

minute DLR ride from my constituency, for some kids growing up in Lewisham East it might as well be another world. How we bridge that gap is a big challenge. Excellent schools can expand the horizons of our youngsters, but I cannot help but think that mentoring schemes, such as those run by Urban Synergy in my constituency, may also have some of the answers. By providing accessible role models and giving an insight into different careers, they fire the imagination of the next generation.

If London is to improve its economic competitiveness, the underlying challenge is to tackle the huge inequalities between the haves and the have-nots. Investment in housing and social housing is very important. I look forward to hearing from the new Front-Bench team about

its plans for the decent homes programme, and I hope I will soon be in a position to reassure my constituents that much-needed investment in Lewisham homes will be forthcoming.

For as long as I am the Member of Parliament for Lewisham East, I will campaign hard to secure the resources that my part of London deserves. I will fight to reduce the gap between rich and poor and I will work tirelessly to give a voice to those who are least often heard. A friend of mine recently told her three-year-old that my job was to keep everyone in south-east London happy. That is one of the most challenging job descriptions I have ever heard, but I have told her I will do my best.