

eNEWS

from Rt Hon Valerie Vaz MP

February 2025

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



Rivers Primary Academy – Breakfast Club



I visited Rivers Primary Academy on 28 February 2025 announced as one of the two schools to trial the new Breakfast Club scheme in the constituency. All children will be able to access a free breakfast and parents, 30 minutes of free childcare every day, helping to support parents getting to work. Schools will offer healthy, varied, and nutritious breakfasts, and schools are encouraged to host activities including arts and crafts, educational puzzles, reading and more. 🌀

Council U-Turn on Leather Museum Relocation



The Council announced at Cabinet on 12 February 2025 that the decision to relocate the Leather Museum will be suspended for 12 months, allowing for a wider consultation. Following a well conducted campaign involving petitions and a march through Walsall, I am delighted there is a stay. I congratulate everyone involved. Lauren Broxton, organised the march and demonstration on Saturday 8 February 2025. I wrote to the Council and the Minister for Tourism about the Museum 🌀

Letter on removal of Palestinian People from Gaza

Together with 66 other MPs and Lords, I co-signed a letter by Dr Rosena Allin-Khan MP to the Foreign Secretary, Rt Hon David Lammy MP on 5 February 2025. The letter condemned President Trump's comments on 4 February 2025, setting out his plan to take over Gaza, forcibly resettling the Gazan population. I will continue to call for a for a two-state solution and for the Palestinian people who live in Gaza, their homeland, to rebuild their lives and live in peace. 🌀

Valerie Chairs Westminster Hall Debate



On 3 February 2025 I chaired the Westminster Hall Debate on e-petition 638449 relating to career breaks for parents of seriously ill children. The debate was moved by Robbie Moore MP on behalf of the Petitions Committee and responded to by the Parliamentary Under Sec of State for Business and Trade, Justin Madders MP. The E-petition 638449 was started by Christina Harris after she lost her job when her daughter, Skye, was diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukaemia. To access Petitions <https://petition.parliament.uk/> 🌀

Public Authorities (Fraud, Error and Recovery) Bill Second Reading



The Bill had its 2nd reading on 3 February and this Bill will safeguard public money by making provisions to better identify, prevent and deter public sector fraud and error and enable the better recovery of money owed to the taxpayer where public money has been stolen or overpaid. The Bill passed the 2nd reading Ayes 343, Noes 87 🌀

Valerie Welcomes Police and Crime Commissioner to Poppyfields Estate



On 7 February 2025 I invited Simon Foster, Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for the West Midlands to the Poppyfields estate, which includes Grand Junction Way, Duchess Road, Britannia Road, Patriots Close and Royal Scot Road as constituents told me of their concerns about burglaries, street lighting and the parking on Match days at the Poundland Stadium. Supporters at the match park in front of driveways and dropped kerbs. Despite double yellow lines there is no enforcement by the Council. The Neighbourhood Watch organiser was able to speak directly putting forward the issues that concern residents 🌀

Valerie Raises Crime Issues with Police and Crime Commissioner



The PCC and Chief Supt also visited Birchalls Leamore with Cllr Tina Jukes and local resident Elliot Pfebve to discuss crime. We made 2 visits to areas which have seen issues with ASB and drugs. Constituents have been concerned with reports of murders, violent crimes, antisocial behaviour and burglary. The PCC visited a shop to hear from the retail worker about the threats they have to face. I raised with the Chief Supt the increase in Section 60 orders - stop and search and heard directly from residents about the drugs issues in their street.🌀

Westminster Book Awards 2025



On 12 February 2025 as Co-Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Publishing, I opened the proceedings to the event. I am pictured with Prof Robin Wilson son of Harold Wilson, collecting the prize for Best Fiction or Non-Fiction by a Parliamentarian: Alan Johnson for "Wilson" the son of Harold Wilson and Dasha Navalnaya on behalf of her late father Alexei for Best Political Book by a non-Parliamentarian: the late Alexei Navalny for "Patriot: A memoir." You can find my speech in full on my website. 🌀

Border Security, Asylum, and Immigration Bill: 2nd Reading



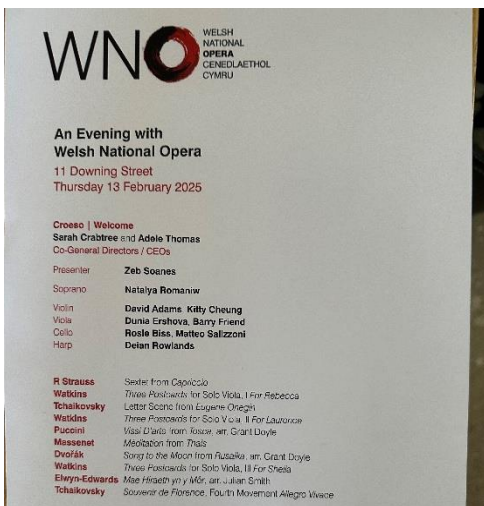
On 10 February 2025, the Bill was debated. The Border Security and Asylum Minister, Dame Angela Eagle DBE confirmed that a new anti-smuggling action plan has been agreed with G7 partners and highlighted the importance of the Government's aim to continue to press for a stronger and more integrated global response to organised immigration crime. So far there have been 9,400 returns from the UK since July 2024 where there was no legitimate claim. The Bill passed 2nd reading Ayes: 331, Noes 108.🌀

USDAW Union Meeting



I attended a meeting with Paddy Lillis, General Secretary Usdaw and retail staff who work on the front line in major retailers. We heard their stories and the new rights set out in the Employment Rights Bill. The Government will take urgent action to tackle growing levels of retail crime as recent statistics showed a 23% increase in shoplifting which has almost doubled since the pandemic. **Usdaw's Freedom From Fear Campaign** wants to prevent violence, threats and abuse against workers by involving the public, shop workers and the Government www.usdaw.org.uk/Campaigns/Freedom-From-Fear 🌀

An evening with Welsh National Opera



A recital was held at No 11 Downing Street on 13 February 2025 by kind permission of the Chancellor. We heard from Soprano Natalya Romaniw, violinists, David Adams Kitty Cheung, Viola players Dunia Ershova and Barry Friend, cellists, Rosie Biss and Matteo Salisconi and the Harp was played by Declan Rowlands. There were pieces by R. Stauss, Watkins, Tchaikovsky, Puccini, Massenet, Dvorak, and Elwyn-Edwards. The programme was introduced by Zeb Soanes and heard on Classic FM on 23 February 2025. 🌀

Valerie Chairs Delegated Legislation Committee on Flood Reinsurance



On 26 February 2025, I chaired the Delegated Legislation Committee, which considered the draft Flood Reinsurance (Amendment) Regulations 2025 which allows for an increase to a levy placed on UK household insurance providers, from £135 million a year to £160 million a year, from 1 April 2025. This change will allow Flood Re Ltd to manage its changing risk profile, securing its ability to provide flood cover to UK households while also ensuring that the total levy is no higher than needed. 🌀

