



Thank you for reading my July newsletter.

Over the next few weeks, I'll be delivering my Annual Report to homes across Cardiff East. It's a snapshot of the work I've been doing on your behalf – from championing local businesses and creating opportunities in green industries, to working hard to make our streets safer and our economy stronger. All alongside day-to-day support and help to thousands of constituents who have contacted me.

Read my Annual Report [here](#).

I'm here to help all year round, so if you need support, advice, or want to raise an issue, please don't hesitate to get in touch using the contact details below.

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NEWS FROM CARDIFF EAST

CONGRATULATIONS COUNCILLOR LEXI POCKNELL

Congratulations to Lexi Pocknell, who has been elected to represent Llanrumney, the community she's lived in, raised her family in, and volunteered in for 7 years. Thank you to everyone who voted, supported, and placed their trust in Lexi. This result is a reflection of her deep roots in the community and the hard work she's put in over many years.

Lexi now joins Councillor Lee Bridgeman as part of the Llanrumney Labour Team, working every day to deliver for the community. She's getting straight to work as a strong, visible, and accessible voice for Llanrumney.



CITY ROAD IMPROVEMENT PLANS

Cardiff Council would like to hear your views on proposed improvements to City Road as part of the Northern Bus Corridor project.

The aim is to make travel safer, greener, and more reliable – especially for bus users, cyclists, and pedestrians.

Proposed changes include new bus lanes, better crossings, and upgraded public spaces. The consultation is now open. Take part [here](#).



ST JOHN LLOYD R.C. PRIMARY SCHOOL VISIT

Earlier this year, I joined pupils at St John Lloyd R.C. Primary School on a Zoom call to take questions from pupils. Nothing beats face-to-face though, so it was great to follow that up with a visit in person before the end of term.

The pupils had clearly done their homework. They asked brilliant questions and shared some really thoughtful ideas about what laws they'd want to introduce if they were an MP. It was great to see them so engaged and interested in politics.

Thanks to Headteacher Clare Hart, her staff and pupils for the warm welcome. I hope everyone has a fun and relaxing summer break.



GREEN FLAG PARKS

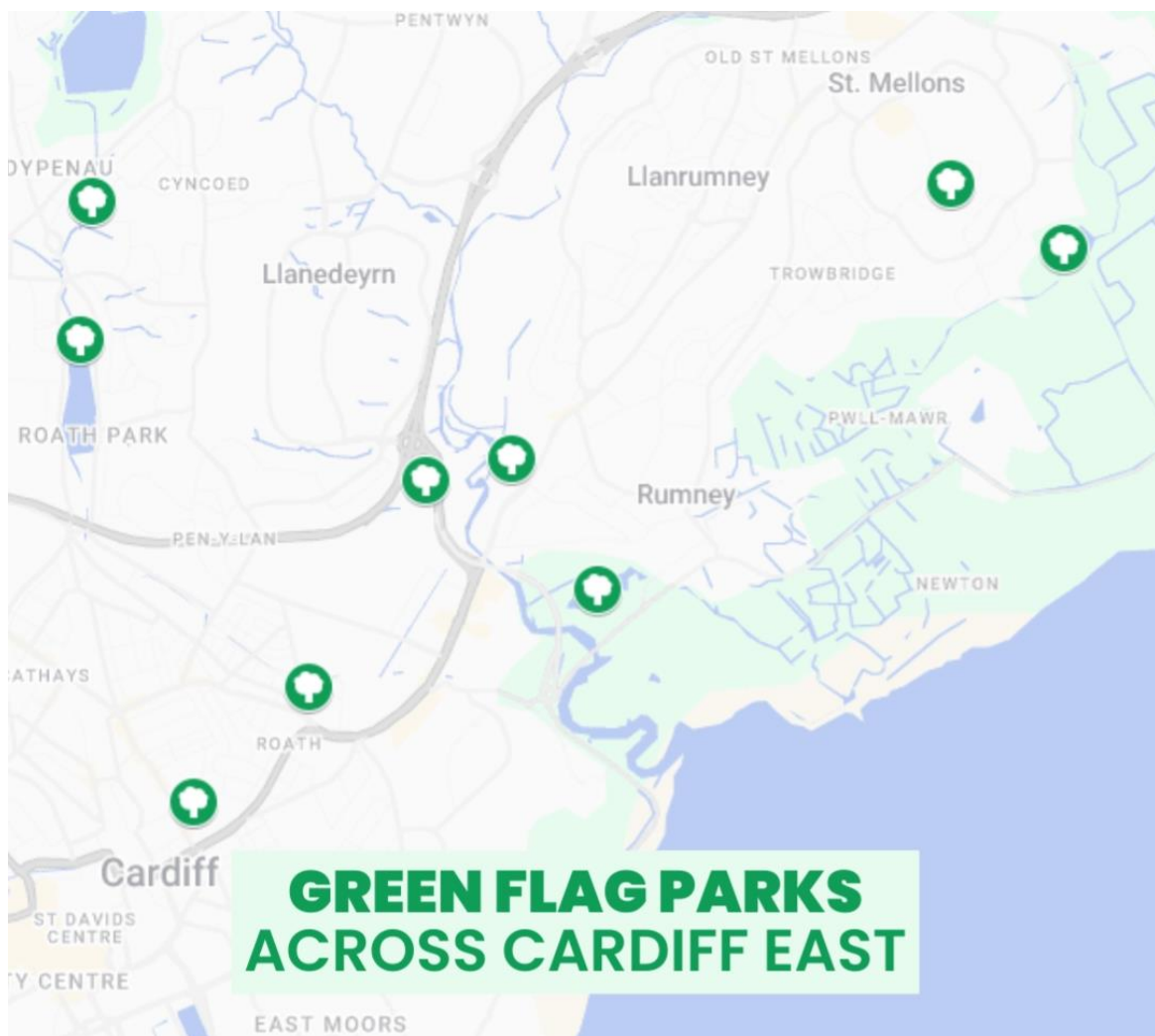
It's brilliant to see nine parks and green spaces in Cardiff East awarded Green Flag status again this year. Due to Cardiff Labour Council's Fields in Trust Schemes, many of these parks are now protected, so they can be enjoyed for generations to come.

Cardiff has more Green Flag standard parks and green spaces than any comparable core city in England and any other local authority in Wales.

The Green Flag sites in Cardiff East are:

- Hendre Lake
- Parc Tredelerch
- Rumney Hill Gardens
- Waterloo Gardens
- St Mellons Community Garden
- Howardian Nature Reserve
- Roath Park
- Nant Fawr Community Woodlands
- Plasnewydd Community Garden

A big thank you to the council teams, volunteers and local groups who work hard all year round to keep our green spaces at their best.



LLANRUMNEY HALL SUMMER FÊTE

The summer holidays kicked off with fantastic weather, perfect timing for Llanrumney Hall's annual summer fête. It was great to see so many residents there enjoying the sunshine, the food, and entertainment.

I had a really productive discussion with local Police and PCSOs about their ongoing work to keep Llanrumney safe.

A huge thank you to the volunteers at Llanrumney Hall who work so hard all year round, and to everyone who helped make the day such a success.



E-BIKE HIRE SCHEME RETURNS

Cardiff Council has announced plans for a new electric bike hire scheme. The scheme will be run by a private operator, with no cost to the Council beyond installing marked parking bays.

This follows the success of the previous Nextbike scheme, which saw over 2 million rides before it was suspended due to vandalism and theft. The new fleet will be fully electric, GPS-tracked, and parked in designated zones to keep pavements clear and bikes secure.

Read more about the new scheme [here](#).

Cycle Hire Scheme

Coming in Spring 2026



BRO EDERN REPRESENTING WALES AT STEM FI RACING WORLD FINALS WORLD

Young women at Ysgol Bro Eder are leading the way in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM). I went to the school to meet Carys and Nia from Team Parabolica. They, along with Gwen have got through to the STEM Racing World Finals in Singapore this September where they will represent Wales.

They'll be showcasing their skills in engineering, design, and marketing with the

miniature F1 car they have developed.

I really enjoyed listening to how they have developed their car, put their business case and marketing strategy together and also hearing about the many STEM awards they have already won. They were absolutely inspirational.

The incredible opportunity to compete in Singapore this September comes with a significant cost, but it's a powerful chance to inspire women and girls worldwide that they belong in STEM.

If you are able to, you can show your support [here](#).



£30 MILLION INNOVATION FUNDING FOR CARDIFF CAPITAL REGION

Cardiff Capital Region is made up of 10 local authorities surrounding our city including Cardiff Council. The UK Labour Government has announced £30million funding to help unlock new, locally led innovation aimed at improving lives across the area.

The region is one of three across the UK to receive the money.

The money will be used to invest into a range of schemes ranging from life sciences, data science and green energy solutions, to AI, engineering, and more.

It means that our region will play a leading role in the technologies of the future.

When announcing the funding I said that Wales has the talent and expertise to develop hi-tech solutions to a range of challenges, and this investment will help kickstart innovation, create new well-paid jobs and grow the Welsh economy.

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

NEWS FROM WALES

WALES IS OPEN FOR BUSINESS

As Secretary of State for Wales, I'm proud to champion Welsh businesses here and on the global stage. Wales has deep and important economic and cultural ties with North America.

The UK Labour Government is focused on delivering economic growth to every corner of Wales. Our new trade agreement with the United States is already bringing real benefits to key Welsh exporters like Aston Martin and helping to support good, well-paid jobs across Wales.

This month I spent a day in Toronto meeting potential investors in Wales and businesses that export there. I then travelled to New York and spent two days doing the same. I was able to showcase the world-class goods and services Wales has to offer and explore further opportunities for investment in Wales.

My message is clear: Wales is open for business. We're proud of what we produce, and we're ready to share more of it with the world.

Read more about my visit [here](#) and watch my recent video about the trip [here](#).



A NEW CHAPTER FOR WELSH STEEL

Construction has begun on Tata Steel's new electric arc furnace, marking a huge step forward for Welsh steelmaking. It safeguards 5,000 jobs, transitions steelmaking to greener production, and delivers on the UK Labour Government's promise to the Port Talbot community.

We acted swiftly to negotiate a better deal for the workforce with Tata, starting the day after the general election. We have invested £500 million towards the electric arc furnace, alongside a further £750 million from Tata Steel. This joint investment secures the future of steelmaking in Port Talbot and creates the conditions for further investment and jobs.

Labour's Steel Strategy will go even further, delivering up to £2.5 billion to support the UK-wide steel sector, cut energy costs, and strengthen protections for UK-made steel.

Port Talbot has a proud industrial history, and now it has a bright future. We promised to back our Welsh steel communities, and we are doing just that.

Watch my video about the future of steel in Wales [here](#).



THE SUSTAINABLE FARMING SCHEME

The Welsh Labour Government is introducing a new Sustainable Farming Scheme, developed through extensive collaboration with the farming community. This revised approach ensures the scheme is practical for the agricultural sector while supporting our shared responsibilities to nature and the climate.

This is a scheme for the whole of Wales which has been shaped by farmers and designed to support every type of farm. It is simpler, fairer, and focused on long-term sustainability.

Welsh Labour has committed £238 million for Universal Payments in 2026, with additional support for those taking further steps to protect nature and improve productivity. By working closely with farmers, the Welsh Government is securing a stable, resilient, and sustainable future for farming in Wales.

OFFSHORE WIND TAKES A LEAP FORWARD

The UK Labour Government gave approval for the Mona Offshore Wind Farm this month. This is a significant renewable energy development for Wales, creating around 3,000 jobs.

Located off the coast of North Wales, Mona will generate enough electricity to power over a million homes. It shows how Labour investment in green industries can support both our economy and our communities.

Through partnership between our two Labour Governments, we're backing projects that deliver long-term benefits for people across Wales.

GROWING WALES' LIFE SCIENCES SECTOR

Life sciences are vital to our health outcomes and our economy. In Wales, this sector is already worth £2.6 billion and supports around 12,000 jobs, from research and development, right through to advanced manufacturing. We have 250 companies in Wales developing medical technology from pharmaceuticals to medical devices and a specialist cluster based in Cardiff.

The UK Labour Government's Life Sciences Sector Plan sets out our vision to expand this industry and transform healthcare across the UK. Wales is well-placed to play a leading role, with a strong base of innovation, skilled talent, and academic excellence. It's another example of the UK Labour Government creating the conditions for new, skilled, well-paid jobs in our city.

LLANGOLLEN INTERNATIONAL EISTEDDFOD

The Llangollen International Eisteddfod is a globally renowned festival, bringing people from all over the world to Wales through music and culture. It was a real pleasure to attend as Day President this year and to meet many of the amazing volunteers who make it all happen.

The Eisteddfod has a powerful history, born out of the Second World War with a message of peace that still resonates today.

And in a lovely twist, I was greeted by the Chair, John Gambles, who I last saw 40 years ago when I collected my A Level results from him!

Read more about my visit [here](#).



INVESTING IN WALES' SEMI-CONDUCTOR INDUSTRY

This month I visited KLA's new facility at Imperial Park in Newport to see first-hand how investment is helping to grow Wales's semiconductor industry.

Thanks to £7 million from Cardiff Capital Region and Newport City Council, KLA is expanding its operations, creating more high skilled jobs and strengthening our unique compound semiconductor cluster in South East Wales.

This is a great example of how targeted investment, backed by the UK Government's support for the Cardiff Capital Region and the Cardiff and Newport Investment Zone, is helping to deliver our Industrial Strategy and drive economic growth in a sector where Wales is leading the way.

Read more about my visit [here](#).



DELIVERING AN AI GROWTH ZONE FOR WALES

Artificial Intelligence is changing the way we live and work. The UK Labour Government is making sure we're leading that change. We're harnessing AI to improve public services, drive innovation, and grow the economy so more people feel the benefits.

Wales is ready to lead. With strengths in semiconductors, life sciences, and digital innovation, we're well placed to take full advantage of this opportunity. That's why Wales will have its own AI Growth Zone, investing in the compute power needed to train and run AI models, unlocking breakthroughs, creating high-quality jobs, and delivering real improvements for communities across the country.

Read more about Labour's plan for AI [here](#).

AMBULANCE TRANSFER TIMES DOWN

The number of people waiting more than an hour to transfer from an ambulance into an emergency department in Wales has fallen by almost a fifth.

The progress on reducing the time that people wait in ambulances outside emergency departments is very encouraging with almost three quarters of people transferred in just 15 minutes.

A national taskforce has been set up by Welsh Government to reduce ambulance patient handover delays across Wales, helping to speed up the transfer of people into emergency departments and release ambulance crews to respond to 999 calls in the community.

The UK Labour Government is supporting the Welsh Government with increased funding for public services. The record financial settlement of £22.4bn per year announced last month, will allow them to make continued progress.

SUPPORTING WALES' DEFENCE INDUSTRY

I visited General Dynamics in Merthyr Tydfil to meet the skilled team working on some of the UK's most advanced defence technology. They make the AJAX armoured vehicle for the British army and are a major employer in Wales. Their work supports jobs, innovation, and the local economy.

The workforce is rightly proud of its contribution to the UK's national security. I was particularly pleased to have the chance to meet people who had left Tata Steel in Port Talbot recently and were now working at General Dynamics.

The top five Ministry of Defence suppliers all have a footprint in Wales and with the necessary increase in defence spending that has recently been announced, defence manufacturing in Wales will go from strength to strength. This will again create job opportunities and stronger local economies.

Watch my recent video about the visit [here](#).

NEWS FROM PARLIAMENT

WELSH QUESTIONS

At Welsh Questions, I set out how our two Labour governments are working together to deliver for people across Wales. We're backing Welsh industries like steel, investing in better transport, and driving economic growth and putting more money in people's pockets.

We are focused on delivery. Working together, we are cutting waiting times, improving public services, and building a fairer, stronger Wales. While Labour is focused on delivering for Wales, Plaid and Reform UK offer division and no plan for the future.

Watch clips from Welsh Questions [here](#).

WELSH AFFAIRS SELECT COMMITTEE

A year ago, straight after the general election, I set out my priorities for Wales to stabilise the economy, drive investment and create jobs – and to reset the relationship between the UK Government and Welsh Government.

This month, I appeared before the Welsh Affairs Select Committee in Parliament to be scrutinised on those priorities and the progress made.

The Committee consists of MPs from different political parties, all representing Welsh constituencies, with the exception of the Tory MP as we have no Tory MPs in Wales.

I was able to tell the Committee that in just twelve months, wages are rising, employment is up, and £3.4 billion in private investment is supporting around 8,000 jobs. We've launched a modern Industrial Strategy and backed key industries like steel and renewable energy. Two new Investment Zones, in Wrexham and Flintshire, and Cardiff and Newport, are driving innovation in advanced manufacturing and semiconductors.

This is just the beginning. Labour is delivering a decade of national renewal and Wales is front and centre.

Watch clips from my appearance at the Welsh Affairs Select Committee [here](#).

PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM HARMFUL CONTENT

What happens online affects our children's safety, health and future. That's why this UK Labour Government has taken strong action to make the internet safer for young people.

We won't let tech companies use harmful algorithms to push damaging content into children's lives. They must follow the law and take responsibility. If they don't, we'll hold them to account.

No child should grow up unprotected online. Nigel Farage says he is going to cancel the Online Safety Act. Labour is putting our children's safety first.



FIXING OUR PENSION SYSTEM

Too many people are heading for retirement without enough to live on. Women, carers, and low-paid workers are hit hardest. Doing nothing is not an option.

The UK Labour Government has launched a new Pensions Commission to fix our unfair and outdated system. We're tackling the pensions gap between men and women, boosting returns, and making sure savings work as hard as the people earning them.

Everyone deserves a decent, secure retirement after a lifetime of work. Labour built the foundations of today's pensions system and now we are making it fit for the future with a plan that's fair and sustainable.

Read more about the Pension Commission [here](#).

PARENTAL LEAVE REVIEW

Every parent should have the chance to spend time with their children during their early years but our parental leave system doesn't always make this possible.

The UK Labour Government is launching a full review of parental leave and pay, listening to families and businesses to build a fairer, more flexible system that supports working parents and boosts our economy.

The review will help us to deliver on our promise to make work pay while providing a better family life balance for parents across Wales.

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

BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

For many families that have been affected by pregnancy loss, the decision around returning to work or taking sick leave to grieve properly can make an already painful experience even more difficult. That's not right and it's why the UK Labour Government is changing the law.

We're introducing new bereavement leave rights, including for early miscarriage, so parents have the time and space to grieve. We're also bringing in a day-one right to unpaid bereavement leave for all workers.

These are long-overdue changes that put compassion and fairness at the heart of our workplaces.

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

A NEW DEAL FOR WORKING PEOPLE

The UK Labour Government has published a clear roadmap to deliver our New Deal for Working People. This is the biggest transformation in workers' rights for more than a generation and will give working people the security, rights and respect they deserve.

From early next year, 15 million workers will start to benefit from new rights. This includes sick pay for 1.3 million of the lowest earners, and day-one rights to parental and paternity leave. These are long-overdue changes that will make a real difference to people's lives.

This roadmap is the result of extensive collaboration between businesses, trade unions and workers. We've listened and we're taking a phased approach so that change is clear, manageable, and lasting.

This is a serious plan to build a fairer economy, boost productivity, and deliver better jobs and better pay for working people.

Read the roadmap [here](#).

SUPPORT FOR FIRST-TIME BUYERS

Too many people in Wales and across the UK have been priced out of owning a home.

Reforms announced by the Chancellor will support more young people onto the housing ladder. Nationwide is expanding its 'Helping Hand' mortgage, lowering income thresholds so more people can qualify. This will support an extra 10,000 first-time buyers every year.

It's a practical step that will make a real difference. Labour is focused on making the housing market fairer and more accessible for those who've been locked out for too long.

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

SANCTIONS FOR PEOPLE SMUGGLING GANGS

People smuggling gangs are driving illegal migration, threatening our security and profiting from human misery. They must be stopped. The UK Government has launched the world's first dedicated sanctions regime targeting people-smuggling gangs.

These measures will freeze assets, block financial flows, and disrupt the vile trade fuelling the dangerous Channel crossings.

This is a serious step in our plan to secure the UK's borders and tackle the root causes of irregular migration. We will continue to act, working with international partners, to break these networks and protect lives.

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

ACTION ON ORGREAVE

For 41 years, mining communities have carried the weight of what happened at Orgreave during the miners' strike. The scars of that day run deep. Families have been left without answers, trust in policing was shattered, and justice denied. The truth has been hidden for too long.

We made a promise in our manifesto that we would hold a statutory inquiry. It will be led by the Bishop of Sheffield, and will finally investigate the events of Orgreave, with the powers needed to uncover what really happened. This is about truth,

accountability, and restoring confidence.

I represented miners and the South Wales NUM when I was a trade union lawyer. I campaigned for decades alongside the miners, their families and trade unionists across the country for the terrible events at Orgreave to be properly investigated. I am really pleased that our UK Labour Government has brought us to this moment.

Read more about the Orgreave Inquiry [here](#).



Promoted by Hollie Ridley on behalf of the Labour Party, both at 20 Rushworth Street, London, SE1 0SS

TACKLING DOMESTIC ABUSE

Thousands more women and children will be better protected from domestic abuse through the direct targeting of perpetrators.

Through initiatives like the Drive Project and Project Vigilant, we're going after perpetrators wherever they pose a threat, whether that's at home or on the streets. We are shifting the focus onto those who cause harm, challenging dangerous behaviours and making it clear that the responsibility for ending abuse lies with perpetrators, not those who suffer from it.

The multi-million pound investment will see up to 15 new areas going live by March 2026, with full roll-out across Wales and England to follow.

Read more about Labour's plan to tackle domestic violence [here](#).

ACTION TO CLEAN UP OUR WATERWAYS

We inherited a broken water system, with record levels of sewage being pumped into our waterways, bosses being paid millions in bonuses, and families being left with massive bill hikes.

I've heard from so many residents who are rightly angry and fed up with water bosses taking bonuses while polluting our waterways and putting up bills. Labour is taking action.

This month, the UK Labour Government announced widespread reform to the water industry. We are abolishing Ofwat and replacing it with a new, powerful regulator in the biggest overhaul of water regulation in a generation.

We are also introducing a new Water Ombudsman with powers to make legally binding decisions to protect customers from leaking pipes, incorrect bills or supply issues.

We will halve sewage pollution, the most ambitious target to cut sewage any Government has ever made, whilst protecting households from unexpected increases to their bills.

Read about how Labour is fixing our broken water system [here](#).

VOTES AT 16

In Wales, 16 and 17-year-olds have had the right to vote in Senedd and Council elections since 2021. We've shown that when you trust young people with a voice, they take it seriously. Now, Labour is extending that right across the UK.

I have always supported votes for 16 and 17-year-olds and campaigned for many years for a change in the law. If you can work, pay tax, and contribute to society, you should have a say in how it's run. This is about fairness, inclusion, and building a stronger democracy for the future.

Young people care deeply about the world around them and Labour is making sure their voices are heard.

Read more about votes at 16 [here](#).

IMMIGRATION DEALS WITH FRANCE AND GERMANY

The Labour government is taking firm action to stop dangerous Channel crossings and save lives. New agreements with Germany and France will crack down on criminal gangs who profit from smuggling people in unsafe boats.

Germany will now make it a crime to help smuggle migrants to the UK, giving police and prosecutors stronger powers. Both countries will also work with Europol and social media platforms to shut down smuggling networks online.

These deals follow the Prime Minister's talks with European leaders. This is about

practical cooperation. Working together, our three nations will restore order to our asylum systems, securing our borders, and prevent further tragedies at sea.

STATEMENT ON ISRAEL AND GAZA

I have been appalled by the horrific scenes in Gaza including images of starvation, desperation and suffering of children and babies.

This week I attended the Cabinet meeting at which we took the decision that the UK Labour Government will recognise the state of Palestine, an issue I have campaigned for and supported for many decades.

Our immediate priority is to ensure humanitarian aid and relief, on the ground and at significant scale. You can read my statement on this decision and the steps the UK Labour Government has already taken and is taking [here](#).

