

## Gerald Jones MP



House of Commons  
London SW1A 0AA

Councillor Andrew Morgan OBE  
Leader, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council  
Cabinet Office  
Floor 4, 2 Llys Cadwyn  
Taff Street  
Pontypridd CF37 4TH

Our Ref: GJ25506

26 November 2024

Dear Andrew,

Thank you for your letter dated 22 November regarding a recent Notice of Motion on Winter Fuel Payments.

This was a decision that the new Government neither expected nor wanted to take but like local authorities, the incoming government has had to make tough decisions to deal with the £22 billion black hole left after 14 years of the previous administrations. The Treasury's report 'Fixing the foundations: Public spending audit 2024-25' lays bare the extent of the inheritance left by the previous government. You can access a copy by visiting [bit.ly/FixingTheFoundations](https://bit.ly/FixingTheFoundations).

As a result, the Government made the tough decision to target winter fuel payments to the poorest pensioners who are on Pension Credit.

In your letter you acknowledge the Government's commitment to protecting the triple lock on pensions, despite many organisations, such as the Institute for Fiscal Studies, urging us to scrap it. The triple lock will mean that, over the next five years, 12 million pensioners will see their state pension increase by thousands of pounds.

Locally, you may be aware that I recently held a 'Pension Credit Day of Action' with a range of partners where I wrote to over 11,000 households across Merthyr Tydfil and Aberdare encouraging people to attend drop-in sessions to access unclaimed support. These sessions were well supported and initial feedback shows around 200 people attended across Merthyr Tydfil and Aberdare with at least £190,000 being secured on the day alone in previously unclaimed income. I believe that this evidences that there are many more people in our communities who, for whatever reason do not claim pension credit but may well be entitled.

You will also be aware that the UK Government has provided an additional £25million to Wales as a consequential to the Household Support Fund aimed at those just above the threshold for pension credit and this will be allocated as part of the upcoming Welsh Government budget.

*Continued...*

I will of course make the Government, more specifically the Secretary of State aware of the concerns you have raised and I would be happy to support any further actions the council plans to take to encourage take-up of Pension Credit.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Gerald Jones', with a stylized, cursive script.

**Gerald Jones MP**  
Merthyr Tydfil and Aberdare