



Southwark Liberal Democrat Group

Southwark Council
Liberal Democrat Group Room
160 Tooley Street
London SE1 2QH

Cllr Sarah King
Cabinet Office
160 Tooley St
London
SE1 2QH

Dear Sarah,

Indefinite Leave to Remain

I am writing to you regarding recent policy proposals from the Government, as well as proposals advanced by the Reform Party, concerning Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR), and the implications these would have for Southwark and its residents.

As you know, Southwark is one of the most diverse boroughs in the country, with around 40 per cent of residents born outside the UK. Migrants make a vital contribution to the social, cultural, and economic life of our borough. Many residents rely on ILR as the main route to permanent residence, particularly where British citizenship is financially prohibitive or incompatible with retaining another nationality. Any weakening of ILR therefore has serious consequences for individuals, families, and communities across Southwark.

Of particular concern is the Reform Party's proposal to abolish ILR altogether, which would strip residency rights from many people who have built their lives here. We are also deeply concerned by the Labour Government's proposal to extend the baseline qualifying period for ILR from five years to ten years. Residents who have already spent years contributing to our borough now face the prospect of the goalposts being moved yet again.

We are especially alarmed by the impact these proposals would have on families and children born in the UK to parents who have settled here in recent years. Prolonged insecurity risks lasting harm to children's wellbeing, stability, and sense of belonging.

Southwark Liberal Democrats were proud to support the council becoming a Borough of Sanctuary, reflecting our united commitment to inclusion, compassion, and



integration. These proposals cut directly against those values and would affect many residents' ability to put down roots and plan for the future.

In light of this, I am asking that you write to the Home Secretary to urge her to abandon proposals to extend the baseline qualifying period for ILR from five to ten years, and to set out clearly the impact this would have on Southwark residents.

Yours sincerely,

Councillor Victor Chamberlain
Leader of the Opposition
Southwark Liberal Democrat Group
Borough and Bankside Ward