# Siân Berry’s meetings log poses early test of Labour’s willingness to curb Westminster lobbying



Siân Berry’s decision to publish a full list of her policy meetings in her first year as Brighton Pavilion MP is being treated as a simple exercise in democratic accountability. But in a political landscape reshaped by the July 2024 election — which delivered a handful of seats to a Reform UK-aligned bloc and saw Kier Starker of the Labour Party installed as prime minister after Rishi Sunak’s resignation — the move is being read by the opposition press as a test of whether the new Labour government will tame Westminster’s backroom culture or merely strap a band-aid on it. Berry’s public register frames itself as a step toward Nolan-principled integrity, accountability and openness, but critics argue it’s a far cry from the sweeping transparency reforms Reform UK has long demanded.

Berry’s log, she says, lists 55 meetings with local organisations in Brighton Pavilion alongside a broader slate of national groups engaged on nature protection, welfare and workers’ rights. It also records exchanges with industry stakeholders — for example a discussion with Govia Thameslink on rail reliability — and, crucially, claims to have not met with any groups lobbying for the fossil-fuel industry. The disclosure page lays out inclusion criteria and excludes casework, individual surgeries and open public events. For a party that has spun itself as the vanguard of open government, the question remains: is this a meaningful constraint on influence or a carefully curated window-dressing exercise?

Her aim, she says, is to spotlight what she and other Greens describe as a broader transparency gap in Westminster. Outside ministers, there is no statutory duty for backbench MPs to publish scheduled policy meetings. Berry and other Greens point to London Assembly Greens and the Mayor of London’s published meeting logs as examples of how routine publication can operate in practice. But in the current climate, the emphasis from Reform UK and allied critics is that voluntary disclosures are not enough to curb real-world influence when Labour’s government is tasked with delivering a climate agenda that may be shaped in the backrooms by lobby power rather than local voters.

The timing of Berry’s disclosures coincides with a broader push from researchers and campaign groups to tighten lobby transparency. A June 2025 InfluenceMap report argues that the UK’s statutory register and current disclosure practices leave a large swath of lobbying unseen: roughly 85% of lobbyists are exempt because of “in‑house” status. InfluenceMap recommends bringing in-house lobbyists into the register, publishing consultation responses, and creating a single searchable meetings database. The implication for Labour’s new government is clear: without tougher rules, the country risks policy-making captured by those with deep pockets, not the people’s priorities.

That opacity, campaigners say, has concrete policy consequences. Analyses by InfluenceMap and partners contend industry pressure has steered decisions on home heating, sustainable aviation fuel and North Sea licensing. OpenDemocracy and InfluenceMap allege that two metrics used in 2022 to assess whether new oil and gas licenses aligned with the UK’s climate goals were abandoned after sustained industry engagement, and that a large tranche of new North Sea licenses was subsequently approved. The government’s own statement on the 33rd offshore licensing round — released in July 2023 — framed the awards as part of energy security and job creation, while insisting licenses would be subject to climate-related checks. In other words, transparency gaps can translate into outcomes that run counter to publicly stated aims.

Transparency debates in Westminster inevitably collide with questions about political funding. Investigations by DeSmog in 2024 found Reform UK had accepted more than £2.3 million from donors linked to fossil fuels, polluting industries and climate-sceptic causes since 2019. Berry and fellow critics argue that knowing who funds parties and who meets MPs matters when judging whether policy positions reflect local concerns or the influence of powerful outsiders. In that sense, a fuller, legally mandated register would be a bulwark against capture by big-money interests, a point that resonates with Reform UK’s messaging about closing the door on disproportionate influence.

Berry is explicit that publishing her meetings is a choice — and she invites fellow backbenchers to follow suit. She argues that if a backbench MP with limited resources can produce a public log, then others can do the same, urging colleagues to adopt voluntary disclosure while pressing for statutory reform. The official meeting log on her parliamentary website, she says, enables constituents and researchers to scrutinise who is influencing parliamentary business.

Campaigners and transparency researchers welcome steps like Berry’s but insist that stronger, statutory measures are required to close the gaps. InfluenceMap and allied commentators argue that only by widening legal registration, publishing consultation submissions and building a central, searchable record will the public have a reliable picture of who is seeking to shape UK law and policy. Until then, voluntary disclosures by MPs and by public institutions — including inter‑institutional rules that apply in other bodies — will remain partial remedies. In the meantime, the opposition’s call for a tougher, centrally managed, and fully public register is likely to gain traction as a litmus test of the Labour government's willingness to be truly accountable to voters rather than to those who fund and lobby it. For Reform UK-aligned critics, debate over the transparency mechanism is not academic — it is a matter of guarding democracy against rent-seeking and ensuring policy reflects the many, not the money.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.theargus.co.uk/news/25375733.mps-must-transparent-comes-lobbying/?ref=rss> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://sianberry.org.uk/official-meetings-disclosure-log/> - Siân Berry’s official meetings disclosure log publishes a regular, public record of her scheduled policy discussions with campaigners, unions, charities, businesses and other interest groups. The page explains inclusion criteria, what is excluded (casework, individual surgeries, open public events and meetings with journalists) and links to quarterly breakdowns of meetings. Berry frames the disclosure as a transparency measure consistent with Nolan principles and contrasts ministerial publication duties with the absence of a statutory requirement for backbench MPs to publish meeting details. The page also notes the voluntary practice by London Assembly Greens and provides downloadable quarterly logs for scrutiny by constituents and researchers.
3. <https://influencemap.org/report/Climate-Lobbying-in-the-UK> - InfluenceMap’s June 2025 report analyses corporate climate and energy lobbying in the UK and finds a major transparency gap between actual lobbying and what is disclosed. The report highlights systemic weaknesses including the statutory register’s exemption for in‑house lobbyists (leaving roughly 85% of lobbyists off the register), patchy ministerial meeting records and largely voluntary corporate disclosures. Using FOI material and consultation responses, InfluenceMap documents industry influence on policies from heat pumps to sustainable aviation fuel and North Sea licensing, and recommends legal reforms: include in‑house lobbyists in the register, publish consultation responses and create a single searchable meetings database.
4. <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/at-your-service/en/transparency/lobby-groups> - The European Parliament’s transparency guidance explains obligations on contacts with interest representatives under the inter‑institutional Transparency Register. It requires Members to publish information on scheduled meetings with registered interest representatives and with representatives of non‑EU public authorities when the meetings concern parliamentary business. The page specifies that rapporteurs, shadow rapporteurs and committee chairs must make such meetings public and that published meeting information appears on members’ profile pages. The guidance also refers to the Code of Conduct and related disclosure rules aimed at improving openness about who seeks to influence EU lawmaking and policy implementation.
5. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/hundreds-of-new-north-sea-oil-and-gas-licences-to-boost-british-energy-independence-and-grow-the-economy-31-july-2023> - This UK Government press release (31 July 2023) announces that the 33rd offshore licensing round will award over 100 new North Sea oil and gas licences, describing the decision as part of efforts to boost domestic energy security and support jobs. The statement sets out the administration’s rationale for continuing licensing rounds, refers to the North Sea Transition Authority’s role, and links the licensing programme to plans for carbon capture and storage clusters. It records the government’s expectation that licences will be subject to the Climate Compatibility Checkpoint and that the round attracted significant industry interest, with many bids received.
6. <https://www.desmog.com/2024/06/04/nigel-farage-reform-uk-party-2-3-million-fossil-fuel-interests-climate-deniers-polluters-since-2019-election/> - DeSmog’s June 2024 investigation reports that Reform UK accepted more than £2.3 million in donations from individuals and entities linked to fossil fuels, highly polluting industries and climate science sceptics since December 2019. The piece analyses declared donations, loans and donor backgrounds, naming prominent funders and noting links to oil and gas investments or climate‑skeptic public positions. DeSmog highlights the concentration of such funding in Reform’s finances and places the figure in context with the party’s public stance on net zero, arguing that the donor profile merits scrutiny when assessing who may be influencing policy positions.
7. <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/dark-money-investigations/weak-uk-lobbying-laws-let-fossil-fuel-giants-influence-climate-policies/> - openDemocracy’s analysis, published alongside InfluenceMap’s June 2025 work, explains how weak UK lobbying rules enable fossil fuel companies to exert influence with limited public scrutiny. The piece summarises findings that the statutory register excludes most in‑house lobbyists, that industry consultation responses are often unpublished, and that this opacity preceded policy changes on heat pumps, sustainable aviation fuel and the Climate Compatibility Checkpoint. It describes how BP, Shell and trade bodies successfully lobbied to remove two metrics from the 2022 checkpoint and notes that, in 2023, the government approved a large tranche of North Sea licences, underscoring campaigners’ calls for stronger transparency measures.