

# Remembrance Services

It was an honour to join Rumney Labour Councillors, Bob Derbyshire and Jackie Parry at the Rumney Memorial Hall for a Service of Remembrance with many families and service personnel led by Pastor Mike Carr.

I also attended the Royal British Legion's Festival of Remembrance for Wales at Cardiff Cathedral with the Royal Welsh Band.

The tribute by Cardiff's Roma Taylor, former Armed Forces Nurse about the contribution of the Windrush generation was very moving.



# Diwali Celebrations

I always enjoy joining friends from across Cardiff and South Wales at the National Museum of Wales in St Fagans to celebrate Diwali.

The event this year was an absolute riot of light, colour, smiles, music and dancing. Thank you, Dr Poonam Singhal for the invitation and congratulations to all the dancers who performed on stage. It was fantastic.



# Respect Shop Workers

Every year tens of thousands of retail workers are physically attacked and hundreds of thousands are subject to verbal abuse and intimidation. This is completely unacceptable.

As stores prepare for Christmas, I met with Paddy Lillis, General Secretary of the Shopworkers' union USDAW to support USDAW's Freedom From Fear campaign.

Labour announced in October that we will bring in a new law and tougher sentences for attacks on shopworkers because everyone has the right to feel safe at work. This has been welcomed by the British Retail Consortium and the Federation of Independent Retailers as well as USDAW.



---

# Living Wage Week

Living Wage Week is a perfect opportunity to share Cardiff Labour Council's success, not only in paying the Real Living Wage to its workers, but persuading others to do the same. I have supported the Living Wage Foundation's work and campaigning for well over a decade and am proud that our Labour Council has prioritised lifting the pay levels of the lowest paid in our city.

Since 2012, an extra £68m has gone into Cardiff's local economy as a result of worker pay uplifts to the Real Living Wage.

Cardiff Council has now set a more ambitious target to hit 300+ accredited workplaces in the next two years.

You can read more about the story [here](#).



## Restoring Cardiff Market

Cardiff Market and its eclectic mix of independent business have served residents of Cardiff Central for more than 130 years.

I was proud to support the successful £3.1 million bid from the Welsh Labour Government's Transforming Towns programme to preserve and protect this iconic Cardiff Central market for another 100 years.

Find out more about the plans [here](#).

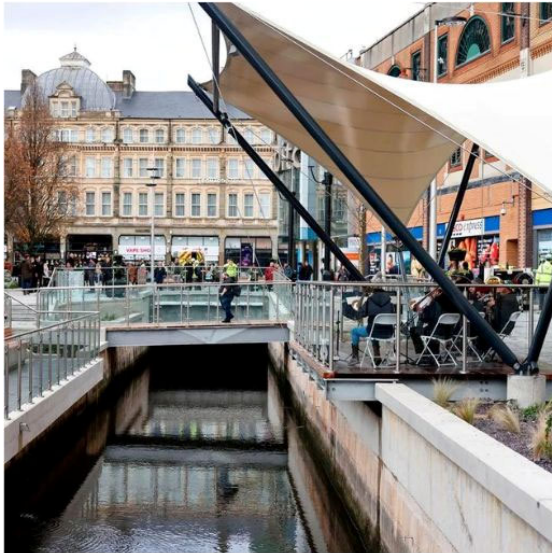


# Dock Feeder Canal Opens to the Public

After almost 70 years of being hidden under concrete, its great to see the Dock Feeder Canal on Churchill Way restored to its former glory. It is a world away from my last visit when workers still had their shovels in the ground.

As well as helping to manage surface water run off in the city centre, the canal will act as a focal point for outdoor leisure with seating, an amphitheatre-style performance area and two foot bridges to cross the canal.

Read more about the project [here](#).



---

## Support for Mortgage Holders

Over 8,000 householders in Cardiff Central are paying £190 extra in mortgage repayments each month because of the steep rise in mortgage interest rates directly resulting from Liz Truss and the Conservatives' disastrous mini-budget a year ago.

Our Welsh Labour government has responded to this financial nightmare for many homeowners in Wales through its Help to Stay support scheme, giving people the help they need to stay in their homes.

Find out more [here](#).



## SUPPORT FOR MORTGAGE HOLDERS

## Dr Who at 60

Earlier this year, I was lucky enough to visit the BBC 100 exhibition at the National Museum of Wales and see some of the incredible costumes and props that have made Dr Who such a successful Welsh made production that has stood the test of time.

As Dr Who turns 60, we can all take pride in the creative skill and expertise of people in Cardiff and South Wales who contribute to the amazing final product on our screens. I



hope Dr Who will continue to keep both children and adults on the edge of their seats for generations to come.



---

## Sherman Theatre at 50

On 23 November 1973, the Sherman Theatre officially opened to the public with a performance of 'The Government Inspector'.

Fifty years on, they continue to welcome large audiences for their top-class productions.

Best wishes to all the Sherman for the next 50 years of pioneering productions. Take a look at what the next year has instore [here](#).



---

## Celebrating Parliament Week

A big thanks to 16th Cardiff Brownies for inviting me along during Parliament Week to discuss my role as Member of Parliament for Cardiff Central. It was a pleasure to speak to so many informed young people who thought of some very probing questions.

I was also pleased to take part in a ballot to decide their Christmas event. It should come as no surprise that a disco was the clear winner.

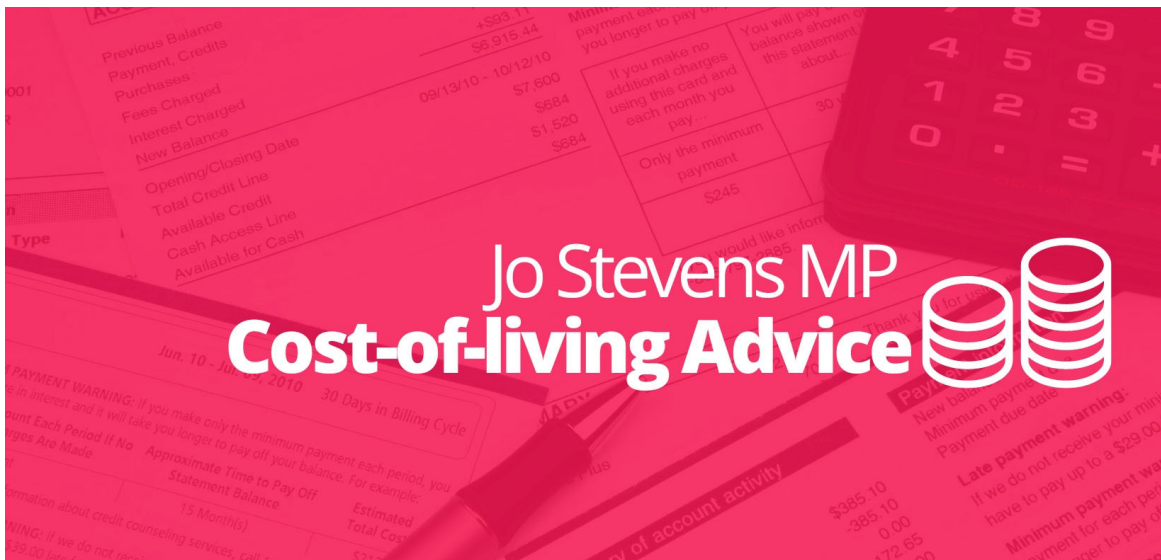
---


# Support with the Cost-of-living

With the cold weather drawing in, many households in Cardiff Central will be worrying about how they will pay their bills.



Visit my Cost-of-living Advice hub to see support available. If you need any further advice, please contact my office using the details below:

- Phone - 02921329736
- Email - [jo.stevens.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:jo.stevens.mp@parliament.uk)



Jo Stevens MP  
**Cost-of-living Advice** 

02921 329736  
[jo.stevens.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:jo.stevens.mp@parliament.uk)  
[www.jostevens.co.uk](http://www.jostevens.co.uk)

   @JoStevensLabour

---

## In Parliament

---

# Autumn Statement

The question that everyone will ask themselves at the general election is “are me and my family better off after 13 years of Conservative government?” Does anything work better than it did 13 years ago?”

That is also the question people were asking themselves after the Autumn Statement and the answer to both those questions is a resounding no, because people believe what their bank balances tell them, rather than what Rishi Sunak and Jeremy Hunt tell them.

Nothing the Chancellor announced will remotely compensate for the damage unleashed by successive Conservative governments since 2010.

**Debt** - up by **£1.5 trillion** since 2010, the equivalent of £54,000 per household.

**Taxes** - highest tax burden for 70 years and this parliament will be the biggest tax raising parliament on record. The average household paying £4300 more in tax. Reducing National Insurance rates by 2 pence when you’ve put them up by 10 pence just doesn’t wash.

**Mortgages** – a year on from Liz Truss’s disastrous mini budget, 1.5 million households have come to the end of their fixed rate mortgage and are paying hundreds of pounds more every single month. Another 1.5 million households have the same fate in store in the coming year. But there is even worse to come. 85% of all mortgage holders are on fixed rates with remaining terms of more than 2 years. The Office for Budget Responsibility say mortgage interest rates will peak in 2027 at around 5%, significantly more than those fixed rates.

**Rent** – those monthly mortgage payment increases have been replicated for private renters.

**Bills** - since October 2021, food prices have risen by 30% and food inflation is still running at over 10%. The price of gas in October 2023 was around 60% higher than in 2020 and the price of electricity was 40% higher.

The country has suffered the biggest hit to living standards since records began.

A Labour Autumn Statement would have been very different. The focus would be on our key mission of growth.

Our **Green Prosperity Plan** creating new jobs, reducing bills and giving the country clean electricity by 2030, combined with a National Wealth Fund and modern Industrial Strategy bringing in £3 of private investment for every £1 of government investment will grow the economy.

Under the last Labour government, the economy grew an average of 2% a year in the thirteen years we were in office. Had it continued to grow at that rate, our economy would be £150 billion bigger creating more tax revenue to spend on public services.

The next Labour government will tax fairly, spend wisely, close those tax loopholes which will trigger an immediate cash injection for public services in Wales and we'll wage a war on the incomprehensible level of waste and fraud that has gone on particularly during the Johnson/Truss/Sunak governments.

Labour's Better Off Plan would save families:

- **£500 a year** by insulating homes to make them more energy efficient.
- **£900 a year** by building cheaper, cleaner power across the country through the creation of Great British Energy, a new, publicly-owned clean generation company.
- **£400 a year** by cracking down on unfair car insurance practices like subscription traps and unfair postcode pricing.
- **£1,200 a year** on mortgage bills by building 1.5 million homes over a Parliament to keep housing affordable.

Listen to my thoughts on the Autumn Statement [here](#).

---

# Conservative Chaos Comes

## Full Circle

The interests of the country have taken a back seat for a very long time as far as successive Conservative governments are concerned.

This month, after having had rings run round him by Suella Braverman who he had appointed (displaying both lack of judgement and weakness) just six days after she had had to resign for breaching the Ministerial Code, Rishi Sunak finally sacked his Home Secretary.

A culmination of her terrible decisions and her awful remarks meant her sacking was inevitable but, as I have said before, rearranging the deckchairs changes nothing.

The return of one of the architects of austerity and failure, David (now Lord) Cameron shows that the government has run out of ideas and run out of road.

It's time for a General Election.

Watch my interviews on the subject [here](#).

---

## Ask Her to Stand

I was only the 426th woman elected to the House of Commons in nearly 223 years, when you first elected me in 2015.

How long will it be before we have a Parliament with equal representation of women and men? I'm very proud that we have more Labour women MPs than men, but we need a Parliament with 50:50 representation.

I'm asking for more women to join me. If you know someone who'd make a great representative, as a Councillor, Senedd Member or Member of Parliament, please ask her to stand.

Find out more about the campaign [here](#).



## Equal Pay Day

Wednesday 22nd November was Equal Pay Day, when women effectively stopped earning compared to their male counterparts due to the pay gap between men and women. This conveniently fell on the same day as the Autumn Statement, when the Chancellor provides an update on the government's plans for the economy. Sadly, equal pay went unmentioned.

Labour is proud to be the party that introduced the Equal Pay Act but we can do and need to do much more. We have pledged urgent action to close the pay gap by:

- Modernising equal pay legislation to allow for equal pay comparisons across employers where men and women are carrying out comparable work.
- Enforcing the requirement to report and eliminate pay gaps, with employers required to devise and implement plans to eradicate these inequalities.
- Ensuring outsourced workers are included in employers' pay gap reporting and pay ratio reporting.
- Introducing mandatory ethnicity pay gap reporting for firms with more than 250 staff, to mirror gender pay gap reporting rules.



**EQUAL**

**PAY DAY**

---



# Putting Family Finances First

It's a year since Liz Truss crashed the economy. The Tories may have changed the person at the top but working people are still worse off.

Labour has been clear that the Tories cannot be trusted with our economy. That's why, we forced a vote on our amendment to the King's Speech to protect family incomes. This 'fiscal lock' would have created new legal safeguards against a repeat of that catastrophic Conservative mini-budget which sent the financial markets into meltdown and drove up mortgage rates.

Rishi Sunak and his Conservative MPs voted against this vital change. The next UK Labour government will take swift action to put these measures into place to ensure the last 13 years of Tory economic chaos is not repeated.



# 20 Years of MP4

I had a great night celebrating 20 years of MP4, Parliament's very own rock band, which includes Cardiff West MP Kevin Brennan, Ian Cawsey (former Labour MP), Pete Wishart MP (SNP) and Greg Knight MP (Conservative) in the Speaker's House.

It was great to catch up with friends past and present from the Musicians' Union, UK Music, the Performing Rights Society for Music and many more.

