

Alan Campbell MP

Community News Christmas 2020



Good afternoon

There is no doubt that this has been a tough year.

As your local MP I have continued to meet with constituents, community groups and stakeholders albeit virtually and although it has been online the sense of local community has emerged stronger than ever. In my newsletter below you will find details of some of the recent meetings and events I have attended online as well as details of the work of local and national organisations I am supportive of. There are also links to various organisations that may be of help for people. Please be assured that all links have been tested and are safe to click through to. I do hope you find it informative and useful.

Although in many ways this will be one of the strangest Christmases we have ever experienced, I do hope that you are able to enjoy it. Please, whatever you do, stay safe. Here's to a much more positive 2021.

If you need to get in touch please call 0191 2571927 or email campbellal@parliament.uk

You can also find useful information on my website at www.alancampbellmp.co.uk or on Facebook at;

https://www.facebook.com/AlanCampbellForTynemouth/?eid=ARct_uybFykBHP9Ze74JblWM5zGUiDhFgl8FizrUZK7Zmr1vijlCM68TFI_cGhOnsm_TvNnVuiYMhiLm

I continue to write my fortnightly column for the News Guardian, you can access these [here](#).

With all best wishes

Alan Campbell MP

Tynemouth

Remembrance Day 2020



Although there were no marches or parades this year, there is no less gratitude for those who served and serve our country in conflicts past and present. I quietly laid wreaths around the constituency to pay my respects. My thanks go to the local British Legion who do so much in our area to help veterans and their families. To find out more about their work, make a donation or get involved visit:

<http://branches.britishlegion.org.uk/branches/whitley-bay/branch-information>

4th Monkseaton Guides Meeting



As part of Parliament Week 2020 I attended an online meeting of the 4th Monkseaton Guides.

This term the guides were looking at a 'Take Action' skills builder and the theme was 'Influence'.

They have been looking at ways in which ways they can influence their local society, their country and their world. As part of their project, the guides created a 'Womanifesto' and held their own election. I thoroughly enjoyed the evening and would be surprised if there weren't a number of future politicians within the group.

Meeting with Northumbria Police Federation



I recently met with Jim Gray the Chairman of Northumbria Police Federation.

Top of the agenda was the pressure placed on the police force because of the pandemic and the anger the many police officers feel having stepped up during

these difficult times on the front line only to have their pay frozen. We discussed the need for clear concise rules for the tier system after we emerged from the second lockdown in December.

YMCA Youth Investment Fund



Ahead of the Spending Review on 25th November I met with the Chief Executive of North Tyneside YMCA, Dean Titterton to discuss his concerns about the Youth Investment Fund.

Since 2010, funding for youth services has fallen by an estimated 70% in real terms, which has contributed to the closure of 760 youth centres, and the loss of 4,500 youth work jobs across England & Wales.

In September 2019, The Chancellor of the Exchequer announced a new £500m Youth Investment Fund to help build 60 new youth centres, refurbish around 360 existing facilities, and provide over 100 mobile facilities for harder to reach areas. One year later, this funding is yet to be released.

Although the Spending Review committed £16.5million for youth services during the pandemic, I am disappointed that the government has not yet confirmed any of the promised £500million. I will continue to raise this with Ministers.

King's Priory Politics Project



I recently joined 6th formers from King's Priory School in an online digital surgery as part of the Politics Project's programme to support politicians to engage meaningfully and effectively with the young people they represent.

The Q and A style event was extremely interesting and I was given a number of tough questions. I am always pleased with how engaged and knowledgeable our local young people are about politics and current affairs. Thank you to King's Priory and the Politics Project for facilitating the event.

Meeting with Local Health Chief



I have a regular catch up with Sir James Mackay, Chief Executive of the Northumbria NHS Healthcare Trust. Obviously Covid-19 is at the top of the agenda.

We discussed the Covid vaccine and the logistics of distribution. [You can access the priority list here.](#) Although future vaccines will be available more locally there is a task ahead with the current vaccine as it can only be moved a number of times whilst having to be kept at a certain temperature. Sir James has promised to keep me updated with any local developments and I will of

course share any further information I receive. Please be assured however that the NHS will contact people individually and asks people not to ring or turn up at hospitals or GP's surgeries about access to the vaccine.

Meeting with Youth Member of Parliament



I had a useful meeting with the Tynemouth Youth Member of Parliament Abi Tang. We discussed her priorities for the coming year including mental health, the environment and the priorities of young people in general. This has been a strange year to hold office but Abi is doing an excellent job.

Small Business Saturday



Saturday 5th December was Small Business Saturday.

This year, many of our local small businesses have had a very tough year but despite that have stepped up to support our communities. I am proud to support them back by shopping local not just for small business Saturday but all year round. There is also a dedicated 'Buy Local' campaign for North Tyneside, [see here for more information.](#)

Respect for Shopworkers Week



This year I have again supported Respect for Shopworkers Week.

A recent report by the Association of Convenience Stores (ACS) showed that over the past year, there have been an estimated 50,338 incidents of violence and threats towards convenience store workers across the UK.

Despite being recognised as key workers, retailers saw a 40% increase in violence and abuse during the Coronavirus pandemic. These incidents can be incredibly traumatic for individuals, causing not only physical injury but significant emotional impacts and leaving members of staff afraid to return to work.

I join with ACS, Usdaw and many others in supporting this campaign to ensure that shopworkers are given the same protections as other key workers and send a clear message to offenders that violence will not be tolerated.

You can sign Usdaw's petition here <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/328621>

Operation Payback



I welcome the launch of a major new initiative 'Operation Payback' by Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner Kim McGuinness.

A £350,000 pot of money recovered from criminals in the North East is going to be put back where it belongs – into the grass roots of local communities.

Local projects and community groups that strive to make their community a better place are encouraged to get their applications in to stand a chance of receiving a cash boost to help make a difference to local lives.

This is an important initiative which seeks to use money seized from criminals to repair the harm caused to communities by crime. I would urge local groups in Tynemouth Constituency to see whether they can bid for funds.

In the years to come the fund will be topped up with some of the money seized from criminal activity under the Proceeds of Crime Act (PoCA), with some recovered funds also going to Northumbria Police to help them target more criminals.

Applications are welcome from community, charity, social enterprise or voluntary groups from within the Northumbria Police force area and must aim to combat the impact of crime, reduce crime and provide diversionary activities. Projects must cost between £5,000 and £25,000 and must have the ability to spend before March 2022. For more information, full criteria and terms and conditions please visit the Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner's website;

<http://www.northumbria-pcc.gov.uk/police-crime-plan/commissioning-services-grants/operation-payback/>

Carers Rights Day



On Carers Rights Day and every day it is important to remember how carers have always been so valuable for our society and our health service, giving their time and energy selflessly for other people. This pandemic has made their role and the challenge they face even greater. Carers UK estimate that the current crisis has meant an additional 4.5 million people taking on caring responsibilities and 3 out of 4 existing carers are having to provide more care, and spending longer doing so. Often this comes at a considerable personal and financial cost.

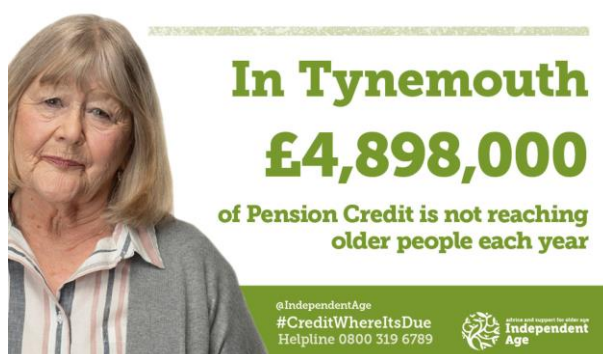
Anyone wanting further information and support can contact Carers UK or the North Tyneside Carers Centre on 0191 643 2298 or info@carersuk.org

Ice Rink Campaign



A number of constituents contacted me recently regarding the Government's decision to class ice rinks and ice skating as entertainment rather than sport. This meant the prospect of our local ice rink at Whitley Bay being shut under tier 3 restrictions. I lobbied the Sports Minister about this and I also tabled a number of parliamentary questions. I'm pleased that after these efforts by the public and MP's, the Government has now overturned the decision. Although the new regulations do not allow general opening of ice rinks for individual exercise, all supervised under 18 training can now go ahead. I am continuing to raise this issue with the Government.

Pension Credit Champion



I am proud to have signed up to become one of Independent Age's 'Pension Credit Champions.

In our country today 2 million people aged 65 or over are living in poverty. Pension Credit is designed to lift them out of poverty, but 4 in 10 do not receive it.

It's estimated that 2,248 older people aged over 65 in our area are missing out, and they're missing out on a massive £4,898,000 every year. Pension Credit also opens up associated benefits such as Winter Fuel Allowance and TV License discounts.

Anyone who thinks they are missing out can ring the Independent Age helpline on 0800 319 6789. Or they can contact Pension Credit claim line directly on 0800 99 1234.

Deaf Awareness Challenge



I am supporting Deaf Awareness North East who have launched an online communication challenge fundraiser to help highlight some common communication barriers and distractions.

[You can view my entry here.](#)

During 2020, with the use of partial and full face coverings, increased isolation and the introduction of social distancing, these communication challenges have become ever more pronounced for many deaf people and it is vital that we draw attention to this issue. For more information and to take part in the challenge visit <https://co-operate.coop.co.uk/groups/deaf-awareness-north-east/>

Campaign to end Puppy Smuggling



I've been a long-time supporter of the Dog's Trust in their campaign to stop puppy smuggling. I believe we must send a strong message that the illegal importation of puppies is a cruel practice that must stop. I support taking

increased measures to tackle puppy smuggling and will continue to work with Dogs Trust and other charities on the best and quickest way to achieve this.

Age UK Advice and support for Christmas



The Government have announced that from the 23rd – 27th December everyone will be able to form a ‘Christmas bubble’ with up to two different households.

To help older people understand what they can and cannot do over this period, Age UK have produced a webpage which clearly explains the new rules. [You can access the document here.](#) This includes information on:

- Travelling to form a bubble and staying overnight with your bubble
 - Forming a bubble if you’re extremely clinically vulnerable
 - Forming a bubble with someone living in a care home
 - How to avoid catching coronavirus over Christmas

Loneliness at Christmas – Age UK Support

Sadly, for many older people this Christmas will be a lonely one, with up to 850,000 older people likely to be by themselves. We can all help to make older people’s Christmas a bit happier by getting in touch with our older loved ones or sending them a card or small gift in the post.

Anyone who is feeling lonely and wants a friendly chat can call The Silver Line on 0800 470 8090. It’s open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week – even on Christmas Day. You can also call the Age UK Advice Line free of charge on 0800 169 65 65 (8am-7pm 365 days a year).

Keep well this Winter

There are important simple steps older people can take to build and sustain their resilience in the months ahead. Age UK recommend that they:

- Get their free flu vaccine
- Look after their mental health
- Keep moving and eat well

- Keep their homes warm
- Get the help and support they need

Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme



The UK Government will pay 80% of employees' usual wages for the hours not worked, up to a cap of £2,500 per month. The terms of the scheme will be reviewed in January.

There are now monthly deadlines for claims. Claims must be submitted within 14 calendar days after the month they relate to, unless this falls on a weekend in which case the deadline is the next weekday.

[HMRC have updated their guidance on GOV.UK](#), which explains the eligibility and how much you can claim to cover wages for employees on temporary leave ('furlough') due to coronavirus (COVID-19).

HMRC are also running live webinars which now offer more support on changes to CJRS, and how they affect employers. There is also a helpful step-by-step guide on GOV.UK, summarising the latest information on Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and the steps employers need to take to make a claim.

Help for domestic abuse

 A blue header with white text reads 'Useful Domestic Abuse helplines:'. Below this is a list of helplines in two columns. On the right side of the list is an image of a hand holding a smartphone. A small note '(24/7)' is located at the top right of the list area.

National Domestic Abuse Helpline* 0808 2000 247	Forced Marriage Unit* 020 7008 0151	* (24/7)
Local Wearside Women In Need helpline* 0800 066 5555	Karma Nirvana (support for honour based violence and forced marriage) 0800 5999 247	
Women's Aid on line chat www.chat.womensaid.org.uk	Victims First Northumbria 0800 011 3116	
The Men's Advice Line, for male domestic abuse survivors 0808 801 0327	Samaritans* 116 123	
The Mix, free information and support for under 25s in the UK 0808 808 4994	Respect helpline 0808 8024040 or www.respect.uk.net	
National LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Helpline 0800 999 5428		

We have seen a worrying rise in domestic abuse throughout the pandemic and know charities are warning of another rise over the Christmas period.

Across the region charities and support groups have urged people to get in touch if they are experiencing domestic abuse while isolating with their family.

If you are experiencing domestic abuse, you can report an incident by ringing 101 or visiting www.northumbria.pnn.police.uk. Also in a non-emergency situation you can text the police on 07786 200814.

In an emergency, always call 999. If you dial 999 and are unable to speak, the emergency operator will ask you to dial 55 and to follow their instruction to quickly put you in touch with police.

Help is also available From Victims First Northumbria, who can be found at <https://victimsfirstnorthumbria.org.uk/> or on 0800 011 3116

The Samaritan's at Christmas

Christmas can be an extremely difficult time for many. The Samaritan's helpline is free and available 24 hours a day on 116 123 or you can email them at Jo@samaritans.org

Covid Memorial Day



On 1st January 2021, at 7pm, people are being encouraged to light a candle as a symbol of collective remembrance for everyone impacted by the Pandemic. This event is conceived to be like clap-for-carers. It is a non-political act of respect for all the loved ones lost as a nation, a demonstration of support for the bereaved, and an expression of hope of recovery in 2021.

For more information visit www.theforestofmemories.com

Learning Disability North East Carol Service



For me, the start of the Christmas Season is attending the LD:North East Carol Service at Christ Church in North Shields. Although the pandemic has meant

this year it could not go ahead, LD: North East held an online service which can be watched here.

Fisherman's Mission Christmas Card



This year my Christmas card is supporting the Fisherman's Mission. This year's card is by local artist Michael Smith and is a painting of North Shields Fish Quay. You can donate to the work of the Fisherman's Mission online here.



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