



As 2025 draws to a close, I want to thank you for keeping in touch through reading my monthly newsletter and for taking an interest in the work I do on your behalf as your Member of Parliament for Cardiff East and as Secretary of State for Wales.

It's been an extremely busy year, and I want to thank every constituent who has taken the time to chat with me and with my team when we've knocked your door. As always, we are here to help, and you can contact me anytime.

Wishing you and your family a very Merry Christmas and a happy, healthy and successful New Year.

2025 in Review

Tackling the cost of living, investing in our public services, creating jobs, delivering clean power and making our streets safer is what the UK Labour Government was elected to do. Here's what we've done in 2025.

Inflation is down (now at its lowest rate since March), wages are up and interest rates have been cut 6 times since Labour came to power. That

means the average worker will earn over £500 more each year. While the average saving on a new mortgage is around £1,000 a year.

Wages grew faster in the first 10 months of this Labour Government than they did in 10 years of the Tory Government.

Between the General Election and April 2026, Labour will have delivered a pay rise of £2300 a year for people working full-time on the national minimum wage and £4000 a year for those aged between 18 and 20.

Above inflation pay rises have been funded for nurses, doctors, teachers, police and other public sector workers. And our armed forces have had their biggest pay rise for over 20 years.

A new law on employment rights that we fought so hard to get past Tory, Lib Dem, Reform and the Greens who kept voting against them, means stronger protections against being unfairly sacked, stronger statutory sick pay, the right to parental leave and bereavement leave from the first day of employment and an end to unscrupulous fire and rehire and exploitative zero hours contracts.

The new law will boost productivity, increase people's living standards and make work more secure. The changes are pro-worker and pro-business.

We've brought in the Renters' Rights Act to make renting more secure by ending no fault evictions.

Pensioners have seen another rise in state pensions and restoration of the winter fuel allowance for every pensioner household whose income is £35,000 or less.

We've taken £150 off energy bills and expanded the warm homes discount for low-income households so that 6 million households will get more help with their bills.

There are 330,000 more people in work, we've done four new trade deals including with the EU, USA and India and attracted £320bn of investment into the UK. More jobs, more opportunities, making the UK a great place to invest.

We've launched our child poverty strategy so that every child gets the best start in life. Scrapping the two-child limit will benefit over 3000 children in Cardiff East and 550,000 across the UK. And we're helping people back into work through targeted employment schemes in Wales backed by millions of pounds.

Two record breaking financial settlements for Wales, the largest ever in devolution history, have meant the Welsh Government has been able to invest more in our NHS, bringing down long waiting lists by 86%, in schools, local council services, transport, business support and high streets. The spending power of the Welsh Government has been boosted by nearly £6 billion and we've updated the Welsh Government funding framework, so it is more favourable for Wales and got the best deal of any nation in the UK for local growth funds to invest in communities right across Wales.

Half a billion pounds for rail infrastructure (including in Cardiff), over £100million to help steel communities, Great British Energy, railway companies being brought back into public ownership and one of the biggest ever public investments in Wales in our history, with the UK's first fleet of new small modular nuclear reactors being built on Anglesey.

Violent crime is down. We have more neighbourhood police on our streets and we're tackling the scourge of violence against women and girls. We've invested in the criminal justice system after the Tories left our prisons and courts in crisis, putting victims of crime at the heart of the system.

And finally, the Prime Minister has restored the UK's international standing, rebuilding trust and relationships with our closest allies and more widely across the world. The deal we struck with the EU in May will

be worth up to £9bn to the UK economy, boosting growth, protecting jobs, bringing down bills and securing our borders. We have rejoined Erasmus+ which is a huge win for young people so students and apprentices will be able to study, train and undertake work placements abroad and enabling school and youth visits and exchanges.

Lots done. More to do. Watch this space!

MEET YOU WELSH LABOUR CAERDYDD FFYNNON TAF SENEDD CANDIDATES

Welsh Labour has announced an excellent team of Senedd candidates for our constituency ready for the Senedd election on 7th May 2026.

The election will be held under a new voting system, where electors have one one vote for one party. 96 Senedd Members will be elected across 16 new super constituencies (six in each constituency). Our constituency will consist of both Cardiff East and Cardiff North and is called Caerdydd Ffynnon Taf.

Our new generation of Welsh Labour candidates bring different experience, energy, and an absolute commitment to stand up for the priorities of people right across Cardiff East (and Cardiff North).

Our team of candidates understands our communities because they are part of them. Working together, we'll focus on what matters most, better public services, good jobs, and opportunities for everyone.

YOUR WELSH LABOUR CANDIDATES FOR CAERDYDD FFYNNON TAF



**Shav
Taj**



**Jackie
Jones**



**Dan
De'Ath**



**Sarah
Merry**



**Jen
Burke**



**Lee
Bridgeman**



**Matt
Hexter**



**Bernie
Bowen-
Thomson**

NEWS FROM CARDIFF EAST

CELEBRATING SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY

Small businesses are the backbone of our area, driving the local economy and employing significant numbers of residents. When we support local businesses, we're supporting our neighbours and helping create and sustain jobs locally.

On Small Business Saturday, I highlighted how Labour is backing small businesses here in Cardiff East, including:

- Transforming City Road into a thriving hub for local businesses with safer crossings, better public transport links, and new seating areas surrounded by trees.
- Investing in Countisbury Avenue to make it a more welcoming shopping parade, with resurfaced roads, upgraded crossings, improved car parks, and new bins, bollards, and cycle stands.
- Tackling crime and antisocial behaviour on Clifton Street by getting South Wales Police to implement the Clear, Hold, Build strategy to drive down crime and make it a more welcoming and safe place for residents, visitors, business owners and their staff.
- Regenerating Clearwater Way, upgrading retail units and improving public spaces for residents and visitors.

I also asked residents to share their favourite local businesses, which I've included in my [Small Business Dashboard](#). Take a look and please do shop local this Christmas.



LLANRUMNEY HOSTS LAUNCH OF WALES'S COMMUNITY FOOTBALL STRATEGY

The Football Association of Wales through its Cymru Football Foundation launched its new 'Closer to the Game' strategy right here in Cardiff East at Llanrumney United Football Club.

The strategy has a really bold ambition to make sure that every community in Wales has access to a quality football pitch within 15 minutes travel. This will mean better facilities for grassroots clubs, more opportunities for children and young people to play, and stronger support for the volunteers who keep football clubs going locally. By

investing in local clubs, the Foundation wants football to continue to be a driving force for community health and wellbeing.

It was fantastic to be involved in the launch at Llanrumney United alongside Wales manager Craig Bellamy. Huge thanks to club secretary Sarah Mace who gave a wonderful speech and thanks to every volunteer across Cardiff East who keep our clubs going.

Watch my speech from the launch [here](#).



149 YEARS OF CARDIFF RUGBY

Cardiff Rugby is celebrating its 149th birthday after a year of real uncertainty. The anniversary is focusing on the remarkable heritage of our club.

The first kit in 1876 was a plain black jersey with a skull and crossbones, a nod to Cardiff's pirating past. It lasted only one season after parents objected to the lawless image it portrayed. Soon after came the blue and black we know and love today.

As a fan and member of Cardiff Rugby's Supporters' Trust, I care deeply about our club, its history and even more about the future of the game. The news that Cardiff will remain home to an elite rugby team had to happen and I stressed this in my submission to the WRU consultation.

I will keep working with the club, the Supporters' Trust, players, fans and stakeholders to ensure Cardiff Rugby thrives for generations to come.



CARDIFF CENTRAL STATION IMPROVEMENTS

£140 million is being invested in Cardiff Central Station by the UK Labour Government, the Welsh Labour Government and Cardiff Capital Region to make significant improvements for passengers. The investment has now been approved, marking a major step forward for our city in its 70th year as the capital city and the 200th anniversary of our railways.

My cabinet colleague Heidi Alexander, the UK Government Transport Secretary, Welsh Government Transport Minister Ken Skates and Cardiff Council Leader Huw Thomas joined me at Cardiff Central to make the announcement, see the station designs and meet rail staff and passengers.

Cardiff Central is Wales' busiest station, used by over 35,000 people every day, and passenger numbers are set to grow. We will get a larger concourse, an extended Platform 0, and a redesigned southern entrance, along with improved ticket gates, waiting areas, retail spaces, and cycle storage, making the station a much easier place to navigate and make it ready for extra demand in the future.

This project is part of a wider £445 million investment in rail infrastructure across Wales by the UK Labour Government. Construction starts in Spring 2026, with completion expected by 2029. The station will be open throughout the work, with much of it expected to be done ahead of Euro 2028 when we'll welcome people from across the globe to Cardiff.

Find out more about the project in my recent [video](#).



WINTER READING CHALLENGE

The Winter Reading Challenge is back. This is a brilliant opportunity to read with children and ensure that they keep up with all they have learnt in school over the previous term.

Taking part in the challenge is easy, simply sign up, log the books you and your child have read together and unlock digital rewards when you complete the challenge.

Click here for [more](#).



CHRISTMAS WASTE COLLECTIONS

Over the Christmas period, your recycling & waste collection could be later than usual. See below for the changes in collection dates.

Usual Date	Late Collection Date
Tuesday 23 rd December	No Change
Wednesday 24 th December	No Change
Thursday 25 th December	Saturday 27 th December
Friday 26 th December	Sunday 28 th December
Saturday 27 th December	No Change
Sunday 28 th December	No Change

Wrapping paper will not be collected from recycling bags or sacks and will need to be put into black general waste bins or bags for collection.



WINTER RAIL DISRUPTION

Great Western Railway's winter timetable is now in effect, and passengers are being asked to plan ahead and book early for the busy Christmas period.

Engineering work will affect journeys to London Paddington between Saturday 27 December and Sunday 4 January. Services will run to an amended timetable because only two of the four tracks will be available.

There will be no direct trains between Cardiff and Cheltenham Spa, so passengers should change at Swindon or Bristol Parkway.

Advance fares and updated journey planners are available [here](#). Please check your travel plans and reserve seats early to avoid disruption.

CHRISTMAS OFFICE CLOSURE

My office is now closed for Christmas and will reopen on Monday 5th January.

During this time, we'll be checking emails. If your request for assistance is urgent, please mark it as urgent.

My Christmas Contact List below also has contact details for other sources of advice and help over the Christmas period.

OUT OF HOURS CONTACTS

Cardiff Council & Foodbank Support: 029 2087 2087

Welsh Water: 0800 052 0130

Western Power Distribution: 0800 6783 105

Wales and West Utilities: 0800 111 999

Non-Emergency Medical Issues: 111

Wales and West Housing: 0800 052 2526

CCHA: 029 2046 8490

Cadwyn Housing: 029 2049 8898

Hafod Housing: 0800 024 8968

Linc Housing: 0800 072 0966

Samaritans: 116 123

Live Fear Free: 0808 80 10 800

Migrant Help: 0808 8010 503



@JoStevensLabour

JO STEVENS MP

Your Strong Voice for Cardiff East

NEWS FROM ACROSS WALES

RECORD INVESTMENT FOR WALES

Wales is attracting record investment. Since the launch of the Wales Investment Summit, more than £16 billion of new projects have been announced, creating thousands of jobs and opportunities for every corner of the country.

From Vodafone's £600m to expand 5G coverage, to Vantage Data Centres' £10 billion investment transforming the former Ford Bridgend site, and major projects in energy, ports and TV production, the Wales Investment has been a game-changer.

Labour is delivering for Wales. This investment is a clear vote of confidence in the Welsh economy and our people. We will keep working to ensure every part of Wales benefits from this success.

WALES INVESTMENT SUMMIT

Bringing **300+** global business leaders
from 27 countries to Wales

£16 billion investment announced since the
Summit was launched

10,000+ jobs over coming years

Showcasing Wales' strengths in
clean energy, tech, and manufacturing

Promoted by Joe Lock on behalf of Welsh Labour, 1 Cathedral Road, CF11 9SD



Welsh Labour  Llafur Cymru

THE UK LABOUR GOVERNMENT'S FIGHT AGAINST CHILD POVERTY

The first 1,000 days of a child's life are crucial. For children growing up in poverty, the impact can last a lifetime. It makes it harder to learn at

school, impacts on health, reduces prospects of good employment or even any employment, opportunity and life chances.

The last Labour Government lifted 600,000 children out of poverty, but a succession of Tory Governments then increased child poverty by 700,000.

That's why this UK Labour Government is scrapping the Tories' two-child limit. We have also published a new Child Poverty Strategy that will tackle its root causes. We'll cut the cost of essentials, boost family incomes, and improve local services so every child gets the best start in life.

The Prime Minister and I launched the UK wide strategy in Cardiff with Eluned Morgan.

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



A LABOUR BUDGET FOR WALES

The Welsh Labour Government has confirmed a Budget Agreement that secures the passage of the 2026-27 Budget through the Senedd in the new year. This is a budget built on Welsh Labour values: protecting frontline services, supporting jobs, and investing in our communities. The extra money is a result of the UK Labour Government providing Wales with the biggest budget settlement in devolution history.

- An overall 4.5% increase for local government. Cardiff Council will receive an increase of 4.2% in their budget in the settlement helping to safeguard schools, social care, and vital local services.
- An increased budget of 3.6% for the Welsh NHS to support frontline services and help tackle waiting times.
- £120m in capital funding reserved for after the Senedd election, ensuring future investment opportunities in Wales.

