highest they have been since the Second World War. This is the Government's record.

The Government's headline announcement was a 2p cut in National Insurance. But going into the Autumn Statement, the Government had already put in place tax increases worth the equivalent of a 10p increase on National Insurance.

The independent Office for Budget Responsibility has said that next year is set to see the largest reduction in living standards since records began in the 1950s. People will rightly be asking: am I better off after 13 years of this Government?

Watch my full response to the Autumn Statement:  
[fb.com/KevanJonesMP](https://fb.com/KevanJonesMP)

## Remembrance

November is the month of remembrance and I attended several events this year to remember our fallen Service personnel.

I planted a tribute in Parliament's Constituency Garden of Remembrance, as well as attending Armistice Day and Remembrance Day events across North Durham.

## Suicide Prevention

This month I met with representatives from Samaritans and If U Care Share to call on the Government to continue vital funding for suicide prevention, which is due to run out in March 2024.

I also attended a suicide prevention training event in Speaker's House, where Mr Speaker spoke movingly about the impact that suicide on himself and his family.

Samaritans estimates that it would cost just £1.40 per person to continue funding for suicide prevention. Disappointingly, the Government failed to announce any new funding in the Autumn Statement.

## RAAC at St Leonard's

Many pupils who attend St Leonard's school travel from North Durham. On 21 November I joined Mary Kelly Foy MP's debate in Westminster Hall raising the impact that reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) continues to have on pupils and staff at the school.

Watch my contribution to the debate:  
[fb.com/KevanJonesMP](https://fb.com/KevanJonesMP)



## Get in touch

*If you are a constituent and need help or would like to arrange an appointment, please contact me.*

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