

Freeport work to pay off in long-term self-sustaining prosperity for our island

BU'N rhaid i fy nhad adael Cymru i ddod o hyd i waith a dyna pam rwy'n bendrferfynol o greu swyddi i bobl leol ar Ynys Môn fel nad oes raid i eraill adael eu cymunedau a'u hiaith Gymraeg. My priority for Ynys Môn since the island elected me is to create jobs and prosperity.

MY dad had to leave Wales to find work which is why I am determined to create local jobs for local people on Anglesey so that others do not have to leave their community and their Welsh language.

Over half our island population speaks Welsh which is why my first EDM in the House of Commons was about the importance of the Welsh Language. When the island elected me I committed to learn Welsh and I continue to do all I can to promote and sustain it. I am delighted that money from the UK Government's £2.7m Community Renewal Fund is being used to protect and expand the use of the Welsh language under the Iaith Môn scheme. The best way I can protect our Welsh language and culture is by ensuring that there is good quality employment on Ynys Môn.

However, attracting the investment required to bring long-term and well-paid jobs to an area does not happen overnight. It needs planning and a strategic approach.

We are now seeing the tender green shoots of the time and effort that I - and many others on Ynys Môn - have invested over the past four years. I have been fighting our corner in Westminster whilst others on the island - like our Council officers, groups of volunteers and organisations like Môn CF and Stena's Anglesey Freeport team - have been working hard to produce bids and plans. We are now working together to put those plans into action.

Whilst you may not yet see much visible change on the ground, please be assured that an army of people have been working behind the scenes to position our island for its economic renaissance.

Already in Holyhead work is



● Local MP Virginia Crosbie being interviewed by BBC Wales at Wylfa

under way to transform buildings that are part of our cultural heritage, funded by £17.3 million from the UK Government plus match funding from other sources. St Cybi's Church, Eglwys y Bedd, the Ucheldre Centre, the Newry shelters, Central Buildings, the old HSBC bank and the Empire cinema building will all be transformed in the coming months as this £23 million programme of work turns the town into a heritage hotspot.

The Anglesey Freeport team has spent months preparing its Outline Business Case (OBC) which was submitted to the UK and Welsh Governments at the end of 2023. The OBC puts the meat on the bones of our freeport status, outlining the way in which Anglesey Freeport will operate, its aims and standards, and how the different freeport zones will be managed.

Behind the scenes there has been a lot of work taking place to identify and build relationships with companies that would fit with the Anglesey Freeport model. With the OBC submitted, we will start to see more movement on the ground, with the old Anglesey Aluminium chimney being demolished and work on the extension of

M-Sparc in Gaerwen.

The UK Government has invested £26 million in Anglesey Freeport and by the end of 2024 we should see new businesses signing up to start operations on our freeport sites, relevant skills training being offered to local people and real evidence that Anglesey Freeport is here.

The important difference between the UK Government's million-pound investments and the EU funding of old is that both the Levelling Up programme in Holyhead and Anglesey Freeport are designed to be sustainable. That means that they will generate money in their own right, so that they do not need ongoing external funding.

These are not short-term investments that will fizzle out when the funding pot does but will instead be self-sustaining long-term investments that will guarantee the long-term future success of Ynys Môn.

This brings me to something that I have been fighting for in Westminster since being elected and which definitely shows just how much time and effort it takes to move forward large-scale, transformational investment. That is bringing

new nuclear to Wylfa.

Here in the UK, we have been world-leaders in nuclear energy since the 1950s, yet almost all of our nuclear fleet will be gone in ten years' time. Even building Hinkley Point C and Sizewell C will only get us back to the levels of nuclear-generated energy we had in 1980s.

I have campaigned for new nuclear at Wylfa because it will bring thousands of construction jobs and hundreds of well-paid permanent roles to Ynys Môn. The £120m Future Nuclear Enabling Fund was launched at Wylfa and Wylfa is now recognised as one of the best sites for new nuclear in the UK.

I have mentioned Wylfa 60 times in the House of Commons, led Westminster debates, sat on the Nuclear Financing Bill Committee and championed green taxonomy for nuclear. I chair the cross-party APPG for Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) and the Nuclear Delivery Group. I hosted Nuclear Week in Westminster and regularly speak at conferences and write articles.

The latest step in the UK Government's new nuclear programme was released last week when it launched its Civil

Nuclear Roadmap heralding the dawn of a new nuclear era. I will continue to ensure that this dawn shines on new nuclear at Wylfa - be that large scale or small modular reactors.

The Nuclear Roadmap confirms the Conservative UK Government's commitment to delivering new nuclear power with 24 gigawatts (GW) of electricity from nuclear by 2050. This is a quadrupling of our energy from nuclear; enough to power a quarter of British homes.

Putting in place a schedule of new nuclear plant construction and deployment now is vital to ensure that the UK can develop, grow and retain the necessary skills and supply chain to deliver our energy security. That is why the UK Government has formed Great British Nuclear (GBN), headed up by the brilliant Gwen Parry-Jones, who lives right here on our island. It is vital that GBN's plans include new nuclear at Wylfa and at Trawsfynydd in its first wave of new projects.

The Nuclear Roadmap commits the UK to announcing another large-scale nuclear site to follow Sizewell C and Hinkley C. My work to keep Ynys Môn and Wylfa at the top of the

potential UK sites for new nuclear has meant that Wylfa is recognised as one of the best sites for new nuclear in the UK and was specifically named in the UK Government's British Energy Security Strategy. Our Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak, has called Wylfa "a fantastic site because it can do both potentially gigawatt power but also could do small modular reactors".

The site has abundant, geologically stable land, good access to cooling water and a willing and skilled host community. It is the perfect place to site one of our next generation nuclear power stations, which will also provide skilled, stable and high paying employment for generations to come.

Surveys show that a significant majority of people on Anglesey want a nuclear power station at Wylfa. Local people have seen the jobs and economic benefits that came from the original Wylfa plant and they want to see that happen again. I will not stop my work to keep Wylfa at the top of the UK Government's agenda - ensuring that we are the obvious choice for the next large scale new nuclear site - until I see spades in the ground.

I am determined to continue to deliver the opportunities Anglesey needs to protect our Welsh language and culture and ensure people across our island have a bright future - and that future is here.

Have your say about new nuclear at Wylfa by completing the survey here: virginiacrosbie.co.uk/nuclear

I enjoy meeting as many constituents as possible, as well as helping individuals, groups and organisations with problems, projects and ideas.

You can contact me at virginia.crosbie.mp@parliament.uk or call me on 01407 644645. Diolch yn fawr.

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