Why I wear my nuclear badge with pride

Gan ei bod hi’n wythnos niwclear yn Senedd y DU, mae’n gyfle i mi dynnu sylw at y rhesymau pam rwy’n benderfynol o ddod ag ynni niwclear newydd i Wylfa.

Mae mwy na hanner poblogaeth ein hynys yn siarad Cymraeg, a dyna pam roedd fy nghynnig cynnar (EDM) cyntaf yn Nhŷ’r Cyffredin yn ymwneud â phwysigrwydd yr iaith Gymraeg. Pan gefais fy ethol gan yr ynys, fe ymrwymais i ddysgu Cymraeg ac rwy’n parhau i wneud popeth y gallaf i’w hyrwyddo a’i chynnal. Rwy’n falch iawn fod arian o Gronfa Adfywio Cymunedol £2.7m Llywodraeth y DU wedi cael ei ddefnyddio i warchod ac ehangu’r defnydd o’r Gymraeg dan gynllun Iaith Môn. Bu’n rhaid i fy nhad adael Cymru i ddod o hyd i waith, a’r ffordd orau y gallaf warchod iaith a diwylliant Cymru yw drwy sicrhau bod cyflogaeth o ansawdd da ar gael ar Ynys Môn. Dyma pam rwy’n benderfynol o sicrhau bod Porthladd Rhydd Ynys Môn yn llwyddiant, o ddod ag ynni niwclear newydd i Wylfa ac o ddenu buddsoddiad o ansawdd da.

With nuclear week in Parliament this week – it is an opportunity to highlight why I am determined to bring new nuclear to Wylfa.

Over half of our island’s population speak 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 has been used to protect and expand the use of the Welsh language under the Iaith Môn scheme. My dad had to leave Wales to find work and the best way I can protect our Welsh language and culture is by ensuring that there is good quality employment on Ynys Môn. This is why I am determined to make a success of our Anglesey Freeport, bring new nuclear to Wylfa and attract high quality investment.

Since the island elected me I have continued to fight to raise the profile of Ynys Môn on the global stage. I have worked locally and in Westminster to deliver investment and generate exciting new opportunities for local people. I have worked with the UK Government to ensure that Ynys Môn has benefitted from their commitment to levelling up left-behind places. The evidence is clear to see with the UK Government committing £26m for our Anglesey Freeport, £20m for the refurbishment of Holyhead Breakwater, £17m from the Levelling Up Fund, £16m from the Shared Prosperity Fund, £3m from the Community Renewal Fund and almost £1m from the Safer Streets Fund.

Anglesey Freeport marks the start of the island’s economic renaissance. The Freeport covers the whole island of Ynys Môn. This means that both businesses already based here and new organisations setting up here can reap the benefits of our new freeport status. Anglesey Freeport will deliver the good quality skilled jobs which local people want and deserve, improve local incomes, boost the island’s economy and offer our communities a long-term future. Secure well-paid long-term local employment will stem the loss of our young people who currently leave in search of careers elsewhere, taking with them our Welsh language and breaking up our communities.

I am determined to make a success of our freeport which is why you will see me bringing companies around the island. Organisations like GE-Hitachi, KEPCO, Westinghouse, Airbus, Rolls-Royce SMR, Moltex and Bechtel are keen to establish operations on Anglesey. Many have average salaries almost twice those on Ynys Môn. They are keen to invest and bring new good-quality jobs here, employing local people. They are committed to working with education providers like Grŵp Llandrillo Menai and Bangor University to deliver the skills training local people of all ages will need for the new careers on offer. Our first Freeport success is Westinghouse who have set up a de-commissioning operation at M-SParc creating 15 new jobs with more to come.

I will not stop here.

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 the site is now recognised as one of the best for new nuclear in the UK. I have mentioned Wylfa more than 58 times in the House of Commons, led Westminster debates, sat on the Nuclear Financing Bill Committee and championed green taxonomy for nuclear. I am the Vice Chair of the cross-party APPG for Nuclear, Chair of the Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) APPG and Chair and co-founder of the Nuclear Delivery Group. I host events at Nuclear Week in Westminster and regularly speak at conferences and write articles about the importance of new nuclear power for the UK’s energy security and net zero targets.

Ynys Môn is known as ‘energy island’ because we have wind, wave, solar, tidal and Hydrogen. I have been a cheerleader for the BP Mona offshore wind project and have helped the Holyhead Hydrogen Hub unlock £4.8 million of funding from the UK Government. I have supported Morlais pushing the UK Government to ring fence funding for tidal energy, which they did in the Contract for Difference Round 4 funding.

Over the past eighteen months the UK – along with the rest of the world – has seen the effects of its reliance on foreign energy imports. Putin’s actions have pushed the cost of living up by putting pressure on energy supplies. For our future security it is absolutely vital that the UK establishes its own energy independence.

Modelling shows that we will need twice as much power by 2050 compared to today. With this projection, we cannot have energy security and independence and achieve net zero without nuclear power.  The reality is the sun does not always shine and the wind does not always blow and we cannot rely on wind and solar power in its current form to provide the energy we are going to need for the foreseeable future.

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 five 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 1983.

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.

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. 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.

I know that local people want and need this opportunity. We remember the island in the 1960s, 70s and 80s when our towns were thriving and our communities thronged with families. Now we watch our children leave to find skilled careers elsewhere, taking the Welsh language with them.

That is why I will continue to fight for new nuclear at Wylfa at every possible opportunity until I see spades in the ground here on Anglesey. This week I will be speaking at several events in Nuclear Week at Parliament so that I can once again highlight my campaign and ensure that new nuclear at Wylfa is recognised as a priority at all levels of Government.

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 on Ynys Môn.

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.

Rwy’n mwynhau cyfarfod â chymaint o etholwyr â phosibl, yn ogystal â helpu unigolion, grwpiau a sefydliadau gyda phroblemau, prosiectau a syniadau. Yna cysylltwch â ni - byddwn wrth fy modd ynclywed gennych - gallwch gysylltu â mi ar virginia.crosbie.mp@parliament.uk neu ffoniwch fi ar01407 644645. Diolch yn fawr.