

# Angela Eagle, Labour MP for Wallasey

## Minister of State for Border Security and Asylum

### Background

Angela was born in 1961 in Bridlington and attended secondary school in Formby. In 1976 she was joint winner of the British Girls' Under-18 chess championship. She studied Philosophy, Politics and Economics at Oxford University before working at the Confederation of British Industry. She then joined the Confederation of Health Service Employees (COHSE) trade union.

Angela joined the House of Commons as the MP for Wallasey in 1997 and has been re-elected at every general election since.



### Wallasey

One of four parliamentary constituencies covering the Metropolitan Borough of Wirral, Wallasey consists of six areas: Wallasey Village, Seacombe, Egremont, Liscard, New Brighton and Poulton, as well as Moreton and Leasowe. It has been seen as a Labour safe seat since the early 1990s, with Angela winning 57.7% of the vote in the 2024 election (with Reform UK coming second with 15.6%).

The constituency sits within [Wirral Council](#), which [declared](#) a climate emergency in 2019, citing more extreme weather patterns and rising sea levels as issues affecting the local area (with 5% of the area [at risk of flooding](#)). As part of this, the council committed to supporting the [Cool Wirral](#) initiative, a campaign aimed at encouraging local climate action.

According to [Friends of the Earth](#), other pertinent environmental issues in the borough include:

- **Home Energy Efficiency** - 65% of homes (22,056 households) in Wallasey are rated EPC "D" or below. This means those houses are especially bad at retaining heat, making them both energy intensive and unnecessarily expensive. 'According to EPC data, 9,010 homes in Wallasey would benefit from loft insulation, and 5,140 homes would benefit from cavity wall insulation'. Download our resource on talking to your MP about green retrofitting [here](#).

- **Air pollution** - Levels of the harmful pollutant nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) – primarily caused by the burning of fossil fuels in cars – are above World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines in 63% of neighbourhoods” in Wallasey, where “11% of the population suffers from a respiratory disease like asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease”. Download our resource on talking to your MP about clean air [here](#).
- **Public transport** - bus services have declined by 26% in the constituency since 2010, adversely affecting everyone, but especially the 27% of households who don't have access to a car. Improving public transport is a great way to tackle air pollution, the causes of global heating and social mobility, at the same time. Download our resource on talking to your MP about public transport [here](#).

## Political Activity

Angela has had a long and varied career in parliament, with her first ever government role being in what was then called the Department for the Environment, Transport and the Regions. Since then she has toured through different areas of government, including as Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury, the most junior minister at HM Treasury, and as Minister of State at the Department for Work and Pensions. In Labour's opposition years she served as Shadow Leader of the House of Commons and Shadow Business Secretary. In this period she came to public prominence with her bid to replace Jeremy Corbyn as Labour leader, describing herself as “a strong Labour woman” who could heal divisions in the party. In the controversy surrounding the leadership challenge, Angela's Constituency Labour Party in Wallasey declared their support for Corbyn as party leader and proposed a vote of no-confidence in Eagle.

On the environment, there are a number of moments worth considering. Eagle has '[almost always voted for measures to prevent climate change](#)' and, as part of her campaign to be deputy leader in 2015, wrote an article titled: '[Labour has treated the environment as an afterthought – that needs to change](#)'. In more recent years, however, she hasn't focused as much on environmental issues, and when she has it has been to support her party, as with the comments she made on the Conservative's Autumn Statement in 2023, when she [argued](#) for 'Labour's green prosperity plan to get us to net zero and create good jobs'. You could argue that this reflects that climate hasn't fitted her brief, but it also fits a general pattern on display in the 2024 general election of [not mentioning climate change](#) explicitly.

Eagle seems far more comfortable using the language of jobs, drawing upon her background in the trade union movement. For instance, she recently publicly supported Labour's '[New Deal for Working People](#)', commenting that the Employment Rights Bill shows that 'Labour is delivering on its commitment to Make

Work Pay, grow the economy and raise living standards across the country'. In addition, in 2018 she co-authored a book, 'The New Serfdom'. which asked how we can build a successful economy, powered by a happy and productive workforce that benefits everyone in the twenty-first century.

In her new role as Minister of State for Border Security and Asylum she's back at the centre of government, albeit with a politically difficult, and potentially unpopular, role of '[tackling irregular migration](#)'. There are [early indicators](#) that Eagle might not enjoy a close personal relationship with the Prime Minister, but what type of advocate she will be for the rest of this parliament is an open question. With the exception of the Corbyn years, she has generally [voted with](#) her party. But she is also not afraid to take on the government or even others in her own party where she feels strongly enough.

## Areas of common ground

Our research on Angela Eagle presents certain areas of possible common ground where constituents might have the best chance of working together with their MP on issues relating to the climate and nature crises.

One key framing here is the **jobs angle**, which, as noted above, is an area that Angela is especially interested in. The way to utilise this is to present your issue through the lens of how it will positively affect employment in the UK. For instance, if you want to talk to Angela about government support for a green retrofitting program to tackle poor insulation, you should mention how this could produce skilled and well paid jobs in construction (up to half a million, according to [some reports](#)). In general, you can talk about how there are [increasing findings](#) that green jobs are 'better jobs', commanding higher levels of job satisfaction and higher wages - in particular for lower skilled occupational groups. Green jobs – in particular, those emerging in the transition – are also at [less risk of automation](#). However, the transition to green jobs will require government support if it is to be done properly - and without risk to those currently working in polluting industries.

With the [increased risk](#) of **flooding** throughout the Wirral and in Wallasey in particular, a key area of common ground could be found by talking to Angela about how the government plans to support at-risk communities. This is especially pertinent with the recent formation of the [Floods Resilience Taskforce](#) 'to turbocharge the development of flood defences and bolster the nation's resilience to extreme weather'. Key questions remain about how the recommendations of the taskforce will be financially supported by the government, so it could be very profitable to discuss this with Angela. The government did commit money for this in the recent budget so getting access to this funding for the local area and exploring what in particular it could be used for could be a useful area to work together on.

This could also be a means of linking local issues to the global agenda. With COP29 on the horizon, you could talk to Angela about the need for the government to *back **the Loss and Damage fund*** to support developing nations dealing with coastal erosion, amongst other issues. The previous government pledged £60 million for the fund. In itself an insufficient amount, it also subsequently became apparent that this wasn't a new commitment, but '[instead taken from an existing and recently-downgraded climate finance pledge](#)'. Labour have [made some signs](#) that they will deliver on the UK's historical responsibilities to Global South nations, but this will only happen if constituents speak to their MPs about why this is important to them.

Another key means of addressing the global inequalities of the climate crisis is to discuss the plight of *climate refugees* – something especially relevant to Angela's brief as Minister of State for Border Security and Asylum. Although the business of predicting how many climate refugees we will see is a [controversial one](#), we can say that the amount of chaos and destruction already built into global temperature changes will likely see many millions displaced. Thus, we can reasonably predict that the question of accommodating those displaced will dominate national conversations for [the rest of the century](#). Unfortunately, the world is turning away from the notion of fair asylum, and isn't taking the necessary steps to prepare for climate refugees.

This isn't an easy conversation to have, but it is important, as climate justice campaigners, that we broach it with our politicians, otherwise they will only hear negative sides of the story. Angela Eagle has [recently spoken](#) about the need to take the conversation about forced migration – from climate change or conflict – away from 'obsessive culture war rhetoric' that seeks to set different groups against each other. In this spirit, you could speak to Angela about how she can use her role to make things safer in the future for climate refugees, for instance by introducing a recognised legal pathway for climate refugees, something which currently doesn't exist at a national or international level.

### **We'd also love to hear from you!**

Please do [get in touch](#) with us too at [info@hftf.org.uk](mailto:info@hftf.org.uk) or by calling 0114 312 2619 if you'd like to discuss asks for other areas of common ground, as well as accessing our free, tailored support for engagements with your MP.

Please keep in touch with us and let us know how your engagement progresses. We use this information to help us work as effectively as possible and to report to our funders so we can continue to provide this service to others.

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