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# Cardiff West *for* Cardiff West



A Local  
Manifesto for a  
General Election

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***“For us.”***

*Promoted by John Urquhart  
of 42 Jackson Road, Cardiff, CF5 4PX*

## A First Word... on Palestine

The genocide against the Palestinian people, were it personified, would be an elder at 75 - yet it is in no way diminished in violence or viciousness.

Estimates of the number of Palestinians murdered by Israel since the beginning of this illegal and vicious ongoing act of collective punishment following October 7th stands at greater than a hundred thousand when counting those under the rubble - for most of whom no rescue will ever come. And it was already genocide.

For months now I have marched every Saturday in solidarity with the Palestinian people and for the dream of a free Palestine in which all people who live in those lands may live in peace - Muslims, Christians, Jews, atheists, and others alike. We march for an end to occupation; for an end to the conflict entirely. It is long past time to rebuild.

I give other labour, too, and participate in other action wherever I can - such as boycott. I'd dearly love Cardiff West to be an Apartheid Free Zone, because commerce and genocide are closer in hand than many people understand.

I want to take a moment to ask you to join us this Saturday and any Saturday you are free to do so, whether you have before or not. The events are posted about on Instagram in particular. If nothing else: come hear real Palestinian speakers.

It may not seem like marches have impact: but they bring people together, people who agree. That's more than could be said for most places you'll be.

# Cardiff West for Cardiff West: A Local Manifesto for a General Election

## **This election provides a unique opportunity:**

and of course candidates say that all the time, but in this case, I'm acting on it, too. Even before election.

## **We're establishing the Cardiff West Assembly.**

This doesn't sound like much but it will enable a lot - including joining up stuff that doesn't join up so well right now in the community, and building new things together too.

## **But elect me, and the Assembly will also tell me what to do.**

Well, okay, I'll be involved in the Assembly too - we all deserve a say, even me! But my voice will be one among many, and your voices will all count just as much as mine.

## **I'll go to Westminster FOR US,**

legitimately, perhaps for the first time in Welsh or British history. Together, we'll decide on questions I ask. Together, we'll formulate strategy. Together, we'll take action to make life better across the constituency - to bring people together to make change and to apply pressure together where it'll bring that change fastest.

But we can't do all that together if you don't know how I'll feel before we step into the Assembly together. So this manifesto is about that: about who I am, my values as a democrat, and why I want to go to Westminster for you, the people of Cardiff West.

## **We don't have to wait for permission to act.**

There's so much we can do together: the #AintAsking petition for universal free school meals UK-wide, backed by the party I founded, Harmony, has close to fifty thousand signatures already.

## **And we're not stopping at collecting signatures.**

Why stop there? We're gathering volunteers to carry out the next step of our #AintAsking campaign. We were considering London, in Starmer's constituency, with help from other orgs - and then, mysteriously, Labour's Sadiq Khan announced universal free school meals... in London.

Probably a coincidence. But you've got to admit: when we pull that off together, and fund meals for a whole school for a year - and it won't cost as much as you might think - whoever wins the election on July 4th will be shamed pretty hard towards bringing in those universal free school meals across the UK.

Together, we can make sure.

And that thinking can be applied locally, too.

I call it "constructive activism" - where you couple activism with actually doing the thing you want to happen. Sometimes it's just a microcosm of it, a little version, so everyone can't deny it works. But sometimes it can be so much more.

## **Our new Cardiff Solidarity Fund has great potential.**

Modeled on Harmony's Emergency Payment Fund, the CSF provides £20 gifts to people in need.

**And the EPF has already paid out over £5,000 to residents in need across the UK, including some here in Cardiff.**

I am proud to say that I personally raised a good chunk of that £5,000, often with much less in the way of resources than you might think.

Funding the EPF hasn't been easy, with sometimes needs as high as £600 in a single month - but it's worth the effort. And the local solidarity fund will have an advantage:

**If elected, I will not retain my full salary, but instead will take no more than minimum wage.**

The remainder of my wage will be made available to the Cardiff West Assembly, and will be spent according to our consensus. I think a good chunk of that should go to the Cardiff Solidarity Fund - but there's lots of other good ways to spend the money, too, which would be about £65,764 a year. Assuming MPs don't give themselves a payrise, obviously!

But we could spend nearly £66,000 a year well in the constituency.

**I believe in paying it forwards.**

When you have, you give.

I've never really had much though, to be quite honest with you. I grew up in poverty and I still live in poverty today; I don't own any nice shoes at the time of writing this, and I'll need to get a haircut soon. Normally, I get a friend to do it, see? A little has to go a long way.

## **This last year has been extra hard.**

I'm not at all ashamed to say there have been hungry times. There have also been cold times, especially in the mornings when the heating's been off a bit too long overnight to cut the bill down.

But even all that scrimping didn't stop my energy bills from coming all too close to being just utterly overwhelming.

And more and more people are just switching off from the grid - at risk not only from the cold, but also from the myriad health threats that arise from a lack of heating through winter... not least mould.

## **And to make things worse, more support is vanishing.**

People can't afford to give as they once did, and people don't have time to give as often either. When that happens, communities often become tighter-knit. Smaller. Sometimes it's just you, your family - and your work life.

But that's no way to live and that's not good enough for any of us.

## **We deserve better.**

And I really fervently believe that we get something better by going against the grain: by widening our community when the urge is to huddle up tighter. By bringing more people in. By widening our resources, our access to ideas, and our ability to bring resources and ideas together in solutions that reduce suffering.

## **Widening our community means including one another, and working hard to make sure we do.**

It means listening to one another. It means swallowing our yearning to centre our own causes, and taking time to hear others, even if we ultimately decide to give most of our time to our own tighter communities anyway.

The act of listening, of hearing one another, is how understanding gets born.

And that's something I think the Assembly can foster, too.

Our party ethos is that the people most impacted by an issue lead on that issue. That means the Assembly won't be a monolith. It'll be composed of smaller working groups, too, focused specifically on YOUR community's needs -

## **Nothing about us without us, and nothing about you without you.**

That's a big mantra in the disabled community - it's something we have to keep close to our hearts because nobody else remembers to do it if we don't. And that's not just true of us.

Those working groups will be rooted in your choices - you'll be the ones to decide where the lines on the map lie. Sometimes, there'll be intersections. That just means the working groups will combine and tackle the task together. We stick with "nothing about you without you" - and from each according to ability, to each according to need. Those working groups can do mutual aid, too.



## **The Assembly can widen our communities, and bring them together at the same time.**

But it'll be an uphill struggle, and one that will go better, I believe, if you send me to Westminster as your representative - because I can carry all of your voices, and not just speak your words, but understand them.

Look at the front cover again. I live here, on Jackson Road. I was there last year on the street when a car burned and the police charged; I had first aid in my bag. Why wouldn't I have? My community needed me.

Earlier that night, I put myself between a police officer and a teenage boy who the officer was shoving. I deescalated that situation and I did it because I'm not afraid to speak truth to power: the boy didn't deserve shoving, and the police officer should've known better.

Walking into Westminster isn't quite the same as dealing with the adrenaline of a police charge... but I assume sometimes it's similar. Just slower.

## **You can trust me to go to the Commons and stay common.**

Not least because I'll be before you at the Assembly regularly, informing and discussing everything with you. I'll run surgery too, because there's always private stuff people want to talk over, I know.

Once the party I founded, Harmony, is registered (the Electoral Commission has a big backlog), I'll be a Harmony MP. And then Harmony will be obliged to recall me if I defy you.



## **You read that right!**

In the event that I stray from what the Assembly's consensus decides, my party would organise against me in my own constituency to have me recalled. Not just deselected, but actually recalled.

## **We're serious about democracy.**

I believe firmly that democratic action is the root of liberation for so many groups: simply learning how to decide and act for ourselves is the first step towards a freer tomorrow - a tomorrow when those in fancy suits in far-away cities no longer decide for you, speak for you, and ignore your lived experiences utterly because they've read some books and listened to some "very important people" get obscenely well-paid to talk on subjects they know next to nothing about.

## **The only way we build that future is to take action together today.**

**Let's make history: let's vote FOR US.**



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**1st edition**

*ok, only edition*