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Wednesday
3 December 2003



PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF LORDS
OFFICIAL REPORT

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£3.00

be here somewhat earlier than I might have predicted.

I am raising this matter tonight because it is an extremely grave one for the 36 Engineer Regiment and for the town that I represent. It is an irony that 19 years ago I had to fight exactly the same battle when it was proposed to move the regiment from Invicta barracks in Maidstone to, at that time, Thorney Island. It was a bleak prospect and the town and regiment rebelled. I am pleased to say that we secured a reversal of the policy.

It would seem that yet again we are threatened with the removal of the 36 Engineers from Maidstone. I am sure that the Minister will accept that it is very important that morale is kept as high as possible in an Army that is stretched as badly as it is at the moment. Part of the maintenance of good morale is ensuring that families are happy, especially when the forces have to serve overseas for any length of time.

The 36 Engineers is a sapper regiment, so almost by definition it spends a large amount of time abroad and has one of the highest rates of separation from spouses and families in the entire Army. It is thus essential for recruitment and retention that the soldiers can go away feeling that their wives and families are happily integrated in the local community. In turn, the wives have considerable influence over whether their husbands decide to stay in the Army. It follows that if there is general unhappiness with the serving conditions, the soldiers will not give a particularly happy account to potential recruits.

In Maidstone, the 36 Engineer Regiment is based near the centre of a large town, which offers not only good shops but extremely good schools, including the envied grammar schools, and many opportunities for wives to work. The Gaffney report described the regiment's relationship with the town as "ideal" for a major unit. It is. Super-barracks are no substitute. They would need to be built and maintained, and would be costly. The regiment currently enjoys the freedom of the town, and the citizens of Maidstone and the surrounding areas regard the Army with immense gratitude following its intervention, first, after the 1987 wind storm when we had to clear roads urgently and, secondly, during the floods which, the Minister may recall, devastated parts of my constituency a few years ago.

The Minister appears remarkably unmoved by all that, however. I shall quote from a recent letter from the Secretary of State for Defence. He said:

"I should tell you that the Army is committed to consolidating its estate into fewer and larger sites. As a result, a singleton site such as Invicta Park Barracks will be kept under review for possible disposal in the longer term. I should stress that no specific time lines have been established for this process but the points you make regarding the presence of 36 Engineer Regiment in the area will be taken into account."

House of Commons debates

Wednesday, 22 March 2006

[? What are Commons debates?](#)

36 Engineer Regiment (Maidstone)

[All Commons debates on 22 Mar 2006](#)

[« Previous debate](#)

Motion made, and Question proposed, That this House do now adjourn.—[Tony Cunningham.]

[Add your comment](#)

6:47 pm



[Ann Widdecombe](#) (Maidstone & The Weald, Conservative) [Link to this](#) | [Hansard source](#)

I am grateful for the opportunity to have this [Adjournment debate](#) tonight and I also wish to record my gratitude to the usual channels on the Government side who ensured that I knew that I had to be here somewhat earlier than I might have predicted.

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The 36 Engineers is a sapper regiment, so almost by definition it spends a large

Paul Ledbrook: As a former Sapper I support Ann wholeheartedly. One reinforcement I would make is that from an educational point of view the close links with the civilians in the town is very important otherwise there will be a future culture of them and us; ideal for a future dictator, who might find soldiers with no contact with the civil population more ready to control dissenters, but not so good for Democracy. Perhaps our Government should consider this aspect in the context of their proposals.

[Add your comment](#)

Emily Thornberry MP

RSS



- **Labour MP for Islington South & Finsbury**
- **Entered Parliament on 5 May 2005** — General election
- **Majority:** 484 voters — 607th safest out of 642 MPs
- **[Send a message to Emily Thornberry](#)** (only use this for *your* MP) (via

WriteToThem.com)

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- [Maiden speech](#)

Voting record (from PublicWhip)

How Emily Thornberry voted on key issues since 2001:

- **Quite strongly against** introducing a **smoking ban**. [votes](#), [speeches](#)
- **Very strongly for** introducing **ID cards**. [votes](#), [speeches](#)
- **Quite strongly for** Labour's **anti-terrorism laws**. [votes](#), [speeches](#)

Read about [how the voting record is decided](#).

More on [well-known issues](#) (from the Guardian) & [their full record](#)

- **[Occasionally rebels](#)** against their party in this parliament.

Topics of interest

Select committee membership

- Member, Communities and Local Government Committee (since 24 Oct 2006)
- Member, Draft Legal Services Bill (Joint Committee) (since 3 Aug 2006)
- Member, Environmental Audit Committee (since 14 Jul 2005)

Asks most questions about

- **Subjects:** Departmental Policies, Water Action Plan, Water and Sanitation (Funding), War Criminals, Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act
- **Departments:** Home Department, International Development, Work and Pensions, Deputy Prime Minister, Treasury

(based on [written questions asked by Emily Thornberry](#) and answered by departments)

- [Parliamentary career](#) (From The Guardian)
- [Election results for Islington South & Finsbury](#) (From The Guardian)
- [Previous candidacies](#) (From The Guardian)
- [Contact details](#) (From The Guardian)
- [General information](#) (From BBC News)

Previous MPs in this constituency

- [Chris Smith](#)

Nearby constituencies

- [Holborn & St Pancras](#) (1.9 km)
- [Islington North](#) (2.5 km)
- [Hackney South & Shoreditch](#) (3.5 km)
- [Hackney North & Stoke Newington](#) (3.6 km)
- [Cities of London & Westminster](#) (4.2 km)

Journalist?

Please feel free to use the data on this page, but if you do you must cite [TheyWorkForYou.com](#) in the body of your articles as the source of any analysis or data you get off this site. If you ignore this, we might have to start keeping these sorts of records on you...

If this MP or Lord has contributed more than once to one debate, only one speech is shown.

Written Answers – Treasury: Cycling (2 Nov 2006)

“To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what incentives have been given to organisations to promote the cycle to work scheme among their staff since its inception.”

Written Answers – Treasury: Cycling (2 Nov 2006)

“To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many organisations have registered for tax exemption under the cycle to work scheme since its inception.”

[Mr. Martyn Jones in the Chair] – Council Leaseholders (Works Charges) (1 Nov 2006)

“I do not know whether the letter to which the hon. Gentleman refers is one dated sometime in December. If so, I have a copy of it. It is from the ODPM and signed by Baroness Andrews, who wrote it to Steve Hitchens.”

[More of Emily Thornberry's recent appearances](#)

[RSS feed \(?\)](#)

Numerology

Please note that numbers do not measure quality. Also, MPs and Lords may do other things not currently covered by this site. ([More about this](#))

- Has spoken in **23 debates** in the last year — average amongst MPs.
- Has received answers to **39 written questions** in the last year — average amongst MPs.
- Is a member of **3** select committees.
- Replied within 2 or 3 weeks to **5% - 15%** of messages sent via WriteToThem.com during 2005, according to polling data — well below average amongst MPs.
- Has attended **82% of votes** in parliament — above average amongst MPs. (From Public Whip)
- People have made **10 comments** on this MP's speeches — well above average amongst MPs.
- This MP's speeches are understandable to an average **15-16** year old, going by the [Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level](#) score.
- **89** people are tracking whenever this MP speaks — [email me whenever Emily Thornberry speaks](#).
- Has used three-word alliterative phrases (e.g. "she sells seashells") **19 times** in debates — well below average amongst MPs. ([Why is this here?](#))

Report, view, or discuss local problems

(like graffiti, fly tipping, broken paving slabs, or street lighting)

Enter a nearby postcode, or street name and area:

Go

How to report a problem

1. Enter a nearby postcode, or street name and area
2. Locate the problem on a map of the area
3. Enter details of the problem
4. We send it to the council on your behalf

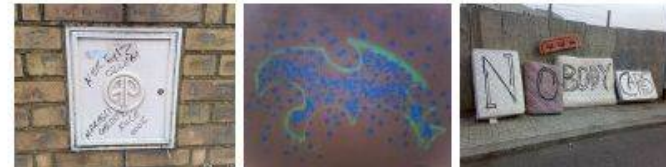
FixMyStreet updates

207
reports in
past week

432
fixed in past
month

2074
updates on
reports

Photos of recent reports



Recently reported problems

- [dog fouling bin](#)
- [benches missing](#)
- [Weak Bridge sign knocked aside](#)
- [holes in the road](#)
- [Rubbish](#)

Obstruction to pavement



*Reported anonymously at 21:18, Sunday 11 March
Sent to Cambridge City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council
12 minutes later*

Overgrown ivy obstructing pavement. Impossible to walk along pavement.

[Offensive? Unsuitable? Tell us](#)

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Updates



*Posted by Rachel at 22:41, Wednesday 14 March,
marked fixed*

This actually works - it has been cut back.

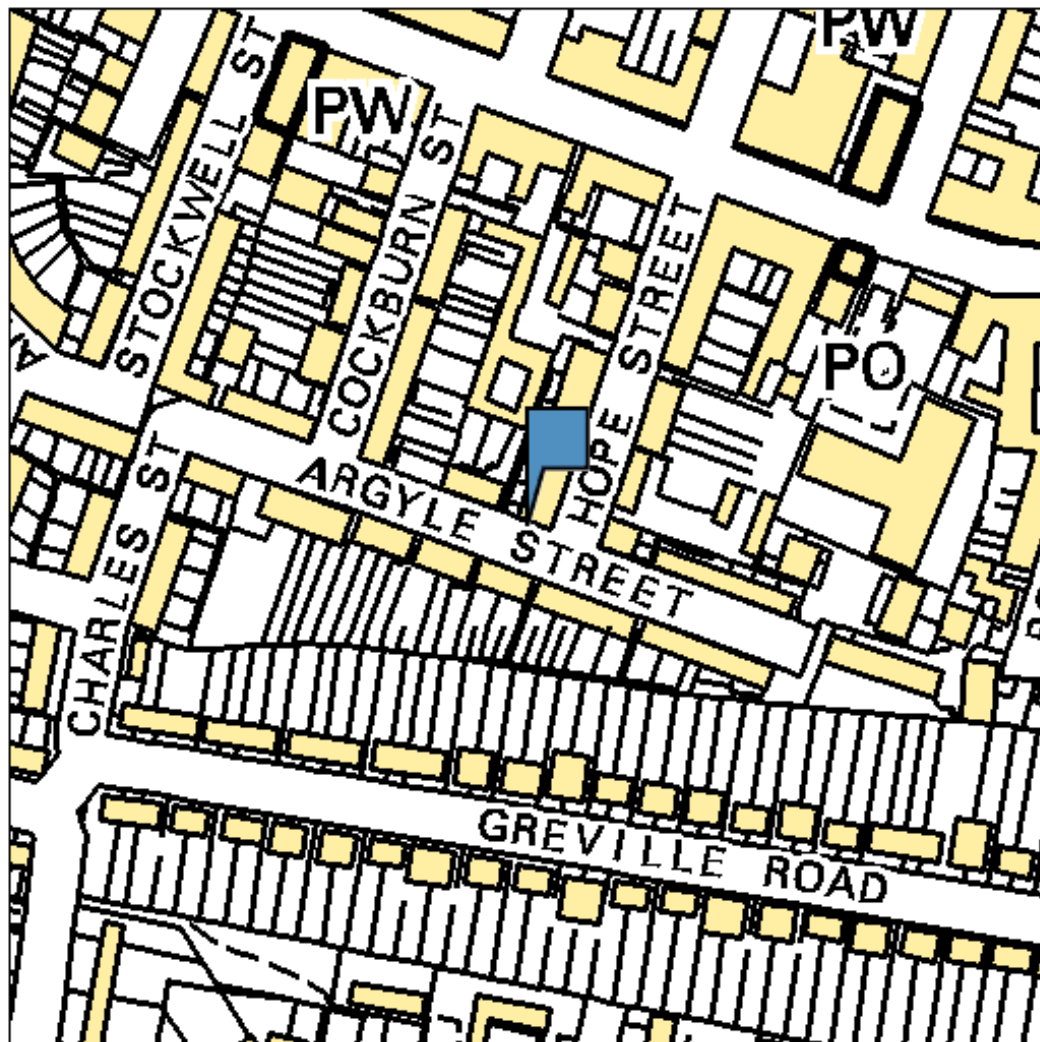
Provide an update

Name:

(optional)

Email:

Update:



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Maps

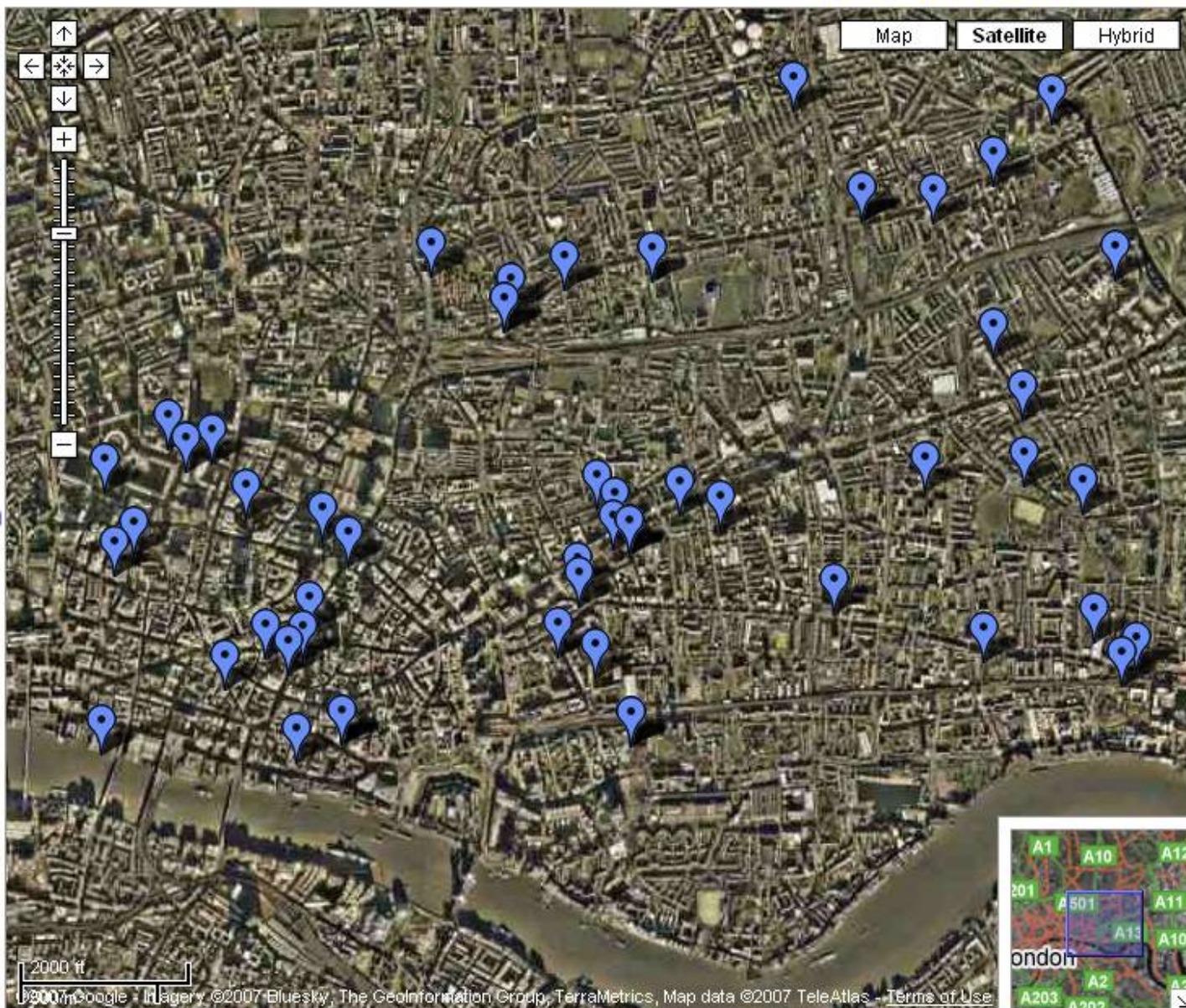
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-  [13 - 17 Old Broad Street London EC2N 1DW](#)
-  [14 Thomas More House Thomas More Highwalk Barbican London EC2Y 8BT](#)
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-  [14-20 ALIE STREET AND 14-16 NORTH TENTER STREET, ALIE STREET, LONDON, E1 8DE](#)
-  [14-20 ALIE STREET AND 14-16 NORTH TENTER STREET, ALIE STREET, LONDON, E1 8DE](#)
-  [17-19 Whitechapel Road, London, E1 1DU](#)
-  [17-19 Whitechapel Road, London, E1 1DU](#)
-  [2 To 4 Redmans Road And Land Rear of](#)



Map Satellite Hybrid

2000 ft



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 - Wider area (approximately 2000 m) [view on a map \(new window\)](#)

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Recent site updates

April 2007 Added 50 more councils.

March 2007 Added an API and a few more councils (inc. Islington and Hackney)

February 2007 Added loads more councils (inc. Camden and Tower Hamlets)

December 2006 beta launch



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[Preferences](#)
[Language Tools](#)[Home](#)[Add a tab](#)[New!](#) [Select theme](#) | [Add stuff »](#)**Date & Time**


**Fri
MAY 4**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Weather**London, England**

10°C

Mostly Cloudy

Wind: NE at

16 km/h

Humidity: 71%

Today



15° | 9°

Fri



16° | 9°

Sat



15° | 4°

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You might have a very different perspective than someone close to you today, even if you are working with an identical set of information. Don't get discouraged about this

disagreement; honest discussion will prove fruitful now. Your flexibility can help you get what you want, as long as you don't give up too quickly.

Friday, May 4, 2007

[more from tarot.com »](#)**Word of the Day****fetor:** (noun) An offensive odor; a stench.

Synonyms: malodor, malodour, reek, stench, stink, mephitis

Usage: He waited in the basement, trying to ignore the moldy fetor that permeated the air.



