

# eNEWS

from Rt Hon Valerie Vaz MP

December 2024

Birchills Leamore - Blakenall - Bloxwich East - Bloxwich West  
Paddock (Part of Ward) - Palfrey - Pleck - St. Matthew's



I wish you a very Happy Christmas and A peaceful New Year  
Advent candles are lit for each week of Advent and promote  
Hope, Peace, Joy and Love.  
I hope we can renew those sentiments into 2025.



## Indian Global Business Awards



I hosted and spoke at the Indo-UK Global Business Awards in the House on 21 November 2024. It is vital for our community to come together, engage with Parliament, to hear from parliamentarians and facilitate meaningful exchanges with visitors from India and members of the Indian diaspora in the UK. India's growing global significance, with its rapid economic growth projected to outpace other nations in the coming years, underscores the importance of strengthening this partnership. All the awardees were inspiring in terms of their entrepreneurship and their charity work. 🌀

## Guru Nanak Dev Ji's Gurburab (Birthday) celebration



I attended the APPG for British Sikhs held by The Sikh Network and the Sikh Federation (UK) to take part in the 8th Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's Gurburab celebrations on 26 November 2024. Guru Nanak Dev Ji's Gurburab (birthday) celebration is a unique opportunity to share his universal message of One God, Truth & Equality. Guru Nanak Dev ji is the founder of the Sikh faith and first of the living Gurus. 🌀

## **Pre-Adjournment General Debate**



I spoke in the general debate on 19 December 2024, and raised the need for accessibility at Bescot Stadium Station, reallocating resources by saving the taxpayer's money on a new school on Reedswood Park and using the former Sneyd School site, funding for renovations at Joseph Leckie. I highlighted a lack of robotic surgery for bowel cancer at the Manor, keeping the Leather Museum at its current site, the imprisonment of Alaa Abd el-Fattah and calling for a Year of Reading in 2026 to renew reading for pleasure.🌀

## **Christmas Fair at Frank Harrisons Community Centre**



I visited the first Christmas Fair which was held at Beechdale, Birchills Leamore. There was something for everyone at the fair. I bought a handmade crochet toy. The event at Frank Harrison Community Centre was well attended. And there were many stalls, including face painting, a lucky dip and I even found some "Croc charms" to decorate our Crocs.🌀

## **Report on Horticultural Economic Impact launched**



I was delighted to thank all the speakers at the launch of the Report at the APPG on Gardening & Horticulture. We heard from Boyd Douglas Davis, Chair of the Environmental Horticulture Group, Minister Daniel Zeichner, actor Jim Carter, patron of Greenfingers, and Alan Titchmarsh, formerly of Gardeners World and many other Gardening programmes, Classic FM. Jim and Alan were planted deep in our hearts and came up like strong bulbs in the nation's consciousness. They both have done amazing work for charity Jim with his cycle rides and Alan with helping people with their gardens.🌀

## **Winter Wonderland Spectacular Christmas Fayre, Blakenall**



I visited the Winter Wonderland Spectacular Christmas Fayre, organised by the New Horizons Community Enterprise, and held at Blakenall Village Centre on 13 December. New Horizons work in Blakenall, Bloxwich East and Leamore to promote regeneration through organising trips, activities, and community events such as the Fayre.🌀



## **Libraries for Primaries**



It was great to drop into the Libraries for Primaries Event held by the Libraries Literacy Trust on the 28 November 2024. Moreland Primary School pupils were present to speak about how they have benefited from Libraries for Primaries and what the new library means to them. CE Jonathan Douglas spoke about the link between Poverty and Literacy in School and said it was strong and inter-generational but something could be done, it was not inevitable. He said investments in school primaries is an opportunity for the government to level the playing field and raise school standards."🌀

## **Publishing Association Drop-In**



The Publishers Association held a drop in on 10 December 2024. importance of reading in our constituencies. The APPG on Publishing held an evidence session to find out why reading for pleasure has dropped. I asked the Secretary of State for Education if she will make a National Year of Reading her policy for 2026 in a written question. 1 in 7 state primary schools in UK do not have a library. The National Literacy Trust found that the proportion of children aged 8-11 who said they enjoyed reading in their free time has dropped significantly over the last ten years. This has affected reading skill. In 1998 the Year of Reading promoted "a culture of reading" and in 2008 the aim was "to build a nation of readers." A Year of Reading in 2026 will break down barriers to literacy and renew reading for pleasure. 🌀

## **Federation of Wholesale Distributors ( FWD) Christmas Drive-Thru' drop-in**



I spoke to Martin Williams, associate director FWD at a drop in on 3 December 2024. There are 640 wholesalers, members of the FWD. They supply food to schools, hospitals, prisons, care homes, shops and pubs providing a link between large food and drink manufacturers and shoppers. Martin said FWD support the minimum wage and the need for apprentices. The crucial issues that affect his members: Retail Crime is a growing threat, with rising theft risks in warehouses. Including wholesale workers in the Police and Crime Bill, retail crime protections are critical to protecting wholesalers. 🌀

**Valerie Shows Support for Fairtrade Foundation**



This year, 2024, is the 30th anniversary of the FAIRTRADE Mark in the UK, and the Fairtrade Foundation. It was a pleasure to attend the Fairtrade Christmas Reception on 4 December 2024 to learn about the Foundation’s work to support millions of farmers in enhancing food sustainability. Dr. Nyagoy Nyong’o, is the incoming UK Chair of the Fairtrade Foundation, she shared a beautiful African proverb: ‘However long or dark the night is, the dawn will always break...’ This holds some much-needed hope as we join together to create a fairer and greener global food supply chain.🌀

**Valerie Chairs Employment Rights Bill Committee**



In November and December, I chaired five sessions of the Employment Rights Public Bill Committee, (26 November, 3 December, 12 December, two sessions, 17 December). The Bill committee considers proposed legislation in detail line by line. Once the committee finishes looking at the Bill, it will report its conclusions and any amendments made to the House to be debated and voted on the next stages, Report Stage and Third Reading 🌀

**Valerie Chairs Delegated Legislation Committee**



I chaired the delegated legislation committee on the Draft Financial Services and Markets Act 2023 (Addition of Relevant Enactments) Regulations 2024 on 9 December 2024. This updates the Financial Services and Markets Act 2023 by adding specific laws to a list that can be modified for testing new financial technologies or methods (“FMI sandboxes”). It includes rules on government stocks, money laundering, and securities, allowing more flexibility to experiment with innovations while ensuring legal compliance. 🌀

**Amnesty International Humans Rights Day**



I attended Amnesty International’s Reception to celebrate Human Rights Day on 10 December. I was delighted to catch up with Anoosheh Ashoori whose case I raised every week in Parliament at Business Questions as Shadow leader of the House. The release of Alaa Abd El-Fattah imprisoned in Egypt is ongoing and I raised his case in a debate in the House on the 19 December 2024. 🌀

