

Subject: News Bulletin from Aidan Burley MP #7

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Since the last edition, Aidan has:

- **Successfully lobbied Ministers** in the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to protect **Cannock Chase's forest**.
- Visited **Cannock Chase High School** to receive a petition to combat human trafficking.
- **Questioned Culture Minister** Ed Vaizey MP to support new Cannock community radio station **Chase FM**.
- Welcomed **Barroness Sayeeda Warsi** to **Chadsmoor**. She visited the CVS, meeting with staff, local Councillors and Council candidates for May's local elections.
- Attended a reception at **10 Downing Street** for MPs.
- Thanked **work experience** student Mark Taylor for his work in the MP Help Zone. If you know someone who would like a work experience placement in Aidan's office, give the Help Zone a call.
- Conducted a help and advice surgery at the MP Help Zone in Cannock. If you would like an appointment at one of Aidan's future surgeries please call 01543 502 447 or email aidan.burley.mp@parliament.uk.

Website of the Week: www.hbtl.co.uk

The website of HB Training who are located in Mill Park, Cannock and are part of the Learning World Academies group.

Learning World Academies are recognised by construction employers as a market leader in the delivery of construction apprenticeships, with experience and knowledge of the industry that is second to none. Their aim is to provide young people with the best possible

start to a career in construction, whilst offering employers a no risk solution to meeting their workforce needs.

MP welcomes new protections for Cannock Chase

Public benefits preserved

Following representations from Aidan Burley MP, Ministers in the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs have this week confirmed that Cannock Chase's forest will remain in public ownership unless established woodland owners would be prepared to commit to improving the public amenities.



Commenting, Aidan said: *"I am delighted that Ministers have listened carefully to the representations I have made to them regarding Cannock Chase's importance as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.*

"Defra has identified Cannock Chase as an exemplar of the type of forest that "combines timber production with significant recreational facilities, high visitor numbers and ... high levels of biodiversity.

"This is a significant step. It offers the protections appropriate to our AONB-designated countryside, but also presents our local community with the opportunity to make the best possible use of the Chase.

"However, the discussions will continue. I firmly believe that Cannock Chase is as important to England's national heritage as the Forest of Dean and Sherwood Forest. I am concerned that without a heritage designation Cannock Chase could be seen as a lesser beauty spot than these other areas which could impact upon our attractiveness as a tourist destination.

"Therefore during the consultation, I will be arguing for the Chase to be given the same status as these other areas.

"I noted with dismay that the immediate reaction to the announcement, posted on the "Save Cannock Chase" website only a minute or so after the document became available, advocated non-participation with the Government consultation.

"We won't help Cannock Chase by ignoring these proposals. If that happens, the people making the decisions will simply think that people of Cannock Chase don't care about their forest. I am afraid that comments by Stoke-on-Trent city councillor Mark Davis suggest that his campaign is driven more by party politics than by a true desire to protect our forest."

PHOTO: Sunset on the Chase by [johnmuk](#)

Photo news: 10 Downing Street



Aidan Burley MP with his girlfriend Helen Boyle, attending a reception last week in 10 Downing Street for MPs.

MP supports school campaign to combat human trafficking



Aidan Burley MP at Cannock Chase High School on Friday 14th January 2011, collecting a petition signed by over 500 local pupils, teachers and parents calling for action to stop Human Trafficking.

Aidan visited Cannock Chase High School on Friday to collect a petition signed by over 500 local pupils, teachers and parents calling for action to stop Human Trafficking.

Pupils from the school started the petition after watching video clips on Human Trafficking during a citizenship lesson. According to some estimates, human trafficking is the third largest illicit money-making venture in the world after drug dealing and the arms trade. Around 800,000 people are trafficked per year worldwide, 100,000 of those into and within the EU each year.

The petition calls on the government to continue its action on pressing other EU governments to take a more proactive role in stopping human trafficking. After speaking with the pupils, Aidan forwarded the petition to Jeremy Browne MP, Minister of State for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office who has responsibility for

Human Trafficking under his EU remit.

Commenting after the visit Aidan said: *"I was pleased to have had the opportunity to come here today and collect this petition. I would like to pay particular tribute to pupil Danielle Robinson who took the lead with organising the petition. I think every Member of Parliament should take some collective responsibility to raise awareness of what is essentially modern-day slavery. I personally have already joined the All Parliamentary Group against Human Trafficking which is made up of MPs from all political parties. I know that the government are already making progress in this area working with the European Union and other regional organisations such as the Organisation for Security and Co-Operation in Europe, however there is still much to do. I am happy to do whatever I can both locally and nationally to raise awareness and encourage discussion on this issue."*

Cannock Chase High School teacher Mr Mark Flint added: *"After being made aware of this global injustice, I was determined to give our pupils the chance to have their say on human trafficking. The response from pupils was fantastic and I'm delighted that Aidan Burley could come into school and formally accept the petition. It's great for pupils to see Aidan working on their behalf."*

MP and Minister back plans for local community radio station in Cannock

Aidan last week gave his backing to a proposed local Cannock community radio station by raising the issue in the House of Commons.



Cannock Community Radio (to be known as Chase FM) is seeking an FM Community Radio Licence from Ofcom, the UK's regulator of Radio and TV services. The Chase Community Radio campaign group has already submitted an expression of interest to Ofcom following a successful trial in 2001, and a Facebook group and website have been launched to support their bid.

Community Radio stations are a new tier of Radio Licences offered by the government regulator, Ofcom. There are 181 of them already on air across the country. They each cover a small area of up to 5km, and station formats vary from covering specialist music, catering for a specific ethnic group, to (as in this case) providing local information for an area otherwise overlooked. The Government recently announced over £500,000 a year funding to support Community Radio stations.

Questioning Culture Minister Ed Vaizey MP at Question Time last Thursday, Aidan welcomed the funding for community radio and sought assurances that new licenses such as the one proposed for Chase FM will be issued by Ofcom, using part of this fund. In response Mr Vaizey reaffirmed the Government's commitment to supporting community radio and assured Aidan that Ofcom are currently considering opening a third round of applications for new licenses. Mr Vaizey also wished the group luck with their application.

Speaking after the exchange Aidan said: *"This Community radio station would provide a brilliant way to engage the local community here in Cannock Chase. For too long, Cannock Chase has been ignored by the radio media and this station would provide the people of Cannock with a dedicated service discussing issues directly related to the region. Not only would it provide a service to its*

listeners but also enable youngsters and adults from across the Chase to participate in the running and development of the station. I hope all the people of Cannock will get behind this application."

Pete Baker, the campaign group's Chairman added: *"Where Radio is concerned Cannock has always been overlooked. We have to make-do with stations meant for nearby areas such as Beacon and BRMB who officially do not cover our area. If we are successful in our application we will offer a truly local service that the people of Cannock, Hednesford, Heath Hayes and Norton Canes.*

"We've had overwhelming support already, notably from Aidan Burley MP, Local Businessman Fred Pritchard, and several of the area's sporting clubs, which we're hugely grateful for. We ask anyone who would like to pledge their support for a local station to send us a letter or email of support, or join the facebook group at www.chasefm.net."

An Internet only version of the community station will shortly go live at www.chasefm.net.

To watch Aidan's exchange with the Minister, click on the image below. Aidan's question begins at 11:08.06.



Aidan Burley (Cannock Chase, Conservative): A campaign group in my constituency has recently submitted an expression of interest in applying for an FM licence to run the first community radio station covering the whole area, to be called Chase FM. Can the Minister assure me that part of the community radio fund will still be available for new licence applications such as that one, and will he join me in wishing Chase FM all the best with its application?

Edward Vaizey (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Culture, Communications and Creative Industries), Business, Innovation and Skills; Wantage, Conservative): We are strong supporters of community radio. We have set aside almost £500,000 this financial year for it, and that funding will continue for the rest of this Parliament. Ofcom is considering whether there should be a third round of community radio licences and I will keep my hon. Friend informed.

Labour's two trillion pound debt

Official figures have revealed that the national debt has risen above £2 trillion for the first time in our history.



According to the Office for National Statistics the national debt, including the cost of bailing out the banks, now stands at £2,323,000,000,000. That works out at over £37,600 for every man, woman and child in the country.

This terrible debt is Labour's legacy. They thought that they had abolished boom and bust and so ran large deficits even before the financial crisis.

Because of this, we are currently paying £43 billion per year, over £120 million per day, in debt interest. This is money that could otherwise be spent on frontline services like schools and hospitals. The average earner in Cannock Chase has to work for 160 days just to pay the interest on Labour's debts.

Commenting, Aidan said: *"These are shocking figures. Labour maxed out the nation's credit card with over £1 trillion of government debt. The longer it is left the worse it will get. If we don't take steps now to live within our means we'll end up paying higher taxes and face deeper cuts just to pay off our debt."*

MP opens up Help Zone to all Cannock Chase Councillors



Cannock Chase MP Aidan Burley has sent an open invitation to all Conservative, Liberal Democrat and Labour Councillors inviting them to use his MP Help Zone to serve the people of Cannock Chase.

Mr Burley, a former councillor himself, believes that opening up his MP's Help Zone to councillors of all political affiliations for surgeries and other meetings will help ensure the facility is used as effectively as possible.

Because of his past experience as a local councillor, Aidan was determined to operate an open office available for any constituents to drop in to get help and advice. The MP Help Zone located at 6 High Green Court in Cannock town centre has now been open and running successfully for over seven months with Aidan conducting many of his surgeries there as the MP.

Commenting Aidan said: *"The help-zone is already being used by two local councillors but I thought it only right to open it up to all councillors on Cannock Chase District Council from all parties in order to best serve the local people. Many local groups and organisations have already made use of the help zone and opening it up to every local councillor seemed like the next obvious step. Having been a councillor myself, I know how important it is to build up a face-to-face relationship with the people you serve. I want people to see the Help Zone as a centre for the whole community whichever political party you support and whoever you represent."*

MP urges npower customers to cash in on £20 million of outstanding refunds

Cannock Chase MP Aidan Burley is urging constituents who overpaid for gas supply from npower in 2007 to take advantage of their refund and get their share of more than £20 million still unclaimed.

On 1st October 2010 npower and Consumer Focus announced that the energy supplier would be offering £70 million of refunds to customers. Since then almost 1.2 million customers have been paid over £51 million in total but there are still 700,000 people who have yet to claim their refund. Consumer repayments range from £1 to £100 with the average payment at £35 plus VAT and interest.

Local residents who were customers of npower in 2007, but have since left the supplier or moved house, are particularly likely to be missing out. Anyone who thinks they might be entitled to a refund should call npower's helpline on 0800 975 7938 or visit npower's website to find out if they can claim. Consumers can also find further information about the npower repayments at www.consumerfocus.org.uk or customerservices.npower.com.

Commenting, Aidan said: *"It's a great win for consumers that over 50 million pounds has already been returned."*

"I encourage all local npower customers with a payment letter at home to take it to the local post office now and get the cash they are owed."

"Anyone who thinks they are entitled to a refund including former npower customers should call their helpline on 0800 975 7938 to see if they are eligible"

Aidan in the papers: Week in Westminster Column

Thursday 20th January 2011

Last week I received an exciting offer from the Prime Minister – he asked me whether I would like to be appointed as Parliamentary Private Secretary (PPS) to the Secretary of State for Transport, Rt. Hon. Philip Hammond MP. I must confess it didn't take me long to think about my reply. 'Yes, I'd be delighted, Prime Minister' I think I spluttered, before thanking him for taking the time to visit Cannock recently. 'I loved every minute of it' he replied, before adding somewhat modestly, 'I hope I did ok!'



I must admit I was surprised and very flattered by the offer. It's not every day you get asked to be a PPS, and it is rare for a new MP to be offered the position within just a few months of being elected for the first time. I later found out that I was the first MP from the 2010 intake to be made a PPS to a Cabinet Minister – which is fantastic news as I can bang the drum for Midlands business transport needs at the highest levels of the Department for Transport. Philip also gave me my first job after University, working as his researcher, so it

is nice to be back with the old boss.

This appointment does not mean that I'll be neglecting Cannock Chase in any way. In fact, it has just made my determination to get the best deal for our area even greater – by putting Cannock Chase first at the highest levels of government. We are an important manufacturing area, and local businesses need an efficient transport network in order to survive and prosper. Working closely within the Department that has responsibility for our transport system will help to ensure those needs are met, and jobs can continue to be created where they are needed most – here.

5 ways to contact Aidan Burley MP:

By Phone: 01543 502 447

By email: aidan.burley.mp@parliament.uk

By post: Aidan Burley MP
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Newhall Street
Cannock, WS11 1GR

In person: [Click here for details of how to book an appointment at Aidan Burley MP's regular help and advice surgeries.](#)

www.aidanburleymp.org

More news from Aidan Burley MP, coming soon...

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