



Wishing everyone observing Ramadan and Lent, peace, strength and a meaningful time of reflection.

February has been extremely busy both here in Cardiff East and across Wales; securing a generational investment in Welsh rail, a £50million fund to boost our defence manufacturing sector, and lots of great doorstep conversations with residents throughout Cardiff East. I've also spent time meeting with local businesses, groups and charities that contribute so much to our local community.

If you need any help or support with an issue, please contact me using the details below.

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NEWS FROM CARDIFF EAST

TACKLING THE COST OF LIVING

Our focus as a government is on tackling the cost of living, reducing the pressure on households and putting more money into peoples' pockets.

All of the work last year to stabilise the economy, to deliver investment and new jobs is now starting to bear fruit ahead of significant measures in a few weeks' time that will see the scrapping of the two-child limit benefitting 69,000 children in Wales, another rise to the national minimum and living wages helping 160,000 Welsh workers, protecting the triple lock with an increase to state pensions for 700,000 Welsh pensioners, a record-breaking permanent increase to Universal Credit standard allowance helping 320,000 Welsh families (including many working families in Cardiff East), and the energy bill cap coming down by 7%.

- Inflation is down
- Wages continue to increase above inflation. Wages rose faster in the first 10 months of our government than they did in 10 years of Conservative rule
- Interest rates have been cut six times since Labour came into office reducing annual mortgage payments by around £1400 a year
- Government borrowing is down
- Retail sales are up 4.5%
- The UK is the fastest growing European G7 economy.

There's still more to do, but this is good progress and people will feel the benefit of the improvements this year.

CUTTING ENERGY BILLS

The affordability crisis is the number one issue facing families. That's why the UK Labour Government has acted to bring down energy bills for households across Cardiff East.

The energy price cap is coming down by 7% (£117) because of the choices made by Labour at the Budget; to ask those with the broadest shoulders to pay their fair share in tax to fund vital cost of living support.

This is on top of the expanded Warm Home Discount, which has meant nearly 6 million families are receiving £150 off their energy bills this winter.

This is welcome news for residents, but Labour recognises there is much more to do to end the era of high energy bills for good. That's why we're delivering the biggest ever public investment in home upgrades through our Warm Homes Plan, and investing record amounts in clean homegrown power to get us off the rollercoaster of fossil fuel prices.

**Labour takes £150 off
energy bills from April
2026**

gov.uk
27/11/2025

**Warm Homes Discount
extended, saving
millions an extra £150**

BBC:
30/01/2026

**From 1 April to 30 June 2026
energy prices will go down by
£117 or 7%**

Ofgem:
25/02/2026



**LABOUR IS CUTTING
ENERGY COSTS
CARDIFF EAST**

Promoted by Ian Bounds on behalf of Jo Stevens for Cardiff East, both at 116 Albany Road, Cardiff, CF24 3RU.

FIXING POTHOLES

Residents across Cardiff East regularly raise concerns about potholes with me. Thanks to the reports you have made, along with those I have submitted on your behalf, 3,863 were fixed in Cardiff East in 2025.

The prolonged wet weather is problematic for our roads, causing more potholes. Cardiff Council teams are out everyday resurfacing, patching and making safe with temporary repairs while long term fixes are scheduled. Because of the record settlement by the UK Labour Government for the Welsh Labour Government, it has been able to commit an extra £10m for resurfacing over the next two years, so even more improvements are on the way.

Please keep reporting any problems through the [Cardiff Council website](#) or the [app](#). You can also contact my office directly if you would like me to raise an issue with a specific road on your behalf.



LIFTING THE TWO CHILD LIMIT ON BENEFITS

The last Tory Government left a shameful legacy, with record numbers of children trapped in poverty. We must break this cycle of disadvantage. It strangles opportunity for so many children from the moment they are born and is wrong.

Scrapping the two-child benefit cap is the fastest, most cost-effective way to lift children out of poverty. In Cardiff East alone, this change will benefit over 3000 children.

This is a deliberate political choice. Our UK Labour Government has taken action to give all children the best start in life. Meanwhile, Reform UK and the Tories say they will reverse our changes.

They claim they want to make work pay but the truth is they will take money out of the pockets of families where at least one parent is already working. They voted against lifting the cap and against our increases to the National Minimum and Living Wages which will benefit so many people across Cardiff East.

CARDIFF CITY FC FOUNDATION VETERANS HUB

I visited the Cardiff City FC Foundation Veterans Hub to catch up with the group this month and was pleased to take the Secretary of State for Defence, John Healey MP with me.

Veterans were able to tell their stories directly to John and I and talk about the benefits of being a member of their group.

Our UK Labour government is taking decisive action to ensure those who served our country have the security they deserve when they leave the armed forces.

We are strengthening the Armed Forces Covenant, improving mental health resources, and we will end the scandal of veterans' homelessness once and for all.

Read more about our plan to deliver for the veteran community [here](#).



RUMNEY FORUM

I caught up with Kath and Mike Wakeham and their dedicated team at the Rumney Forum to hear more about the excellent work they do, providing a lifeline to families and vulnerable residents across Rumney.

Their home at Brachdy House is central to everything they offer, so I was really concerned to hear that the charity is now at risk of losing this vital property. The charity is currently fundraising to cover urgent legal costs

to save their home. If you are able to help protect this essential community facility, please consider supporting their campaign [here](#).



ABC PARK IMPROVEMENTS

Our Trowbridge and St Mellons Labour Councillors, Bernie Bowen Thomson and Michael Michael have been working hard to secure funding for improvements at ABC Park.

As a result of their hard work, Cardiff Labour Council is providing investment to:

- Resurface the BMX Track
- Improve the Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA)
- Upgrade the much-loved zip-wire

Despite the horrible weather, works have continued at ABC Park and it's great to see real progress on the ground. Bernie, Michael and I will

continue to keep residents updated as the remaining works are completed.

CLIFTON DENTAL PRACTICE

Everyone should be able to access high-quality dental care when they need it.

I recently met with Dr Imtiaz Khan, who has set up a new NHS dental practice, Clifton Dental Care, in Adamsdown.

Dr Khan has a great life story. A Grangetown boy who has a really strong commitment to making sure children learn about and have access to good dental healthcare from an early age.

Although there is currently a waiting list for adult patients, the practice is supporting people by advising them on the steps they can take to secure an NHS dentist. You can get in touch with the team [here](#).

OLIVE TREE GARDENS

Olive Tree Café in Rumney Hill Gardens is a lovely, welcoming not-for-profit, dementia-friendly café run by local volunteers. Whether people are living with dementia, caring for a family member or friend, struggling with loneliness, the café is a lifeline for many.

All the profits from the café and the crafts they sell, go to Alzheimer's charities. In 2 years, this wonderful group have raised over £6,500. If you know anyone who could benefit from this support, visit the café in Rumney Hill Gardens or contact them via email [here](#).



SHAHJALAL MOSQUE FOODBANK FUNDRAISING

It was a privilege to attend the Shahjalal Mosque foodbank fundraiser to thank all the volunteers and everyone who donates to help the most vulnerable people across our city.

The mosque provides over 200 food parcels every month. This is a vital service that relies on the kindness of local people and businesses.



POLICE FUNDING

Over a decade of Tory austerity devastated neighbourhood policing across the country. In Cardiff East, we've felt these consequences firsthand.

Crime and anti-social behaviour is one of the more frequent issues residents raise with me each week. Whether its issues like off-road bikes, drug dealing and drug use or criminal damage, I raise them all with our local neighbourhood Police teams.

Last year, our UK Labour Government increased South Wales Police's budget by a record £25.2 million. For 2026/27 we're increasing it again by another £17.2 million.

This means more police officers to prevent and detect crime and make our streets safer. I've also taken the Chief Constable and other senior officers out to crime hotspots in Cardiff East so they can see what

residents have had to put up with for far too long. As a result, there are specific initiatives agreed and being implemented in Adamsdown and in Llanrumney as a start.



HALIFAX BANK CLOSURE

Halifax Bank is closing its Albany Road branch, effective from 11 June this year. This is bad news for residents and businesses that rely on the services this branch offers.

However, after contacting Lloyds Banking Group, I've been assured that existing Halifax customers will continue to be able to access Halifax banking services via the Lloyds branch on Wellfield Road.

I've also written to the Halifax requesting a meeting to discuss their proposals and to get assurances about how their customers will be supported. If you bank at the Halifax and have any particular concerns you'd like me to raise with them, please contact my office.

USDAW POLITICAL CONFERENCE

It was great to welcome delegates from across the UK to shopworkers' union USDAW's Political Conference in Cardiff.

USDAW's Freedom from Fear campaign has been vital in exposing the daily reality of working in retail. Verbal and physical abuse has become a daily occurrence and the union has shown exactly why stronger protections are needed to keep shopworkers safe.

The UK Labour Government is working closely with USDAW to make abuse against shopworkers a specific criminal offence. We're also ending the indefensible Tory shoplifting threshold where no action is taken against thieves if the value of goods they steal is under £200, to make sure all retail crime is taken seriously.



SPACE FORGE

The UK Space Agency has awarded the ground-breaking Cardiff East business, Space Forge, one of three organisations awarded contracts to manufacture high-tech materials in satellites in space that are used in the microchips that we rely on everyday in our phones, cars and much, much more.

The UK Defence Secretary came with me to visit Space Forge at their site

in Rumney to see the brains and the science behind manufacturing materials in orbit.

Space Forge have won many industry and technology awards and grown significantly over the past few years. They are an amazing business so whenever you look up at the night sky, there's a Cardiff East made satellite up there in space!

SUPPORT FOR LOCAL SPORTS CLUBS

British Gas has teamed up with Team GB and Paralympics GB to help local grassroots clubs cut their energy bills.

The Energy for Tomorrow fund is offering grants for upgrades like solar panels, LED lighting, and insulation. By cutting energy costs, clubs can reinvest every penny back into local sport.

Do you know a local club that could benefit? Find out more and apply [here](#).



ST DAVID'S AWARDS FINALISTS

Cardiff East is home to incredible talent. Congratulations to Jess Fishlock MBE and Brød Bakery founder Betina Skovbro, who were shortlisted for this year's St David Awards.

Jess Fishlock is a true inspiration. By breaking stereotypes to represent and captain Wales on the world stage, she has paved the way for women in sport.

Betina Skovbro set up Brød and built it into a great Cardiff success story, making the most delicious Danish bakes and pastries I've ever eaten. From their Riverbridge Road base at Newport Road, Betina has recruited so many local people, worked her socks off and continues to meet the huge demand for her delicious Danish products.



NOMINATE YOUR LOCAL SCHOOL FOOD HERO

Nominations for Jamie Oliver's Good School Food Awards are back for a fourth year. Last year, I was proud to nominate Lisa Mahoney from St

Cadoc's R.C. Primary School in Llanrumney, a local champion loved by teachers, parents and pupils alike.

Now, I'm looking for our next school food hero. If you know someone who deserves recognition let me know by **11th March 2026**. I'll announce my nomination on my social media channels.

Suggest a nomination [here](#).



NEWS FROM ACROSS WALES

GENERATIONAL INVESTMENT TO TRANSFORM WELSH RAILWAYS

Wales has waited a very long time for a UK Government willing to fund and build the infrastructure needed to transform our Welsh rail network.

It was a huge moment last week when the Prime Minister Keir Starmer came to Transport for Wales's headquarters in Taffs Well to announce up to £14bn funding for Welsh rail and commit to delivery of Transport for Wales's vision for the future of rail in Wales as quickly as possible.

There are 43 schemes set out that cover every corner of Wales from seven new stations, upgrades to lines, more and faster trains, electrification of mainlines in the North and South of Wales, improvements to Mid Wales and the Marches services, Swansea Bay and West Wales Metro and more. You can read about the plan and what it involves [here](#).

The UK Labour Government have also committed funding to Cardiff Parkway station. The announcement will support 12,000 new jobs.

This represents a generational commitment to Welsh rail by the UK Labour Government, building on the £445million announced last year and the Welsh Labour Government's £1.1bn spent upgrading and electrifying the Core Valleys Lines and £800m investment in new trains.

This has only been possible through detailed, committed work between our two Labour Governments during the last 19 months. This will transform our rail network and support passengers and businesses to access the tens of thousands of new jobs we are creating across the country.

Watch my recent interviews [here](#).



LAUNCHING WALES' DEFENCE GROWTH DEAL

National security is the first duty of any Government. I was proud to join the Secretary of State for Defence and the First Minister to launch our new Defence Growth Deal for Wales.

Global events mean that as a UK Labour Government we have committed to increase defence spending, and we are determined that as well as providing defence capability, we will use the increase in defence spending as an engine for economic growth.

We're investing £50 million in Wales to support small and medium sized businesses secure defence contracts and there will be a particular focus on Welsh expertise, technology and innovation in the design and manufacture of drones.

Many of the drones that are manufactured are dual-use, so not just used by our Armed Forces, but also in civilian capacities helping with

coal tip safety surveillance, air and sea rescue and reducing dangerous working at height which is the cause of workplace fatalities every year across the UK.

Read more about the Defence Growth Deal [here](#).



SUPPORTING JOBS GROWTH & INVESTMENT IN PORT TALBOT

It was great to be in Port Talbot to announce the launch of a new £11.78 million fund to create high-quality jobs and attract long-term investment to Port Talbot, funded by our UK Labour Government and Tata Steel.

So far, the Port Talbot Tata Steel Transition Board which I chair, has allocated £122million of funding, resulting in thousands of grants distributed locally for retraining, business investment and regeneration projects.

Our Labour Government said we would back the steelworkers of Port Talbot, their families and businesses dependent on Tata Steel and we have delivered on that promise.

PRIDE IN PLACE

Tredegar and the Sirhowy Valley is one of fourteen places across that is receiving £20million as part of the UK Labour Government's Pride in Place programme. The areas have been selected because they are amongst the most deprived in the country.

Local residents will help decide what the funds will be spent on, with an emphasis on making their local area a better and more prosperous better place to live and work.

Watch my video from my visit here. Read more about the funding [here](#).



ACTION ON VACANT LAND

Building new affordable homes is a top priority for our two Labour Governments.

For nearly a decade, the Tories refused to give Wales the power to tax developers who sit on empty land. This allowed "landbanking" to thrive,

leaving sites earmarked for homes empty whilst housing waiting lists went up and up.

Labour is taking action where the Tories failed. I announced this month that our UK Labour Government will devolve powers to the Senedd to introduce a vacant land tax to unlock land for housebuilding, speed up construction, and deliver the high-quality homes that our so desperately needed.

Listen to my recent interview [here](#).

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR PUBS & RESTAURANTS

The Welsh Labour Government has announced 15% relief on rates bills for pubs in 2026–2027 to help them with financial challenges. This rates relief has also been extended to restaurants and cafes.

This builds on more than £1 billion of temporary rates relief provided since 2020, alongside permanent reliefs worth £250 million every year.

The latest support has been made possible thanks to the record financial settlement for Welsh Government from our UK Labour Government.

15,000 PEOPLE SUPPORTED TO BUY THEIR OWN HOME

The Welsh Labour Government's Help to Buy – Wales scheme makes buying a new-build home achievable for first time buyers with a 5% deposit, and provides a shared equity loan to help young people purchase their own home.

To date, £600 million has been invested into the scheme, and more than 15,000 people have been able to get a foot on the property ladder.

That success is political choice by our Welsh Labour Government. The Tories scrapped this support in England. That's the difference a Welsh Labour Government makes.

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



BUS BILL BECOMES LAW

The Welsh Labour Government's Bus Bill is now law, marking the beginning of a new era for public transport in Wales. The failed bus deregulation experiment will be consigned to the past, and we're taking back control of our bus network putting passengers before profit.

This landmark law will allow the design of a joined-up system with one timetable and one ticket. With our two Labour Governments creating thousands of new jobs right across Wales, the new bus system (including a £2 fare cap and 100 new routes after May if Welsh Labour are re-elected) will provide the reliable and extensive bus network that people need and deserve.

150 YEAR OF FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION OF WALES

The Football Association of Wales (FAW), one of the world's oldest football governing bodies, marked its 150th anniversary on 2 February. Founded in Wrexham by local businessmen who wanted to form a Welsh team capable of competing with Scotland, the organisation has come a long way.

Fast forward to 2026, and Welsh football is thriving, competing on the world stage, hopefully about to qualify for next year's World Cup and holding its own at the Euros.

Good luck to Wales for their semi-final qualifier against Bosnia next month and wishing the FAW every success for the next 150 years.



GE AEROSPACE

Wales's aerospace sector is known across the world. From Airbus in Broughton to GE Aerospace in Nantgarw, people around the world fly on aircraft with Welsh wings powered by engines that are maintained and kept safe by Welsh engineers.

I went to meet apprentices at GE this month to hear about the investment in the facility in Nantgarw to talk to them about their futures in this vital industry.

The UK Labour Government has committed £49 million to the aerospace sector in Wales to help it expand and create more apprenticeships and jobs.



NEWS FROM PARLIAMENT

ST DAVID'S DAY DEBATE

St David's Day is a perfect time to reflect on how far we have come in just 20 months. With record-breaking financial settlements for Welsh Government, we are delivering falling NHS waits, universal free school meals, and cheaper bus fares for young people.

We've committed £14 billion for Welsh rail and launched a new £50 million Defence Growth Deal to back our high-tech defence industries. We've secured the future of steelmaking in Port Talbot, unlocked floating offshore wind in the Celtic Sea and announced new nuclear power at Wylfa.

Through our new AI Growth Zones, Freeports, and our Wales-wide Local Growth Fund, we're investing in every community to raise living standards, create jobs, give people opportunities and ensure public service fit for the future.

At the Senedd election on 7th May, Wales faces an important choice.

We can continue to build the next chapter of Wales's future with two Labour Governments focussed entirely on the real and pressing priorities of people across Wales. Or, that future can be put at risk with the division and destruction of Reform, or the grievance politics and separatism of Plaid. That was my message in my St David's Day speech. You can watch it in full [here](#).

ST DAVID'S DAY RECEPTION

It was a pleasure to welcome people and businesses from across Wales to celebrate St David's Day at Number 10 Downing Street with the Prime Minister.

From delicious Welsh food and drink to our incredible sports teams, the reception was a brilliant showcase of Welsh pride and passion.



PROTECTING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ONLINE

The digital world that our children grow up in today is dominated by powerful platforms, addictive algorithms and fast-evolving technology.

The UK Labour Government will soon launch a three-month public consultation to hear what parents and the wider public have to say about the risks posed to children online and the measures they believe we should take to improve child safety.

Hearing directly from parents, carers, and young people is essential to getting this right and ensuring that the UK can continue to be a global leader in children's online safety.

Read more in my recent [blog](#).

HEART UNIONS WEEK

I've spent all my working life representing working people. First as a trade union solicitor for over 25 years, and as a Labour MP since 2015.

I was one of many people across our Labour trade union movement who worked together to lay the groundwork for a Labour Employment Rights Act providing the biggest uplift of workers' rights in a generation. And now, our UK Labour Government has delivered it.

And this month, its first steps were implemented. We have repealed the most restrictive parts of the Trade Union Act 2016, allowing unions to represent their members and negotiate for better pay without being tied up in unnecessary legal knots.

To mark Heart Unions Week, I made a shared a series of videos of what new rights you will have. You can watch them in full [here](#).

ENDING RIP OFF BILLS AT THE VETS

The cost of vet bills has skyrocketed over the last few years, with fees rising at nearly twice the rate of inflation. The Tory governments did nothing about this broken market which has seen people set to be overcharged by a staggering £1 billion over five years.

Our UK Labour Government is delivering the first major overhaul of the veterinary sector in sixty years to stop households from being ripped off.

These reforms will force transparency on pricing, end unexpected costs, and ensure pet owners can finally choose the best value care for their animals.

Read more about our plans [here](#).

