



Annual Report - August 2022

Dear friends, I hope you and yours are well. Please find below an update on my work over the last year.

The last year has been an extremely busy one for me and the team. I want to thank you all for your incredible support over the last few years.

Massive thanks as well to my team, who have enabled me to step up my level of activity in Cynon Valley and in parliament this year, I know **we will continue to go from strength to strength.**

It has been an honour this year to address Wales TUC, to speak at fringes at Welsh Labour Conference and to chair Mark Drakeford's contribution on 100 years of Welsh Labour at the National Eisteddfod. I will be speaking at a variety of fringes at Labour's annual conference in Liverpool too.

But it is community engagement and joint working that is key to all of my work, and it is engagement and consultation with local people that has informed the major pieces of work we have completed over the last year. For example, the mass survey of the constituency last spring has given us a clear steer to focus on the local economy and the environment, and we have followed up with action, commissioning research on the economy and holding public meetings to discuss climate change. Read more on Page 3.

Similarly, as the focus has turned onto the cost-of-living crisis, I wanted to hear from local people about the change that is needed. The response was astonishing, with over 650 local people filling in my survey. I wrote the survey responses up into a

report which you can see on my website.

I am now circulating a petition in Cynon Valley with common sense demands on the cost-of-living crisis. Please drop into my office or head to my website to add your name if you haven't already!

If you would like to have your say on any of my work, please get in touch and let me know your thoughts, I'd love to hear from you.

I have been extremely proud to see the RCT **Trades Council**, which I helped to set up, go from strength to strength. Trades Council reps have been attending picket lines across RCT, and the new banner has been attracting a lot of attention everywhere it goes! Not least in London after I organised a coach from Cynon Valley to attend the TUC 'Demand Better' Rally.

I have now called a **cost-of-living rally** in Aberdare for September 3rd. Get in touch if you would like more information.

I will continue to fight for a Labour Government that will stand up for the many, not the few.

Representing Cynon Valley in parliament is the honour of my life. I will continue to work as hard as I can to earn the privilege. Together, we can achieve a fairer, greener future for all.

B Winter

Campaigns

I must start with the **local elections** earlier this year. It was a pleasure to get out on the doorstep properly for the first time since Covid and knock doors with a brilliant team of Labour candidates. Labour in RCT and in Wales had an outstanding result, a ringing endorsement of leadership at local and Wales-wide levels. Huge congratulations to Team Cynon councillors elected in Cynon Valley, both new and returning. Thanks are in order to all outgoing councillors, some of whom are standing down after many decades of committed public service.

This time last year, I was distributing the **Priorities for Action** report I had compiled following a leaflet of every home in the constituency. Asking people what they thought needed to change was the easy bit. The hard work comes afterwards, as we try and turn those priorities into real and lasting change.

Two overwhelming priorities to come out of the exercise were **the Economy** and **the Environment**. On the economy, I started by commissioning **independent research into the Cynon Valley Economy** from the brilliant Welsh Think Tank the Bevan Foundation. We received the report back from the Bevan Foundation in November 2021 and immediately brought together stakeholders from the public, private and third sectors to discuss the findings.

Out of this research and that event have come a number of streams of work. I have instigated in total nine task and finish groups to carry forward this important work.

On **the Environment**, I ran a series of **Cynon Valley Climate Assemblies** giving local people the chance to have their say about the climate crisis and the changes needed. The sessions were extremely well attended and resulted in a '**Cynon Valley Climate Manifesto**'. I submitted a copy to COP26 and sent copies to Boris Johnson, Mark Drakeford and others!

We are continuing with all this important work, but my focus has changed slightly in recent months, due to the rapidly escalating **cost-of-living crisis**. Poverty has been normalised in this country for too long, we can't tolerate it any more.

People are suffering in Cynon Valley. In the spring of this year, I conducted a **cost-of-living survey**. Of the 650 people to complete the survey, 90% said that things were getting worse for them financially, and 81% said financial problems were affecting their mental health. Since then, everything has gone up except wages.

I am currently collecting signatures for a **petition** calling for inflation-proofed increases in pay, pensions and social security; price controls on essential household goods, a mass programme of home insulation, increased emergency payments to household and wealth and windfall taxes to pay for it. You can sign the petition either online, or by dropping into my office.

I have now called a **rally in Cynon Valley** to give people a chance to have their say. Speakers include Andrew Morgan, Shav Taj, Mark Serwotka, Rachel Rowlands & Jason Richards.

Other campaigns I have been involved in this year include Universal Basic Income, WASPI campaign, the Mineworker's Pension Scheme, Anti-social behaviour, access to cash, reform of the welfare system and constitutional reform.



At the local election count with Andrew Morgan and Wendy Treeby



Giving a speech at a demo calling for fair pay. Photo: Mehek Seth



Cynon comrades & the amazing Trades Council banner in London.



Beth Winter MP

AS Cwm Cynon

MP for Cynon Valley



In Parliament

Activity in Parliament. I have not lost sight of why I am in Parliament and I am determined that Cynon Valley should have the strong voice it deserves.

I have made 64 **spoken contributions** this year on a range of topics and asked 133 **written questions**, both well above the average figure for 2019 intake MPs. I **voted** 204 times this year.

I tabled **Early Day Motions (EDMs)** in support of Llwydcoed brass band, and in support of Caradog Fest, and signed 101 EDMs by colleagues.

I also served on my first **Bill committee** as I worked on the progress of the Charities Bill through the House.

I am now a member of **18 All-Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs)** and act as chair or officer for Ageing and Older People, Coalfield Communities, Poverty, and Youth Affairs.

I will be **presenting a petition** of Cynon Valley constituents to Parliament in September—on the cost-of-living crisis.

Collapsing Government. This year saw the end of Boris Johnson. What has followed has been a farce, as the Tories have spent the summer waging war on each other, and shirking their responsibility to protect the British people.

While the Tories are spending the summer fighting among themselves, the **Trades Unions** are fighting for the interests of the working class. We have seen railway, postal and telecommunications staff on strike and civil servants, teachers and nurses are being balloted.

They have my full and unwavering support. I have visited picket lines to show my support and will continue to do so. **The Labour Party is the political wing of the Trades Union movement** and we must be united with them.

The **Welsh Affairs Committee** continues to be a significant part of my work in Westminster. This year the cross-party committee published a report on the benefits system in Wales, calling for the re-introducing of the £20 Universal Credit uplift, and the extension of that uplift to those on legacy benefits, as well as uprating benefits in line with inflation.

I have now also joined the **Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Select Committee (PACAC)**. In that capacity, I posed questions to Lord Geidt, who resigned immediately after that session, and also the head of the civil service Simon Case on Prime Minister's conduct.

I hope that I have been able during this last year to continue to be a visible and approachable MP here in **Cynon Valley**, representing the interests of the people of this community – especially the most vulnerable and those most in need – in Parliament and highlighting at every opportunity the excellent work being done here in Wales and in this constituency. I hope too that I have been clear in my aim of taking the fight to the Tories and seeking to establish a better way of doing things – in the interests of the many, not the few.



Giving a speech in the House of Commons



Supporting the RMT strike with fellow Labour MPs (*and my dad*)



From Novara Media's coverage of Lord Geidt's resignation



Beth Winter MP

AS Cwm Cynon

MP for Cynon Valley

