



# HELEDD FYCHAN MS

Plaid Cymru - South Wales Central



## IN THIS ISSUE

[Out in the Community](#) •  
[Senedd Business](#) • [Cost of living](#) • [Get in touch](#)

**Happy St Davids Day!** This newsletter is an opportunity to update you on my work and some of the issues I have been raising in the Senedd and across the region over the past month.

The cost-of-living crisis has been a key focus of the office in February. Last month we brought together organisations from across the region to discuss practical solutions to help constituents. Those working on the frontline supporting communities have already begun to see the impact of rising energy, fuel, and food prices and with support cut from the UK government I will be working with these organisations to ensure further support for those already struggling.

Some of the key issues I have been raising on behalf of constituents this past month in the Senedd have been ambulance waiting times, the cost-of-living crisis and in my new role as Plaid Cymru's spokesperson for Children and Young people and the Welsh Language, the ongoing impact of Covid on education.





# Out in the community

Following the ease of covid restrictions last month it was great to be back out visiting local organisations and supporting community groups. Some key highlights from last month were attending the launch of the Urdd and WRU rugby 7's launch in the stadium as well as visiting Vattenfall wind farm to hear about the community projects they're supporting in the region.

Last month we also were able to work with Citizen's advice to hold our first joint surgery. February focused on Energy advice, but each month will have a new theme so be sure to follow my social media pages to find out when the next one will take place.

If you'd like me to visit a group or organisation in your area, or if you'd like to get advice, please get in touch.

## Cost of Living Protest

On the 19th of February I joined activists on the streets of Cardiff to protest the cost-of-living crisis. Joined by Sioned Williams MS as well as speakers from Cardiff people's Assembly, Wales National union of students and many of the local unions we marched on British Gas buildings.

The cost-of-living crisis is already affecting people across Wales, the number of people using foodbanks has dramatically increased and we need to do everything we can to support communities now.

Earlier in the month I also hosted a regional summit bringing together organisations who are on the frontline of the crisis to work together to find practical solutions to help local people. [Read more here.](#)







# Supporting Flooded Communities

The 16th of February marked the two-year anniversary of Storm Dennis. Last month RCT only published a further 1 section 19 report (Treorchy) bringing the total to 10 with a further 9 remaining.

Myself and my team have been back to the communities whose Section 19 reports have been published by RCT council over the past few months to hear their thoughts on the reports. Overwhelmingly the responses to the reports so far have been disappointment. They have provided very few answers or assurances to residents and businesses that were left devastated by the floods. Residents contact me wanting to see proper support and defences put in place and don't want to wait another 2 years for these changes.

If you live in one of the flooded communities, I would like to know your thoughts on the reports. You can do this by filling out my flood survey by clicking the QR code below or you can get in touch with me by email.



## Meeting with residents

Following the publication of the section 19 reports for Pontypridd and Nantgarw in January, last month I held public meetings in both these communities and the response that I've received from residents and business so far is that the Section 19 flood investigation reports have not addressed many of the concerns they have nor give them the assurances that their communities are safe if a similar event were to happen in the future.

As part of the co-operation agreement with Welsh Government I have secured an independent review into the floods, but this cannot begin without all the remaining section-19 reports published. I will continue to pressure Rhondda Cynon Taf council to publish the remaining 9 reports for the below areas so that we can finally begin to put the proper flood prevention measures needed in these communities.



# Senedd Update

## Calling for the establishment of a Welsh Flood Forum

I had the opportunity to raise a number of issues that constituents have contacted me on in the Senedd last month, and with February marking the second anniversary of storm Dennis many constituents continue to contact me on the issue of flooding.

This isn't an issue that only effects people in my region but across the country so last month I asked the First Minister to support the establishment of a Welsh Flood Forum. There currently isn't an independent organisation here in Wales that directly supports communities at risk of flooding that can provide practical support as well as advocating on their behalf if a flood were to happen.

The First Minister has agreed to further discussions on this matter and so I will continue to pursue this in the Senedd over the coming months.



## Protecting historic buildings

Many constituents have contacted me over the past few months about the current proposal to demolish the old girls School in Cowbridge. A debate was brought to the Senedd to discuss these proposals and joined by many of my colleagues we are disappointed that historical buildings like the old girl's school are being demolished when we have the opportunity to reimagine these historic buildings to meet a local need. I hope the Government and Cadw reconsiders this proposal.

**You can read my full contribution [here](#).**



# Local election reform

With local elections fast approaching in May it was a pleasure to support Rhys Ab Owen's member debate on electoral reform in the Senedd last month. The current first-past the post system is outdated and discourages people from voting for the candidates that may be their first choice.

If we want to have a more representative democracy, we need a more proportional voting system where every vote counts.

I will continue to work with my Plaid Cymru colleagues to fight for a fairer and more representative democracy here in Wales.



## Supporting victims of stalking

Last month in the Senedd Plaid Cymru held a debate on stalking calling on the government to do more to tackle this problem and ensure greater support for victims.

Stalking is a pattern of unwanted, persistent, obsessive and intrusive behaviours by one person towards another person, causing fear of violence and distress to the person being targeted.

**You can read my full contribution [here](#).**



# Cost of living Summit

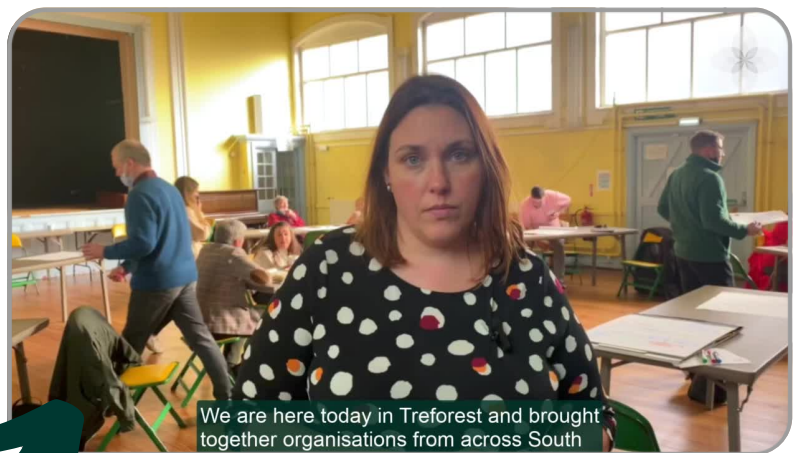
## South Wales Central

As we all know, energy, fuel and food prices are rising dramatically. Along with the cut to universal credit and the financial hardship many are suffering as a result of the pandemic, people across Wales are facing a cost-of-living crisis. Unfortunately, this will only get worse as prices continue to rise.

On the 17th of February, I held a summit in Treforest on this issue bringing together organisations that offer support to people facing crisis, such as Citizens Advice and local food banks.

We discussed how we could work together to ensure that everyone receives the help available to them, and that we work together to make more support available.

**You can watch a summary of our discussions in the short video attached.**



## Plaid Cymru's 5 point plan

On the same day, Plaid Cymru announced a 5-point plan to tackle the cost of living crisis in Wales:

- 1. Helping people with their energy bills - by expanding the Winter Fuel Assistance scheme for Spring.**
- 2. Supporting children and young people - by accelerating the introduction of free school meals and increasing the Education Maintenance Allowance.**
- 3. Debt cancellation - council tax arrears and school meals debt.**
- 4. Housing assistance - by extending the Hardship Tenancy Grant and capping social housing rent increases and increasing the discretionary housing payments fund.**
- 5. Reversing the cut to Universal Credit - and devolve powers over welfare.**

The five-point plan shows how the crisis can be addressed directly here in Wales, to help people with rising costs, to cap bills where possible, and to allow more flexibility for people in work by expanding free childcare.





## Meet the team

Danny Grehan - Community Engagement Officer

Amanda Ellis - Community Engagement Officer

Brooke Webb - Communications Officer

Eleri Griffiths - Caseworker

Elyn Stephens - Office Manager

Ken Moon - Sustainable Futures Coordinator

## How we can help

I am holding regular telephone and in person advice surgeries offering help and support to local people.

Myself and my team are able to help with a range of issues including Health, Housing, Transport, Education and Local Government.

If there's anything we can do to help you please contact us to book an appointment via the details below.



## Contact Heledd



01443 853214



[Heledd.Fychan@Senedd.Cymru](mailto:Heledd.Fychan@Senedd.Cymru)



2 High Street, Pontypridd, CF37 1QJ



Heledd Fychan AS / MS



@Heledd\_Plaid



@Heledd\_Plaid



Plaid Cymru  
Party of Wales



Senedd Cymru  
Welsh Parliament