

# Alan Campbell MP

## Community News May 2021



Good afternoon

Welcome to the latest edition of my Community News. I hope you are keeping well and staying safe.

In this edition you will find information on 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 to 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.

There are important elections on Thursday 6th May when you get to choose your Mayor, your Police and Crime Commissioner and your Local

Councillors. However you vote, just make sure you get to have your say. For any further information including where to vote visit:

<https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/186/elections-and-voting>

If you need to get in touch please call 0191 2571927 or email [campbellal@parliament.uk](mailto:campbellal@parliament.uk)

You can also find useful information on my website at [www.alancampbellmp.co.uk](http://www.alancampbellmp.co.uk) or on Facebook at;

[https://www.facebook.com/AlanCampbellForTynemouth/?eid=ARCt\\_uybFykBHP9Ze74JblWM5zGUiDhFgl8FizrUZK7Zmr1vijiCM68TFI\\_cGhOnsm\\_TvNnVuiYMhiLm](https://www.facebook.com/AlanCampbellForTynemouth/?eid=ARCt_uybFykBHP9Ze74JblWM5zGUiDhFgl8FizrUZK7Zmr1vijiCM68TFI_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

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## Commemorating HRH Prince Philip



It was an honour to attend a service alongside our Mayor Norma Redfearn to celebrate the life of HRH Prince Philip.

The special, socially distanced service was held at Christ Church in North Shields and my thanks go to The Rev'd Canon Glyn Evans for organising the service.

I was greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Prince Philip, a devoted husband and support to Her Majesty and a dedicated public servant to our country. Like many local people my thoughts are with the Queen and the Royal Family as our nation unites in mourning.

## Meeting with Chief Constable



I recently had my regular catch up with Winton Keenan the Chief Constable of Northumbria Police.

We discussed a number of local issues including Operation Coastwatch which will see extra police patrols taking place on the Metro during the busy spring and summer season and in areas such as beaches and beauty spots which are likely to attract more visitors as lockdown measures continue to ease.

The operation will see an increase in officers patrolling alongside Nexus staff on the Metro network, and Council wardens to tackle any anti-social behaviour and ensure local residents aren't disturbed.

Activity will include extra patrols, preventative work at Metros to disrupt and stop any disorder before it reaches communities and beach wardens to monitor coastal activity.

Officers will also be gathering cross-agency intelligence on anyone found to be taking part in criminality or disorder as well as carrying out modified CCTV plans to best utilise resources and capture disorder for prosecution.

As we enter the Bank Holiday weekend, I stressed the importance to local communities of visible policing.

We also discussed plans to tackle anti-social behaviour in communities drawn up by our Police and Crime Commissioner Kim McGuinness.

I discussed with the Chief Constable plans for a dedicated Wildlife Crime Officer for the area as I know that many local people have an interest in animal welfare issues. The new post will also have a remit to tackle the issue of pet theft which I know has been an issue worrying many pet owners over the last few months.

## Vaccines Update



I get a regular update from Vaccines Minister Nadhim Zahawi about local vaccine supply. I continue to raise my concerns about the importance of the vaccine supply. I have recently had assurances that the Minister remains confident that the supply of vaccine to the UK will not be disrupted. I would also like to thank all the local healthcare workers and volunteers who have ensured that the process locally has been excellent. My office has been dealing with individual cases where any issues have arisen so if you do have any concerns about getting a vaccine please get in touch.

## Meeting with Local Health Chiefs



I had my regular catch up with Sir James Mackey, the Chief Executive of Northumbria NHS Healthcare Trust. Covid is still top of the agenda although I am reassured that the number of Covid cases in the local area is extremely low. That said, we cannot become complacent and must keep making sure we follow the guidelines and stay safe.

## Help and Support for Long Covid



For some people, coronavirus (COVID-19) can cause symptoms that can last weeks or months after the infection has gone. This is sometimes called post-COVID-19 syndrome or "long COVID".

Many people feel better in a few days or weeks and most will make a full recovery within 12 weeks. But for some people, symptoms can last longer and be severe and debilitating. If you have any health worries after suffering from Covid please visit <https://www.yourcovidrecovery.nhs.uk/>

People may not be aware that Personal Independence Payment (PIP) can help you with some of the extra costs if you have a long term physical or mental health condition or disability.

The amount you get depends on how your condition affects you, not the condition itself. You'll be assessed by a health professional to work out the level of help you can get.

You can get Personal Independence Payment (PIP) whether you're working or not. You must be aged 16 or over and usually have not reached State Pension age to claim.

You must also have a physical or mental health condition or disability where you:

- have had difficulties with daily living or getting around (or both) for at least 3 months
  - expect these difficulties to continue for at least 9 months

As the ongoing effects of the COVID pandemic are realised individuals with ongoing, long term symptoms may be eligible to make a claim for PIP.

I also recognise that as a result of the pandemic, there are more people than ever at risk of losing their jobs through economic reasons or due to illness. I employ a member of staff, Amy Anderson who specialises in welfare benefits.

If you would like to discuss claiming PIP or access support with the PIP claims process or to talk through anything related to welfare benefits such as JSA or ESA please contact Amy directly on 07598 106 421 or email amy.anderson@parliament.uk you can also ring my office on 0191 2571927.

## **Tynemouth rated 2nd best seaside holiday in UK**



It was great to see Tynemouth in the news again over weekend, after being rated Britain's most 2nd popular seaside destination in the UK by Which magazine. The regeneration of the coast in recent years really has made our area a great place to live, work and visit.

## **Wellfield Middle School Q and A**



As part of Parliament's Education and Digital engagement work, I will be joining Wellfield Middle School for an online Q and A.

The Parliament team are doing a great job in teaching our young people about the role of parliament and its history and the session was rounded off with a



Q and A. If any local teachers or schools want to get involved in this initiative, you can find out more at:

<https://learning.parliament.uk/en/session-workshop/primary-secondary-school-online-workshop/>

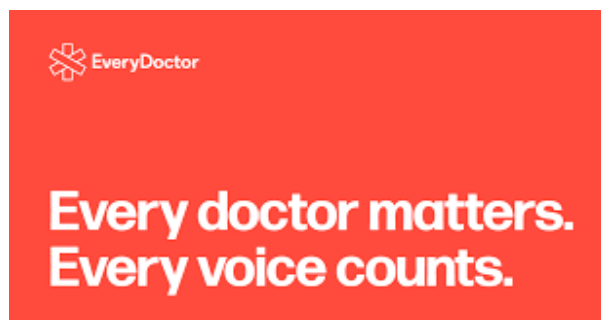
## **Work to start on next phase of North Shields regeneration**



Preliminary investigation works are planned in North Shields next week as part of the early stages of regeneration plans for the town centre. The work is planned to take place between 27 April and 14 May, weather permitting and will be to excavate holes in Northumberland Square, Howard Street and Saville Street. I am told that access to properties will be maintained at all times.

For information on the exciting Masterplan for the Fish Quay and North Shields, visit <https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/1415/ambition-north-shields> or here <https://youtu.be/TRHbiZDe7b4>

## **Every Doctor UK Briefing**



A member of my team recently attended a session organised by Every Doctor UK - the doctor-led campaign organisation against the privatisation of the NHS. The group has done some excellent work in raising awareness of government plans to privatise parts of the NHS by the back-door and it was interesting to hear their plans for future campaigns.

## Operation Sceptre



I'm supporting Operation Sceptre – a countrywide clampdown on serious violence including carrying out a range of targeted activity, from weapons sweeps to extra patrols and searches – to tackling the illegal importation and distribution of blades and other dangerous items.

In Northumbria Police force area, officers will also be visiting local schools to deliver a range of educational inputs to show young people carrying a knife is never the right choice.

A number of surrender bins have been placed at six stations across the Force area, with members of the public encouraged to hand over any unwanted knives or sharp objects which they fear could fall into the wrong hands.

Thankfully, here in the North East we see lower levels of knife crime than comparative areas of the country but it's good to see that working towards ending knife crime and tackling this type of offending is very much a priority for Northumbria Police, despite the fact that the Government has recently slashed funding for violent crime in Northumbria by 40%.

Police and Crime Commissioner Kim McGuinness has warned recently that violent crime could soar in the North East after the Government slashed funding by 40% and has raised this with the Policing Minister as a matter of urgency.

## Off road bikes and anti-social behaviour



KIM MCGUINNESS  
NORTHUMBRIA  
POLICE & CRIME  
COMMISSIONER

violence  
reduction  
unit

I am pleased that our Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner Kim McGuinness has raised the issue of off-road bikes and anti-social behaviour



with the Policing Minister. I contacted her recently to raise the issue locally following a number of instances of this on the local waggon-ways.

Now Kim has asked that legislation is brought forward so that all off-road bikes are fitted with a tracker.

I have been advised that here in Northumbria, the force is working hard to tackle this growing problem and local initiatives include:

- PCSO's are deployed on a daily basis to 'hot spot' areas for motorcycle ASB with a high powered camera, to try and identify offenders and their vehicles.
- Police cadets were used for test purchases of fuel at all Gateshead East petrol stations to identify those selling fuel to underage persons. This resulted in warnings being given to two petrol stations and used as a springboard to ensure education of all staff working there and to the recruitment of filling stations as 'partners' rather than offenders. This initiative is being rolled out across Gateshead with the aim of preventing the purchase of fuel by underage persons and identified target offenders and vehicles involved in motorcycle enabled crime and disorder. If it continues to prove effective the initiative will be rolled out force wide.
- Deployment of 'stinger' bikes, surveillance and proactive operations targeting handlers of stolen bikes have been used with several successes.

## **Sessions on the Kickstart Scheme for local businesses**



The local Department for Work and Pensions Team are holding 4 sessions in May to talk to local businesses about the Government's Kickstart Scheme and how it may help them and young people in the constituency.

The Kickstart Scheme is a fantastic opportunity to give a young person a stepping-stone onto the employment ladder, giving them the vital skills to grow their future career path.

If you are a local business and would like to know more see here

[kickstart event Flyer.pdf](#)

## **Children's Commissioner's Big Ask Campaign**



The Children's Commissioner, Dame Rachel de Souza has recently launched a campaign – The Big Ask, which aims to be the largest ever consultation with children in England. The survey aims to find out children's concerns about their lives today and their aspirations for the future.

I'm encouraging as many children as possible to share their experiences with the campaign. 'The Big Ask' survey has been sent to every school in England and has been made available to charities and other settings working with children.

Parents, care leavers and those working with children are also invited to share their views about the future for children and young people today, and what they think is holding young people back by completing the adult survey.

The survey is open until the 14th May and you can take part at [www.thebigask.uk](http://www.thebigask.uk)

**Royal Mail, Vote early, post early**



Ballot packs are now landing on doormats for the elections taking place on Thursday 6 May. Although restrictions are starting to ease, it is anticipated that more people than ever before will be registered to vote by post. Royal Mail is working closely with the Electoral Commission to encourage postal voters not to delay sending back their ballot papers once they have chosen how to cast their vote.

To ease the strain on Royal Mail, they are encouraging voters post their ballot packs by Tuesday 4 May to ensure they can be counted.

You can use any Royal Mail postbox including one of the 35,000 Priority postboxes around the country, which are emptied later in the day and 15,000 are emptied on a Saturday and Sunday.

To find your nearest postbox visit [www.royalmail.com/services-near-you](http://www.royalmail.com/services-near-you).

Ballot papers can also be handed into polling stations and local authorities on Thursday 6 May before 10pm.

## **Open University**

### **Disabled Veteran's**

### **Scholarship Fund**



Applications have just opened for the 2021 Open University (OU) Disabled Veterans' Scholarship Fund and I am encouraging local veteran's who may wish to sign up to do so without delay.

The fund will provide scholarships for up to 50 disabled veterans to build on their unique military skills and experiences by studying at undergraduate or postgraduate level for free. The OU has awarded 160 such scholarships so far, helping individuals from a variety of service backgrounds and diagnosed with a range of physical disabilities and complex mental health conditions. Each scholarship is tailored to fully support all disabled veterans, injured during or due to their service, as they transition to civilian life, providing a free OU education and wraparound disability and careers service support.

The application deadline is midnight on 9th July 2021. More information is available here: <http://www.open.ac.uk/courses/choose/veterans>

## **Mind Survey on coping with the pandemic**



We all know that Covid has continued to have a massive impact on our lives, and in particular people's mental health, so it is timely that mental health charity Mind has launched a new survey to find out how people are feeling and coping now.

They want to hear from people who were struggling with their mental health before the pandemic, as well as those who have struggled with their mental health during or because of the pandemic.

To take part in the survey please visit <https://www.mind.org.uk/coronavirus-we-are-here-for-you/coronavirus-research/>

You will also find lots of information about help and support on their website.

## **Free train travel for those**

## fleeing domestic violence



I am extremely pleased by the recent announcement that train companies will continue to provide free train travel for those needing to flee domestic abuse. The news comes as the number of people who have used the landmark Rail to Refuge scheme reaches over a thousand people.

Rail to Refuge is a joint initiative between rail companies and Women's Aid Federation of England, in which train operators cover the cost of train tickets for adults and children escaping domestic abuse and travelling to refuge accommodation. The scheme was first introduced by Southeastern in 2019 and then GWR in March 2020. At the start of the pandemic last year, all train operators joined the scheme to provide this crucial support at a time when domestic abuse was increasing and people experiencing it were finding it harder to leave. Since then, together operators have provided free tickets to over 1,348 people, including 362 children over five.

To find our more visit <https://www.womensaid.org.uk/rail-to-refuge/>

