



HELEDD FYCHAN MS

Plaid Cymru - South Wales Central



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This newsletter is an opportunity to update you on my work and some of the issues I have been working on over the past month.

Following the news of the Queen's death, much of our planned work and visits had were postponed for the official mourning period. Myself and my team continued to support constituents with case work during this time with more people than ever coming to visit the office, requiring help with a number of different issues including the cost of living, planning and NHS waiting times being the biggest concerns.

Despite the delay in Senedd Business, I have continued to raise issues on behalf of constituents which include safety concerns with road works in Hirwaun, support for schools and pupils during the cost-of-living crisis as well as continuing to support the Covid-19 bereaved families for justice group by continuing to press the government on information about Covid-related deaths in care homes.

I am also in contact with Welsh Government Ministers on Nurse staffing levels in our local hospitals as well as raising the concerns of home educators to relevant ministers on the the new draft guidelines for home education provisions.

Heledd Fychan

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Out in the community

Myself and my team have continued to be out and about, meeting with community groups and organisations across the region. Some key highlights this past month include visiting Coedpenmaen school to discuss how we can look after our community as well as taking part in the school eco council summit as part of Pontypridd Green Week. All the children and, young people had a lot of great ideas on how to protect our planet and inspired me to do more as well.

I would also like to take the opportunity to congratulate Paula Evans who is now our new Plaid Cymru Councillor in Ynysybwl and Coedycwm after winning the by-election following the untimely death of Tony Burnell. I look forward to working with Paula and Amanda Ellis, the other Councillor for the ward, to support residents.

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 with my office.

You can learn more about my visits across the region [here](#).

Cost of Living networking event

At the end of this month (27th October) I will be hosting my third cost of living event in the region.

With bills rising again this month and the cost-of-living crisis worsening, I'm inviting organisations who are working on the frontline of the crisis once again to come together to discuss practical ways we can tackle this crisis. Previous cost of living events have proven a success with local organisations who have found them very useful to be able to support those in need in our communities.

You can read reports from previous events [here](#).

- [Cost of Living Crisis Regional Summit Report](#)
- [Cost of Living Local Networking Event Taff Ely & Ogwr](#)

Any organisation working in the region wishing to attend can book [here](#) or by emailing Heledd.Fychan@senedd.cymru



Supporting Royal Mail workers strike action



Royal Mail made a profit of £758 million last year while workers were only offered a 2% pay rise, which equals a real-term pay cut. The revised offer of up to 5.5% would see current employee benefits taken away, also resulting in a real-term pay cut as well as worse conditions for staff.

On the 8th September, I joined Royal Mail workers on the picket line in Pontypridd to express my solidarity with all members who are striking. Our amazing postal workers work all year in every weather delivering an essential service to our communities. They deserve to be treated with respect and paid a fair wage.

Cylch Meithrin Cilfynydd

It was a pleasure to be invited to the official opening of the new cylch meithrin in Cilfynydd and Pont Norton community centre on 6 September.

Access to Welsh-medium early years care and education is so important to communities like this one as well as the future of the Welsh language.

Well done to all involved and good luck to all the staff and volunteers.



Sustrans

This past month, I joined Joe from Sustrans Cymru during Great Big Green Week to explore one of the many active travel routes in my region. After visiting one of the local routes, it's clear that the Welsh Government and Local Authorities need to think more creatively about how they approach active travel plans.

Many of the routes in my region are in desperate need of repair, and investment to become more accessible. The Welsh Government should commit to creating more inclusive and safe routes across Wales so that the region many more people can enjoy the benefits of active travel.



Ty Hafan

I had the honour of visiting Ty Hafan's children hospice in Penarth. Ty Hafan aims to meet all of the needs of life-limited children and young people in Wales free of charge.

The hospice and their staff are a real lifeline to children and their families in my region and beyond, so it was a real privilege to be able to spend a few hours touring the facilities and discussing the challenges organisations like theirs are facing due to the rising cost of living and energy crisis.

Ty Hafan have seen their energy costs increase to £500,000 per year compared to £100,000. This drastic change is deeply concerning particularly as this will also have a direct impact on the families of children with life-shortening conditions who rely on life-saving equipment 24/7 at home.

I look forward to developing the relationship between my office and Ty Hafan, and I echo their calls to energy suppliers in the UK to support families who rely on life saving equipment as a matter of urgency.



Its time for Wales to decide whether we want a Prince of Wales

Following the news of the Queen's death last month the 'Prince of Wales' title was quickly passed down a day later to the new King's son.

This sparked fierce public debate about whether it's time to end the use of the title. Whilst I myself am a republican, and would prefer to see only elected representatives in an independent Wales, I accept that others in Wales will feel differently.

However, I hope we can agree that the people of Wales should have the final say about how the democracy in our country is shaped. I recently wrote an article about this in Nation Cymru which you can read in full [here](#).





Senedd Business

Due to the official mourning period usual Senedd business was put on hold from the 8th of September – 19th September. Despite this I have continued to hold the Welsh Government account particularly when it comes to the cost-of-living crisis. Alongside my Plaid Cymru colleagues, we called on the Welsh Labour Government to use their powers to

- Freeze rents and ban evictions
- Extend free school meals to all pupils
- Halve rail fares and cap bus fare
- Slash energy bills
- Extend support to SMEs and charities

It was hugely disappointing that Labour and Conservative members did not support our calls. We have the power to make real changes to people's lives here in Wales and we need to use them. The failure to recognise that this crisis is one that's been made by political decisions in Westminster will lead to countless deaths if we don't take immediate action. I will continue to be a strong voice on this in the Senedd in the coming months.

I have also raised issues about the dualling works of the A465 around Hirwaun, floods in Pakistan and Wales' presence in Qatar for the World Cup as well as attended multiple events including the launch of the Royal College of Nursing report and a Macmillan Coffee morning. I also Chaired a meeting of the Culture, Welsh Language, Communications, Sport and International Relations committee which was focused on Welsh medium education.

Free School Meals update

Thanks to Plaid Cymru, the roll-out of free school meals for all primary school pupils in Wales has begun with all reception aged children now receiving them.

Whilst the roll-out continues to be extended to other years, I have called for a review of the current eligibility criteria so that free schools meals are extended to more primary and secondary school pupils as soon as possible. This would be a great support for families who are struggling because of the cost-of-living crisis.

Please let me know if you are facing any issues regarding the roll out of universal free school meals, or are struggling to pay for food for your children. I am working with local Councillors to ensure that any issues are resolved as quickly as possible.





Meet the team

Danny Grehan - Community Engagement Officer

Amanda Ellis - Community Engagement Officer

Brooke Webb - Communications Officer

Eleri Griffiths - Caseworker

Wendy Allsop - Administrative Officer

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.

We have also teamed up with citizens advice to hold advice surgeries in the office. A list of upcoming dates and how to book are listed on my website.



Contact Heledd



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