

Beth Winter MP



2021 Annual General Meeting Report

As we look back over the past year, I want to thank all those who have helped keep us safe and keep the wheels turning in our communities. At the same time, we remember the hardships and difficulties we all faced – from the storms of 2020 and the devastation they caused to homes and businesses, to the lockdowns caused by the outbreak of the Covid 19 pandemic, all of which have taken their toll on our community. We remember those we have lost, while also feeling inspired by the sense of community and the mutual support shown by local people. We have looked after one another, and we will, I'm sure, continue in that spirit in 2021 and beyond.

A priority for me as a new MP is to engage with and involve local people identifying priorities, and identifying solutions to the problems we face. I firmly believe that the answers to the problems we face can be found in our communities. With that in mind, I circulated an information leaflet across the whole of the constituency at the start of 2021, asking people to respond with their priorities. The response was incredible, with around 150 priorities raised by local people. These responses formed the report '[Priorities for Action](#)' which I have been circulating, and will continue to do so over the summer.

Following on from this report, I have commissioned [independent research](#) from the Bevan Foundation into the economy of the Cynon Valley, which is on track to be published in the autumn. I am excited to read the report and the recommendations that will come with it! Another key outcome of the Priorities for Action Report is the [Cynon Climate Assemblies](#) series I have been running. The environment was raised as a priority by many people and I wanted to make sure local people had a chance to feed into my *Cynon Climate Manifesto* - the submission I will make to COP26 in November.

I want to bring you a message of hope. With the roaring success of the vaccine roll out and the cautious easing of restrictions we can see light at the end of this tunnel. Being the MP for my home community is a privilege and I remain committed to working alongside you all to address local issues as well as promote the brilliant work taking place in Cynon Valley. I firmly believe that **Together, we can build a fairer future for all.**

Cynon Valley

Community Engagement and Involvement Key to all my work is the spirit of joint working and the idea of empowering and lending my voice to the people of the Cynon Valley. Since the start of the pandemic, my ability to engage with and involve local people and groups has, inevitably, been restricted. Despite this I have been working hard to begin building lasting relationships with and working collaboratively with a whole host of individuals and organisations. Thanks all - diolch yn fawr!

Voluntary Sector

Age Connects; Citizens Advice Bureau; Signposted Cymru; CPAG; Bevan Foundation; Interlink; Rowan Tree; Abercwmboi Welfare Hall; Cynon Valley Organic Adventures; Our Aberdare BID, Merthyr Cynon Food Bank, Barod, Mind, Shelter Cymru **and many more!**

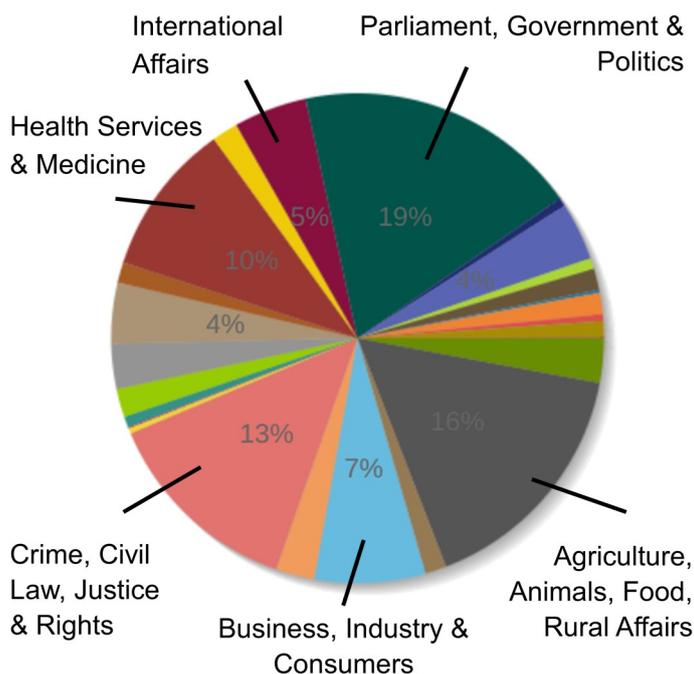
I've also been organising introductory meetings with various Council departments and officers, with headteachers at our schools and have been regularly popping in to local businesses.

One way of engaging for me has been to organise introductory virtual **meet and greet sessions** with groups in a particular sector. Since the last AGM I have organised these with;

- Primary schools
- Arts & Cultural groups
- Religious organisations
- Food charities and local groups

Casework

In the last year, my casework & policy team have received over 2500 cases, the pie chart below breaks down the cases by type.



(There are too many categories to neatly display here)

Trades Unions

One outcome from the initial meet and greet I hosted last year between Trade Unions has been the establishment of an **RCT Trades Council**. I must pay tribute to Cynon CLP members Jason Richards, Karl Greenhough and Mustapha Maohoub who have worked hard to make this happen and who are the officers of the newly formed Trades Council!

Advisory Groups

Another key component of my commitment to joint working are my advisory groups. These have continued to meet over the last year, with the Economy advisory group (Cynon **Valley Community Vision, CVCV**) overseeing the launch of the research. The **Welfare Reform** group are leading on campaigns for Universal Basic Income and for a Right to Food. The **Devolution & Constitution** advisory group has merged with CVCV and now meet as a subgroup. Since the last AGM they have met with [Ben Gwalchmai](#) and with previous Counsel General Jeremy Miles MS, as well as having met in the past with new Counsel General Mick Antoniw MS to discuss [Radical Federalism](#).

I've been involved in a number of **Campaigns** over the last year or so, some listed here.

- Enviroparks. Stop the Stack!
- Flooding & Climate Change
- Universal Credit Uplift
- Universal Basic Income
- Mineworkers Pensions Scheme
- Fire and Rehire
- Right to Food (**including** Free School Meals)
- Black Lives Matter
- NHS Staff pay
- Radical Federalism
- Broadband Infrastructure
- Penderyn Quarry
- Bank closures
- Post Office card account closures

In Parliament

Oral and Written Contributions

Since the last AGM in November, I've [spoken](#) at Parliament 37 times on a range of topics, including;

- Internal Market Bill
- Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill
- Right to Food
- Welsh Affairs
- Covid 19 Employment Support
- Universal Basic Income
- Shared Prosperity Fund
- Climate Change in Wales
- Domestic Abuse
- Levelling Up
- Mineworkers Pension Scheme
- Nuclear non-proliferation Treaty
- Higher Education
- Steel Industry

I've also submitted **written questions** on a range of local and national issues. You can see those questions, and any answers [here](#). If ever there is anything you feel I should ask in the Commons, please get in touch and I can ask the question of the appropriate minister, either in the chamber or as a written question.

The Welsh Affairs Committee is a big part of my work in Westminster. We have this month published two reports; one on Welsh Railway Infrastructure which concluded that UK Government must urgently form a Wales Rail Board along with Welsh Government to come up with a detailed set of proposals for investment in Welsh railway infrastructure. The report also concluded that HS2 must be categorised as an England only project rather than an England and Wales project, which would mean significant Barnett consequential for Wales. The other report published this month was on renewable energy and concerns we have about barriers to green energy production in Wales.

Other reports recently released include one on the Shared Prosperity Fund and priorities for the replacement of EU structural funding and one on Brexit and its implications for Wales. You can read all of the committee's reports [here](#) and watch back previous events [here](#).

I am a member of quite a few **All Party Parliamentary Groups**, and a co-chair of four of them!

- Co-Chair of UBI CPPLG
- Co-Chair APPG for ageing & older people
- Co-Chair APPG for Youth Affairs
- Co-Chair APPG on Poverty
- Member of APPG on Climate Change
- Member of APPG on Coronavirus
- Member APPG on Sustainable Finance
- Member APPG on Rail in Wales
- Member APPG on Air Quality
- Member APPG on Homelessness
- Member APPG on Fair Trade
- Member APPG on Future Generations
- Member APPG on Palestine
- Member of several Trade Union APPGs

Since the last AGM, I have tabled two [Early Day Motions](#), one expressing solidarity with the family of Christopher Kapessa and another welcoming the announcement that Welsh Government would be undertaking a [UBI pilot](#). In addition to these, I signed 72 EDMs tabled by my colleagues, you can read those EDMs [here](#).

Finally, I have continued to pen the occasional **article**. Back in December, I wrote an [article](#) with our very own Richard Jones, marking the 25th anniversary of the disability discrimination act and discussing the barriers disabled people still face. This was published in the Western Mail and the Cynon Valley Leader. If you, like Richard have an area of expertise and you would be interested in writing a joint article with me, please get in touch!

I have since written an article about UK Government [riding roughshod](#) over the Devolution settlement, as well as articles to mark [International Women's Day](#), [International Worker's Day](#) and the [73rd anniversary of the NHS](#). Finally, I have just had [an article](#) published in Labour List about CVCV and about the research Bevan Foundation are undertaking. **My thanks to my staff team for all their hard work - without them, my volunteers & supporters much of this work would not be possible.**