

Jill Evans MEP annual report 07|08

On Your Side



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Plaid



I hope that this annual report will tell you something about the work I do as an MEP for Wales. It is a tremendous privilege to represent our nation in Europe. As a partner in the One Wales government, Plaid Cymru is moving Wales forward on so many levels - not least in Europe. Winning semi official status for the Welsh language is one example. This means that you will be able to use the Welsh language with European Union (EU) institutions if you wish. This is an historic step forward and something I have been proud to play a part in.

Working with Plaid Cymru's sister parties in the European Free Alliance (EFA) and with the Greens in the European Parliament has been productive and effective. Our EFA parties are now in government in seven countries and our ministers have formed the Edinburgh Group to liaise on a wide range of issues. In another uncertain year for the EU, with the Irish

vote against the Lisbon Treaty, our role as small nations is crucial. Plaid Cymru supported a referendum in Wales on the EU treaty but we were denied one by the Labour government in London.

The last few months of the year have been dominated by the financial crisis. We are struggling with a credit crunch and a climate crunch. Europe has and will play a crucial role in building a sustainable economy as well as leading the fight against climate change. I have been working with my staff team to make our offices as energy efficient as possible. As a member of the Climate Change Commission for Wales, I have been involved in the work to cut our CO2 emissions by 3% after 2011.

Thank you to the many organisations and individuals in Wales who have worked with me, written, e-mailed and telephoned me to highlight important issues, such as promoting Welsh produce, improving our health and environment, better rights for workers, peace and justice. I am on your side. The more contact I get from constituents in Wales, the better I can fight on your behalf.

I am also grateful to the Plaid team of MPs, AMs, councillors, members and staff at all levels, as well as colleagues and staff in the Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament. Most of all I would like to thank my staff team, Sara Davies, David Bradley, Sara Medi Jones, Darren Jones and Ann Rees Sambrook for their tremendous and constant support.

This has been another interesting and exciting year in the European Parliament and in Wales. I have enjoyed meeting people in all parts of the country and being a voice for Wales in Europe – your voice in Europe.

Jill Evans

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Wales Making its Mark

The past year has brought great success for Wales: another Grand Slam and the fantastic performance of Welsh athletes in both the Olympics and Paralympics! Plus of course, Cardiff City reaching the FA Cup Final, Swansea City gaining promotion and our Under 21 football team winning their group in the European Championship qualifying round.

In the past year Jill has seen at first hand the excellent work of young people in Wales. Jill spoke to and supported several youth organisations, including sponsorship of Ton Pentre Football Club Youth Team kit, pictured above. Jill funded many young people from Wales to do work experience in her Brussels and Strasbourg offices. Their work and their presence in Parliament certainly raises the profile of Wales in Europe.



Young Roma people from Pembrokeshire organised a forum in the European Parliament

Once again, Jill hosted several groups from Wales on visits to the Parliament in Brussels and Strasbourg and enabled Welsh representatives to give evidence in committees.



Staff and students from University of Wales Institute Cardiff

FOOD AND FARMING



Together with MEPs from Scotland, Ireland and England, Jill campaigned successfully for a ban on Brazilian beef imports to Europe because of safety and hygiene standards. Now the MEPs have launched a campaign to oppose compulsory electronic sheep tagging which would cause huge problems for farmers in Wales. Jill sponsored a stand at the Royal Welsh Agricultural Show and visited several Welsh shows over the summer. She welcomed new European proposals to provide free locally produced fruit to schools. Jill supported the cockle pickers in the Bury inlet in their efforts to prevent further pollution damage to the cockle beds. She has also met fishermen to discuss the problems they face and commissioned a report on the fishing industry in Wales. Jill sponsored the planet diversity world congress on agriculture and GM free regions in Bonn and continues to campaign against GM food and animal feed. She opposed the use of food produced from cloned animals.

WELSH - IT'S OFFICIAL



We have finally won semi-official status for Welsh in the EU. It is possible for Ministers to speak Welsh at the Council of Ministers and for people to use Welsh in correspondence with the Council and shortly the Commission. Jill has been pushing the Parliament to adopt the new rules and has been supported by over seventy individuals and organisations in Wales who have written to the European Parliament President.

CAMPAIGNING

Jill invited groups from Wales to Brussels to give evidence to the Petitions Committee of the European Parliament. The committee can investigate breaches of European law.

The issues raised this year included the LNG pipeline, the LNG terminal in Milford Haven, the Hafod landfill site and Ffos-y-Fran opencast coal mine in



Merthyr. The issues are being investigated further by the European Commission. Jill also raised the issue of a housing development in Llanelli with the Commission.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Jill was appointed to the Wales Climate Change Commission which advises the One Wales government on fighting climate change and dealing with its effects. As a member of the Environment Committee of the European Parliament, Jill is spokesperson for the Greens/EFA group on Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS), part of the Energy Package to reduce carbon emissions by 20% by 2020.

Jill spoke at several public meetings on climate change during the year. She worked very closely with environmental groups and NGOs who are making a real difference both in Wales and globally. Before the votes on climate change in the Environment Committee, they launched one of the biggest ever environmental lobbies – "Time to Lead" – which was very successful.

ACROSS THE WORLD



In February, Jill visited Gaza in Palestine and again called for an end to the siege which has caused a humanitarian disaster with three quarters of the population dependent on United Nations food aid.

Jill also called for the immediate release of 11,000 Palestinian prisoners being held in Israeli jails, including 44 elected members of the Palestinian Legislative Council.

In Strasbourg in January, Jill delivered a message of peace from churches in Wales to the Grand Mufti of Syria. She met Archbishop Ruben Salazar Gomez from Columbia in May and signed a letter to the Columbian president urging action over the murders of trade unionists, politicians and people working for human rights.

With the focus on China for the Olympics, Jill and Plaid President Dafydd Iwan joined the many calls for freedom for Tibet.



NO TO NUCLEAR WEAPONS

To mark the 50th anniversary of the first Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament march to Aldermaston nuclear weapons facility a demonstration was held there on Easter Monday. As Chair of CND Cymru Jill was one of the speakers.

She returned to the Faslane nuclear submarine base at the end of the year-long blockade to reaffirm Plaid's complete opposition to the British Government's weapons of mass destruction programme.

Jill opposed the privatisation of military training and the defence training academy which will be run by private companies, including arms manufacturers.

She spoke at the All Wales Peace Festival in Bangor in October and is campaigning for a Wales Peace Institute.



REFORMING PARLIAMENT

Jill is a member of the Campaign for Parliamentary Reform which works for more openness, accountability and efficiency. She supports strict controls on lobbyists.

Jill has campaigned to end the Parliament's practice of moving between Brussels and Strasbourg every month which costs £160 million and produces over 20,000 tons of CO2 emissions annually.

