

Alan Campbell MP

Community News September 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 and in person as well as details of the work of local and national organisations I am supportive of. There are also details of some upcoming important parliamentary business.

As ever, I have included some 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.

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_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

Merchant Navy Remembrance Day



Following many years of lobbying to bring about official recognition of the sacrifices made by merchant seafarers in two world wars and since, Merchant Navy Day became an official day of remembrance on 3 September 2000.

Our area, on the banks of the Tyne, has a historic link to the Merchant Navy so although there was no official ceremony this year, earlier today I laid a wreath to honour the brave Merchant Navy men and women who provided the lifeline which kept Britain alive, fed, and armed during conflicts and who still support the nation today.

North Tyneside Disability Forum Garden Party



It was a pleasure to recently give out awards at the North Tyneside Disability Forum's annual summer garden party.

NTDF's Mission Possible COVID 19 Emergency Response Project aims to provide support to everyone who uses their services. The Project aims to make sure nobody is struggling to feed themselves and their families and their Keep in Touch work is adapting their service delivery to make sure people don't feel lonely, isolated or abandoned, if they are afraid or unsure they know they can contact NTDF seven days a week.

For help, or to offer your help, contact NTDF at info@ntdf.co.uk or find out more at www.ntdf.co.uk [facebook.com/NTDFORUM](https://www.facebook.com/NTDFORUM)

Donations can be made via <https://justgiving.com/ntdf>

YMCA

Youth Friendly Communities



One of the most instructive meetings I have attended recently was led by the YMCA to discuss how we can work together to make Youth Friendly Communities. We've all endured the pandemic, but it has been particularly tough for young people. There is a growing recognition of the importance of youth services as we begin to build back better. The Government is committed to a Youth Investment Fund with £500 million to level up left behind areas. The reality is however that youth provision has been cut by twice that figure over the last decade and the pandemic has turbo charged problems of accessing jobs and training as well as issues like mental health.

A quarter of all registered homeless people are between 18 and 24 and even in supported housing young people in work often can't afford to save to move on, that's if they have a job. One in ten young people are NEETs without work, training or education. After a decade of underinvestment there is no quick solution, but it makes sense for community groups and charities to work closely with statutory agencies and to challenge the culture which too often sees young people as a problem. We need communities to be youth friendly and once again the YMCA is providing a strong voice.

Meeting with North Tyneside CCG



I recently had my regular catch up with North Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group. We discussed concerns around the Government's Health and Care Bill 2021-22 which will shortly be going into committee.

The Government says the Bill builds on the NHS's own proposals for reform, aiming to make it less bureaucratic, more accountable, and more integrated, and that it has incorporated lessons learnt from the pandemic.

Like many in the health sector, I agree with the objective of more integrated health and care services. But I am concerned that this is the wrong Bill at the wrong time and I voted against it at 2nd Reading.

This is a moment of great pressure on the NHS. Yet there is nothing in the Bill to address the greatest challenges facing the NHS or wider reform of adult social care and workforce pressures. I strongly believe the Government's focus must instead be on ensuring that services are appropriately staffed and have the resources they need, addressing the crisis in social care, and giving the NHS workforce the pay rise they deserve.

Army engagement event



I attended an interesting online held by the Armed Forces to provide greater awareness and understanding of the British Army.

Recent events have shown the professionalism and bravery of our Armed Forces, many of whom are still from traditional recruiting areas like the North East. I am grateful for the work that they do at home but also abroad to keep us safe. The armed forces family includes not just veterans but others in our community like the reserves and cadet forces.

Sport Works in North Shields



I recently met with Sport Works, a social enterprise which designs and delivers highly effective community sport programmes to enable people to become active and healthy.

Their focus is to support some of the most vulnerable people in society, such as children living in poverty, adults and children with disabilities, individuals from the BAME community and older people with long term health conditions including people in care homes.

We discussed their 'Aspire' programme which is an anti-crime intervention programme supporting 10-14 year olds classified at risk of anti-social behaviour and/or gang activity living in the Meadow Well. The programme is funded by the Youth Endowment Fund and delivered in partnership with a range of local partners including the police and social workers from the Local Authority.

We also discussed their work with other local schools including Southlands and Whitley Bay High as well as some of the work they have done to try and prevent anti-social behaviour at Langley field.

Visit to Little1Stop



It was good to join local young people who are participating in the National Citizenship Service (NCS) and have decided to raise money for Little1Stop.

NCS is a government funded organisation that runs programs for 16 and 17 year olds so they can create their own social action projects and help their local communities.

The local group are raising funds for Little1Stop which is a new non-profit charity that sells pre loved and new nursery equipment and clothing on Howard Street in North Shields.

If anyone wants to donate they can visit;

https://www.gofundme.com/f/ncs-for-little1stop?utm_campaign=p_cf+share-flow-1&utm_medium=social&utm_source=instagram

Well done to all involved.

<https://www.facebook.com/Little1StopNorthShields/>

Armed Forces Day



I was present when the Speaker of the House of Commons led a ceremony in Parliament to say “a very big thank you” to the Armed Forces for their help in combatting Covid-19.

Since the pandemic began, military personnel have been tasked with:

Supporting the vaccination role out

Deploying defence medics to hospitals to relieve pressure on the NHS

Assisting in non-clinical roles, including porter duties to free up NHS staff

Supporting local authorities with community testing

Driving ambulances.

At a special ceremony in New Palace Yard ahead of Armed Forces Day on 26 June, Sir Lindsay Hoyle praised servicemen and women for “being there in our hour of need”.

Campaign to save the £20 Universal Credit Uplift



At the start of the pandemic the Government understandably increased Universal Credit and Working Tax Credit by £20 a week. That lifeline was a big help to struggling families but on 6th October the Government is going to take it away.

Across the North East more than a quarter of a million families will be affected. In Tynemouth Constituency alone there are 7450 families affected, most with children. The £20 increase was more than just “a bit extra” in difficult times, the money is an integral part of family income. Citizens Advice estimates that the cut will pull around 2.3 million people families into debt.

This would be the biggest overnight cut in social security since the foundation of the modern welfare state. The Government’s argument seems to be that the welfare system should incentivise people moving into work

where they should be better off. I agree, except that most of the families with children who stand to lose will have someone in work – an indictment of running a low pay economy for many. And the North stands to be hardest hit, by a double whammy, because, as the Salvation Army Reports, many of England’s most deprived areas have been locked out of the Government’s Levelling Up Fund. I hope when Parliament returns the Government will reverse this cut and that MP’s across our region will stand up for struggling families.

Local people missing out on Pension Credit



I am asking local people aged 66 or over to check whether they are missing out to benefits they are entitled to.

It is important people get the help they need when they need it so I was disappointed to find out that more than 2,000 local people aged 66 or over are missing out to benefits they are entitled to.

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 in our area are missing out, and they’re missing out on a massive £4,898,000 every year.

Anyone who thinks they are missing out can check online at <https://www.gov.uk/pension-credit-calculator>

Ring the Independent Age helpline on 0800 319 6789. Or contact Pension Credit claim line directly on 0800 99 1234.

Private Members Bill

on

Fire and Re-hire



Thousands of British workers are threatened with being fired and rehired on worse pay and conditions to do the same job which is why I am supporting a new Private Members Bill on stopping Fire and Rehire.

It's not dodgy backstreet companies doing this, it's the biggest names on our high street.

I firmly back this Bill which seeks to stop workers being bullied, sacked and told they will only be re-employed to do the same basic job if they accept less money and poorer conditions. It's an issue that affects people up and down the country and is causing harm to thousands of families across Britain.

The Bill will receive its Second Reading on 22nd October.

Age UK advice for older people after lockdown



As a result of lockdown restrictions, many older people may be feeling less active and confident. They may find that their fitness levels have decreased,

or that they are struggling to motivate themselves. For many people this is reversible.

I have welcomed an informative guide produced by Age UK to help older people get back on their feet after lockdown. This includes advice on:

- Deconditioning
- Finding motivation to get more active
- Staying active at home
- Changing health during lockdown
- Reducing risk of falling
- Staying active with long COVID

To find our more visit

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/coronavirus/coronavirus-guidance/getting-back-on-your-feet-after-lockdown/>

Time for justice for Nuclear Test Veteran's



In a letter to the Defence Secretary, I recently called on the government to recognise the sacrifice made by nuclear test veterans and to compensate them for the harm caused to them. More than 20,000 UK forces personnel were close to the test sites in Australia and the South Pacific. Some collected samples, ran laboratories or transported radioactive material. Many did so without any protective clothing. Since the 1980's the evidence has been clear which links the tests to rare cancers and birth defects.

Britain is the only western nuclear power which still refuses recognition or compensation and it is time that we accept responsibility for the harmful

effects on service personnel and to honour our debt to them and to pay compensation.

Backing a Safer Transport Bid



(Photo taken before Covid)

I've backed Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner Kim McGuinness in her new bid to make public transport safer.

Following the findings of her recent survey which showed that during the daytime, 47 per cent felt 'safe or very safe' on public transport, compared to only 14 per cent at night, the Commissioner has come together with local authority leaders and transport operators to draw up a range of solutions to address the fears and concerns shared by local people.

These include a new reporting app to transform the reporting process, body-worn cameras for transport staff, Street Pastor-style safety volunteers on patrol across the Metro network and extra CCTV linked to control rooms.

Although we are one of the safest areas in the country it is clear that there are still issues that need to be addressed and people should feel safe across our transport network. I have written to the Transport Minister in support of the Safer Streets Funding Bid which could see £400,000 of investment in safety measures for our area.

Supporting Diabetes UK



1 in 14 people in the UK has diabetes and a further 13.6 million people are at increased risk of developing type 2. Diabetes UK's new report examines the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on people with diabetes.

To find out how you can take part in their campaign please visit:

https://www.diabetes.org.uk/get_involved/fundraising-events?frequency=regular

Campaign to tackle anti-social behaviour



I have spent time over the summer urging the Government to do more to tackle crime in local communities.

Police forces in England and Wales recorded 2,022,274 incidents of anti-social behaviour last year. That figure is up by around a third in a year and is the first time since 2013-14 that incidents of ASB have exceeded two million.

Police numbers fell by more than 20,000 during the last eleven years and even though the government says they want to recruit more officers that's too little, too late for many communities. I am calling on the Government to do

more to tackle crime in local communities and they can start by scrapping the plan for a new Government yacht and instead spend the hundreds of millions of pounds on recruiting more police officers.

Covid Support Still Available



Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS)

HMRC contacted customers who may be eligible for the fifth Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) grant in mid-July, providing a personal claim date indicating the earliest date from which they could apply.

As of 5 August, the claims service is open to all potentially eligible customers. People have until 30 September 2021 to submit their claims for the fifth grant, and they should receive payment within six working days of a successful application.

Changes to the CJRS from this August to September

From 1 August to 30 September (when the scheme closes), the UK Government will pay 60% of employees' usual wages for hours not worked, up to a cap of £1,875. Employers will need to continue to pay the difference, so that they pay furloughed employees at least 80% of their usual wages in total for the hours they do not work, up to a cap of £2,500 a month including their contribution.

Useful links for Covid advice and guidance

[Foreign travel advice](#)

[Case data for Local areas](#)

[NHS Test and Trace digital helper for enquiries and complaints](#)

[Guidance on the Test and Trace Support Payment scheme: claiming financial support](#)

[NHS COVID-19 App](#)

[Use of the NHS COVID-19 App in education and childcare settings guidance](#)

[Working safely during COVID-19: How to make your workplace Covid-secure](#)

[COVID-19: guidance for households with possible COVID-19 infection](#)

[Every Mind Matters: mental health and wellbeing](#)
