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Thanks for reading my March 2025 newsletter. I hope it gives you a flavour of what I have been doing here at home, in Parliament and across Wales this month, on your behalf.

I and my team are here to help all year around. I am out knocking doors to listen to residents each week, but you can also easily contact me using the information below.

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

Phone: 02921 329 736

You can also keep up to date with my work on my social media channels:

[Facebook](#)

[X \(formerly Twitter\)](#)

[Instagram](#)

[Tiktok](#)

[Youtube](#)



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## News from Cardiff East

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### Cardiff Parkway

Following the First Minister's very welcome announcement that Cardiff Parkway has the green light, I continue to work with Vaughan Gething MS to ensure that we attract investment and good jobs for local residents. This month I met with the investors behind the Parkway development and with Vaughan so we can continue our campaign for Cardiff East to get the opportunities you deserve.

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### Howardian Primary School Question Time

Pupils at **Howardian Primary School** are taking the lead in protecting our local environment in Penylan.

After receiving a lot of very thoughtful letters from Year 6 students, I went along to meet the whole of Year 6 to hear their concerns about fly-tipping and littering and we had a big question time session where I was grilled on everything from jobs, YouTube, recycling and the performance of the Welsh rugby and football teams!

Whenever I meet students in our schools, I am always struck by how important the environment is to them. I was pleased to be able to tell the students that **Cardiff Labour Council** is investing an additional **£1 million** to improve street cleanliness and recycling. Let's all follow the example set by these young leaders and play our part in keeping Cardiff East clean and raising our recycling levels.



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## Llanrumney Hall

I had a fascinating morning at Llanrumney Hall with Vaughan Gething MS, South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner, Emma Wools and local Llanrumney Councillor Lee Bridgeman, meeting the Chair of the Trustees, Christine Borley, to learn more about the

incredible work being done by the Llanrumney Hall Community Trust.

Once the family home of Captain Morgan (of rum fame), this historic hall is now a thriving community hub, providing extensive support for local residents including the Food Pantry which offers affordable food to its members. The Hall needs volunteers to help run it, so if you have some spare time and think you could help, please contact:

Phone: 02920 001441

Email: [info@llanrumneyhall.org](mailto:info@llanrumneyhall.org)



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## Women Investors

Last week the Chancellor Rachel Reeves and I, alongside First Minister Eluned Morgan, met with the Invest in Women's Taskforce at Tramshed in Cardiff. As the first women in our roles, we're committed to championing the success of female entrepreneurs to unlock their full potential.

Female business founder teams in Wales received just 2.3% of equity investment in 2024, whilst all male teams received more than 75%. Leading figures from Wales's business and

investment community came together so we could discuss boosting female entrepreneurship.

The Invest in Women Taskforce's investment pool has already met its initial £250 million target to support female entrepreneurs across the UK, with opportunity for more institutional investment to increase the fund's impact in Wales and across the UK.



## Changes to 20mph Speed Limits

The change of default speed limit in built up areas across Wales took place in September 2023. Since then, the Welsh Government and Cardiff Council have consulted widely, asking residents which roads they would like to revert back to 30mph, where appropriate.

Residents in Cardiff East have repeatedly raised concerns about the speed limit on Newport Road. I am pleased that Cardiff Council has listened and will change the speed limit back to 30mph, with the exception of the stretch of road alongside St Illtyd's R.C. High School, that remains at 20mph because of the proximity of the school.

You can read more about other changes in Cardiff [here](#).

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# £140 Million Upgrade for Cardiff Central Station

Cardiff Central Station is set to undergo a £140 million transformation, improving capacity, reducing overcrowding, and improving passenger accessibility.

The project, funded by Labour's UK Government, the Welsh Labour Government and Cardiff Capital Region, will modernise the station and complement the Cardiff Parkway development, supporting rail infrastructure and economic growth across South Wales.

Read more and see what the finished station will look like [here](#).



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**Have Your Say on Cardiff's Future**

Cardiff's Replacement Local Development Plan (LDP) will help shape what our city looks like for the next 11 years, ensuring future developments benefit our local communities and our economy.

Cardiff Labour Council has set out a plan to deliver 32,300 jobs, 26,400 homes, and a greener, more sustainable Cardiff.

I'd really encourage residents to read the plan and give feedback. You can have your say on the proposals [here](#).



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## Good News for Gardener's in Cardiff East

Garden waste collections returned this month after a break for the winter. Following feedback from local residents in Cardiff East, I'm pleased to confirm that Cardiff Labour Council will provide garden waste collections all year round. This will be particularly helpful with leaf collections in the autumn, which I know from lots of conversations with residents, will be very welcome.

Cardiff is one of the best recycling cities in the world and garden waste collections help our city reach its targets. So it's really important that we all recycle the right materials in the right way. To keep compost of a high quality, please only put organic garden waste in your recycling bags. Remove any non-garden waste items before collection and we can all help push Cardiff even higher up the recycling charts.

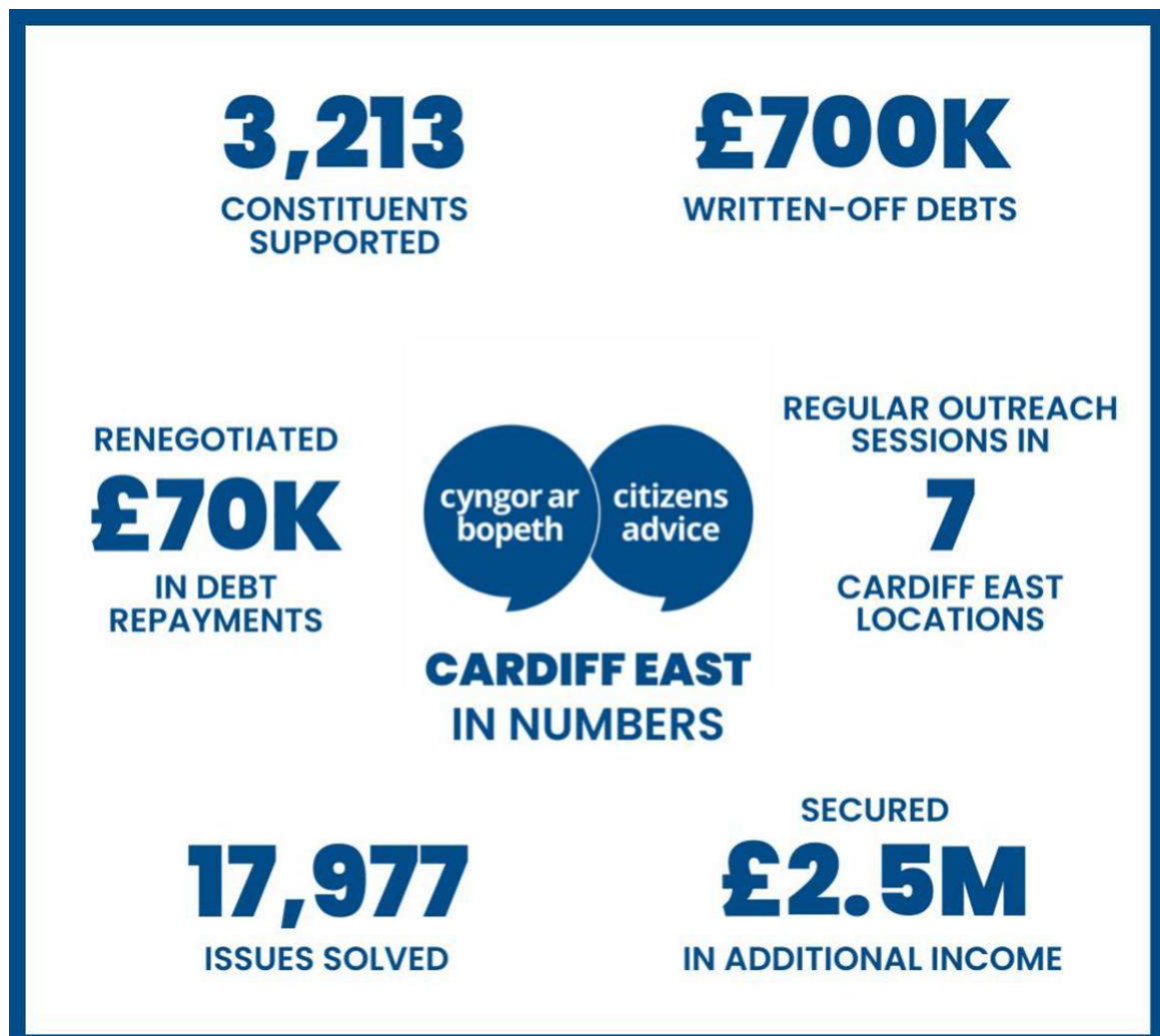
Read more on the changes [here](#)

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# Citizen Advice Support

From housing and money advice to benefit checks, Citizens Advice Cardiff & Vale can help residents across Cardiff East.

Last year alone, they supported 3,213 residents in need. A big thank you to the team who work tirelessly on behalf of people across Cardiff East. Get in touch by calling 0808 278 7925 or webchat [here](#).



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## Across Wales

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# Delivering on the Priorities of Welsh people

Last October, the UK Labour Government's budget delivered a record-breaking £21 billion settlement for Welsh Government - the largest since devolution.

It included an extra £1.6bn for Welsh public services. The Welsh Labour Government has now passed its own budget with all that additional funding. Plaid and Conservative Senedd Members inexplicably voted against the budget and the extra investment.

We're already seeing the benefit of this additional funding with NHS waiting lists and times coming down for the second month in a row. This shows the power of two Labour Governments for people across Wales: cutting waiting lists, improving schools, investing in transport and creating jobs.



## £100 Million for Towns in Wales

The UK Labour Government's Plan for Neighbourhoods is fantastic news for Wales, providing £100 million to boost growth by investing in high streets, parks, cultural venues, youth clubs and more.

We are working with the Welsh Labour Government to help local people from Rhyl to Merthyr Tydfil transform their communities.

Targeted local funding is a vital part of the UK Labour Government's mission to grow the economy and raise living standards.



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## Celtic Freeport Launch

The Celtic Freeport has been officially launched. The Freeport covers the Ports of Port Talbot and Milford Haven and is essentially, an economic and industrial zone with business rates, tax, employment and investment incentives that brings the prospect of 11,000 new jobs across South Wales a step closer.

The UK Labour Government and Welsh Labour Government have provided a package of incentives, which will be supplemented by up to £26 million from the UK Labour Government, again showing the benefits of two Labour Governments working in partnership to deliver for Wales.



## Supporting Grassroots Sport

Grassroots sport is at the heart of communities throughout Wales and I'm really pleased that over £6 million is being invested by the UK Labour Government to improve facilities across the country.

This means that people the length and breadth of Wales will be able to access the health and social benefits that sport brings.



## **Six Nations: Free-to-Air**

The Guinness Six Nations is the highlight of the rugby calendar. I have always supported the tournament remaining free to air.

So it was great news this month that BBC and ITV have secured the broadcast rights for the Six Nations for the next four years, free to air, inspiring the next generation of rugby players across Wales.



## Wales is Open for Business

As part of St David's Day and International Women's Day celebrations, Eluned Morgan and I spent a day in Paris, meeting with key French industry leaders and investors in Wales to highlight that Wales is open for more business, especially in the clean energy and constructions sectors.

Our discussions at the UK Embassy focused on strengthening our international partnerships, attracting new investment, and promoting Wales's cutting-edge industries and world-class talent.

It was also a day of Welsh women firsts to celebrate International Women's Day. I'm the first female Labour Secretary of State for Wales. Eluned Morgan is our first female First Minister and Dame Menna Rawlings, is the first female UK Ambassador to France. We met with women leaders from across France and Cerys Matthews joined us at the end of the day for a St David's Day event showcasing Welsh music, food and drink that is exported to France every year.

This Labour government has put women's rights at the heart of our legislative agenda. Within months of taking office, we introduced legislation that will transform working life for women across the UK. Learn more [here](#).



## South Wales Microchips Powering the UK

Did you know we have a world-leading compound semiconductor (microchips) cluster in South Wales? From mobile phones, computers and electric vehicles, to wind turbines, medical equipment and banking systems, we all rely on microchips, every minute of every day. And we design and make them in a unique, specialist business cluster in Newport and Cardiff.

This month I visited two of those businesses in Newport with my cabinet colleague, the Science Secretary, Peter Kyle, to demonstrate the potential for growing the sector and creating new skilled and well paid jobs in Wales.

Following my visit, we received fantastic news with the announcement of £250 million investment by Vishay Industries into their factory in Newport. This is the largest microchip factory in the UK and is critically and nationally significant infrastructure. The investment will secure jobs and bring new jobs into our region.



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## **Investing in Renewable Energy**

I was thrilled to announce a landmark £600 million private investment in Bute Energy's onshore wind farms, which will be developed across Wales, generating the clean energy we need whilst creating 2,000 jobs.

This major deal marks a significant milestone for Wales's renewable energy sector, reinforcing our position as a leader in clean energy investment.



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## Mental Health Support for Steelworkers

The past 18 months have been incredibly difficult for steelworkers in and around Port Talbot, their families and for the wider South Wales steel community. I said we would back them in whatever ways were needed.

We are helping people learn new skills and set up new businesses, but we also need to help protect people's mental health, because good health is crucial to getting into new work and staying in work.

By boosting direct support services, we are investing in the people of the area and supporting growth in the local economy.

Read more about the support the UK Labour Government is offering [here](#).



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## Investing in Solar Energy



The UK Labour Government has announced an extra £2.8 million to install solar panels on schools and other public buildings in Wales. This builds on the £2.3 million already invested by the Welsh Labour Government, helping save thousands on energy bills.

Through Great British Energy, we are strengthening energy independence, investing in public services, and reducing bills for communities across Wales.

**Just announced:**

# Labour will install rooftop solar panels



**on hospitals and  
schools *to cut  
energy bills.***

 **Labour**



# Newport Transporter Bridge

The Newport Transporter Bridge is an iconic symbol of Wales' engineering heritage, standing proudly in the Newport skyline since 1906. Originally designed to allow people to cross the River Usk without obstructing tall ships entering the docks, the bridge remains a remarkable feat of engineering and is one of only three transporter bridges in the UK.

Earlier this year, I was pleased to announce a £5 million UK Labour Government fund to support essential repairs and maintenance to ensure the bridge's preservation. It was an honour to be invited to the newly built visitor centre to learn more about its history and the plans for its 120th anniversary year next year.

During the visit, I also took part in the launch of Newport's new Culture Strategy, along with the opening of the city's very own FOCUS Wales music festival. It's exciting to see Newport celebrating its history and putting its unique culture at the heart of its future.



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## In Parliament

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# Chancellor's Spring Statement

On March 26, 2025, Chancellor Rachel Reeves delivered the Spring Statement, outlining the progress made since the general election and the next steps in Labour's plan for change, restoring economic and political stability, fixing the foundations and rebuilding our public services. We were elected to provide security for working people, and that's what we're doing.

Since the election, there have been three interest rate cuts, the highest level of inward investment into the UK for 20 years, falling inflation in February and tomorrow, the biggest increases in the National Minimum Wages and the National Living Wage take effect, with up to 150,000 Welsh workers benefitting from a pay rise. For full time workers aged 18 to 20 a rise of up to £2500 a year, and for those over 20, a rise of up to £1400 a year.

We've created 190,000 jobs and delivered the biggest ever Welsh Government budget settlement since the dawn of devolution with £1.6bn extra investment into our public services that is bringing down NHS waiting lists.

By prioritising fairness and economic growth, we are cracking down on tax evasion, raising an additional £1bn to fix our public services. We are reforming the welfare system to help more people get into work whilst protecting the most vulnerable.

Our planning reforms will drive economic growth, unlock investment, and create jobs. We are delivering on our manifesto commitments, putting working people first to deliver a brighter future for our country.

Watch my reactions to the spring statement [here](#).

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## Welsh Questions

Your two Labour Governments are proving the power of partnership—delivering on the priorities that matter to people across Wales:

- Economic growth and raising living standards
- Cutting NHS waiting lists, making our public services fit for the future
- Clean power by 2030
- Safer Streets and opportunities for all

At Welsh Questions, I welcomed the approval of the Welsh Labour Government's budget—securing an extra £1.6 billion to deliver for Wales. It's deeply disappointing that Plaid Cymru

and the Tories in the Senedd, chose to vote against this vital investment in our public services.

Watch my exchanges at the dispatch box [here](#).



## Getting Britain Back to Work

Our social security system must be a safety net for all of us when we need it, now and in the future. We inherited a Tory welfare system that is the worst of all worlds.

It has the wrong incentives. It discourages people from working. The people who really need a safety net are still not getting the dignity and support that they need. And the taxpayer is funding an ever-spiralling bill, due to hit £70bn a year by 2029/30. The system currently costs more than the entire Home Office (including Policing, Immigration, Counter Terrorism), Justice system and Ministry of Defence expenditure combined.

It is unsustainable, indefensible and above all, unfair on the people involved in it. Millions of people being failed, when they could be prospering with the right support.

The principles behind the proposed reform are clear. Supporting those who need support. Restoring trust and fairness in the system. Fixing the broken assessment process and the disincentives. And supporting people to start, stay and succeed in work.

We are taking decisive action to fix this broken Tory system - supporting those who can work, whilst protecting those who cannot.

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



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## Investing in Defence

Over the past 14 years, the Tories hollowed out and underfunded our Armed Forces. This UK Labour Government's historic increase in defence spending to 2.5% of GDP by April 2027 will boost national security and make defence manufacturing an engine for economic growth.

Increasing our investment in defence is not only bolstering our national security at a time of global political uncertainty, it is an opportunity to put more money into working people's pockets and boost economic growth. Wales has a strong defence manufacturing industrial base and I expect to see investment and jobs in Wales a consequence of this increased defence spending.

The UK Labour Government will also help smaller businesses in every nation and region to access this investment in defence, making communities better off and opening up more opportunities to train for good, skilled, productive jobs.

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## A New Deal for Working People

Labour promised real change for working people - and we're delivering it. Within weeks of taking office, we brought forward proposals for the biggest upgrade to workers rights in a generation. This month, our New Deal for Working People took a giant leap forward after it passed all of its stages in the House of Commons. Here's what it means for you:

- Ending Exploitative Zero-Hour Contracts
- Banning Fire and Rehire
- Providing Day One Rights at Work
- Strengthening Trade Union Rights
- Ensuring Fair Pay

This UK Labour Government is making work pay—delivering fairness, security, and prosperity for every worker across the UK. Read more in my recent [blog](#).

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## Making Our Streets Safer

Labour's flagship Crime & Policing Bill will tackle the epidemic of anti-social behaviour, theft and shoplifting that exploded on the Tories' watch.

We're giving police stronger powers to tackle mobile phone thefts. We're introducing Respect Orders to tackle the worst anti-social behaviour offenders. We're ending the effective immunity for anyone caught shoplifting goods worth below £200, which was shamefully introduced by the Tories. And we're dealing with the scourge of off-road bikes, giving police new powers to seize vehicles causing chaos in our communities.

Labour is determined to put law and order back at the heart of our communities.

## LABOUR'S CRIME BLITZ

# TAKING BACK OUR TOWNS

» 50 new laws unveiled in bid to tackle yobs & thieves

» Home Sec's pledge: We'll make the streets safer



» Knives, e-scooters, shop attacks, stalking... targeted

BY DAVE BURKE

**YVETTE Cooper today vows to tackle the crime epidemic that has blighted Britain for years.**

The Home Secretary is bringing in 50 new

laws to tackle crooks who have flourished due to Tory police cuts.

Ms Cooper says in the Mirror: "It is time to take back our town centres from thugs and thieves."

**FULL STORY: PAGES 4&5**

## Delivering Swifter Justice

The Tories left us with a broken courts system with justice delayed and denied for far too many victims.

The UK Labour Government is delivering swifter justice for victims by increasing Crown Court sittings to a record 110,000 days next year, helping clear case backlogs and ensuring faster convictions.

We've also boosted funding for court infrastructure to £148.5 million, improving the justice system for everyone.

Labour is committed to making our streets safer and reforming a broken system. Read more about how we are delivering swifter justice [here](#).



## **Ending Unfairness for Leaseholders**

For too many leaseholders, the reality of homeownership has been far from the dream they were promised - facing escalating ground rents, unreasonable charges, and unfair conditions.



Unlike many other countries that moved away from leasehold years ago, the UK remains a global outlier. The Tories failed to address this injustice, but the UK Labour Government is determined to change it.

We are committed to giving leaseholders more rights, protections, and control over their homes, and ending the outdated and unfair leasehold system. A key part of this is making commonhold the default tenure for all.

