

## **This week's news from Ben Bradley MP**



### **Tax cuts voted through!**

As the debate on the Budget comes to an end this week, and MPs vote on proposals, it's positive to have confirmation that the measures in these plans will reduce the overall tax burden on British people. A £900 tax cut and up to £1300 back in Child Benefit for thousands of families will make a real difference to the lives of many local people.

This April we'll see taxes fall for working people, and we'll see pensions rise for older people too, in the second largest increase in history (which follows the largest ever, last year). As the economy begins to recover from years of turbulence, post-Covid and through global conflict, I'm pleased we're able to start to pass more of that on to local people and put more money in their pockets.

[Read my thoughts on this here!](#)

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**Keep in touch!** 



Join my constituents only Facebook group here!



## **Ravensdale SEND school: progress update**

At County Hall last month we set a budget that invests an additional £50 million into our schools, adding a further 300 new SEND places and commence improvement works to school buildings around the county.

For Mansfield, this investment will deliver a brand-new SEND school in Ravensdale, which is on top of Government investment that will see four of our schools rebuilt through various central funds – Yeoman Park SEND School, Garibaldi, Meden and All Saints.

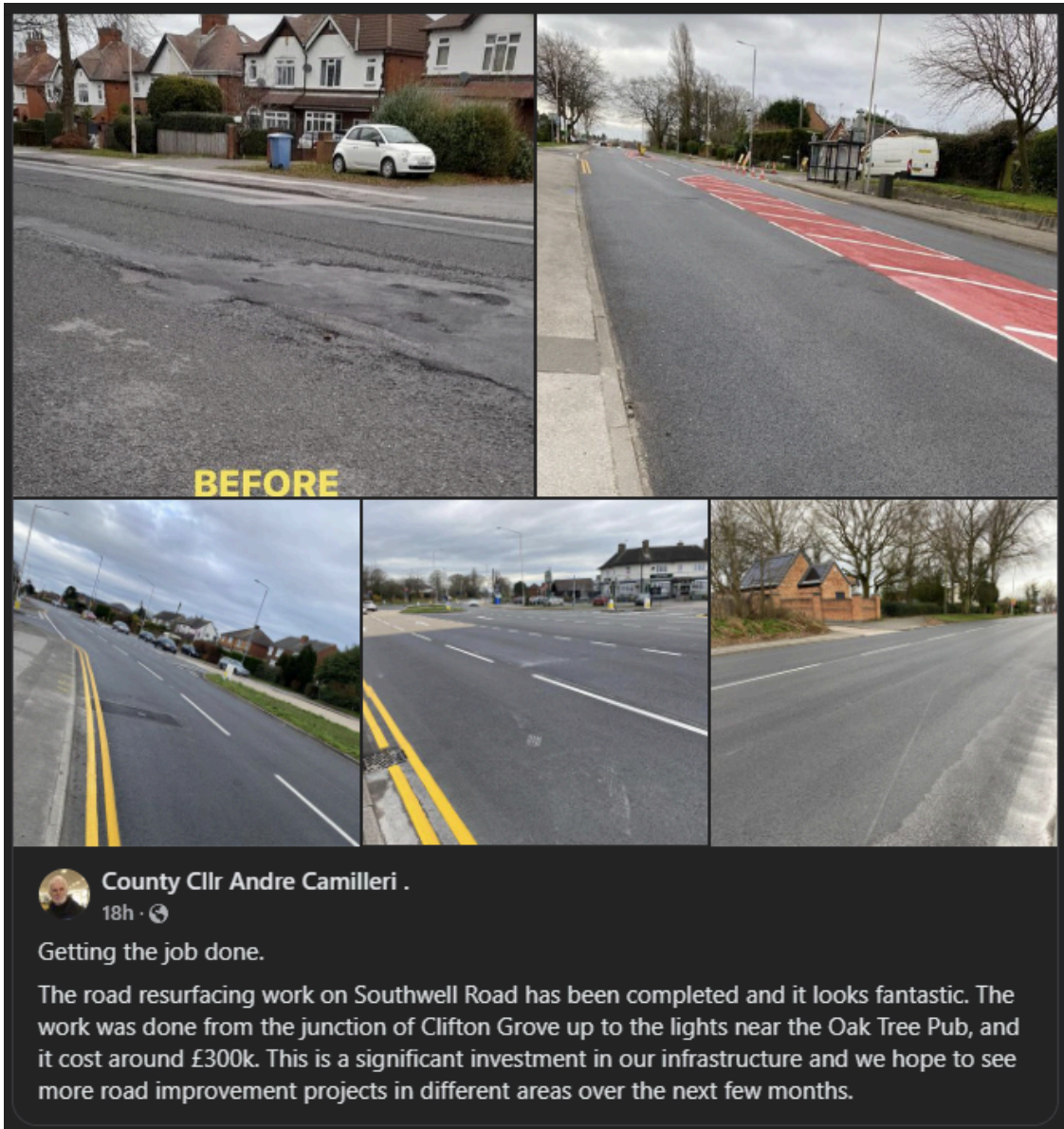
The Ravensdale SEND school is expected to open in 2025 and will provide a specialist learning environment for children with social, emotional, and mental health needs.

This week, the school passed through the planning committee, and it now good to go! I'll let you know when we fix the date for work to start.

[Read more here](#)

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## Roads progress...

Brilliant to see resurfacing work on Southwell Road, thanks for sharing Andre!

## Roads survey!



I need your support to ensure that we deliver major new road investment with the £1.5bn Transport Fund that I've secured for our region.

This is really important.

Please share your views on the roads using the link below!

[Fill in the survey here](#)



## Visiting Highfields School

I've been to Highfields, an Independent Primary School, where we've been talking about all things education, about their engagement with the community, and about Labour's absolutely mad plans to add VAT on independent schools that will leave thousands of children left with no school places to go to.

I heard about their Early Years provision and free childcare places that's available for the whole community, their commitment to sharing the facilities with local sports and community groups, and the Forest Schools programme that they're running here on site with local businesses.

We've already lost Mansfield's only independent school a couple of years ago, for financial reasons, which was a massive shame. They're not big rich institutions. In fact they are often not for profit charities that provide excellent education on tight financial margins.

Labour's idea that they're all like Eton or Harrow, just full of rich people, is nonsense. They're used by parents who often make huge sacrifices to send their kids there, and who couldn't afford the 20% increase in fees that Labour want to introduce.

Ultimately, that would mean THOUSANDS of children that would then need places in local state schools instead, all in one go, and our state school sector simply wouldn't cope. Kids would be left without places, or crammed in to facilities that weren't big enough.

That would negatively impact EVERYONE's children. That's why it's a really, really bad idea, based on ideology and the politics of envy rather than on logic or reason.

Lovely time at Highfields today, including classic school lunch! These guys are doing a fantastic job. Big thanks for inviting me.





**90% OF SCHOOLS  
NOW RATED  
GOOD OR  
OUTSTANDING**

**UP FROM 68%  
IN 2010**



Department  
for Education

## **Schools continue to improve!**

2023 was a year of major investment for our schools, with the announcement that Meden, Garibaldi, All Saints and Yeoman Park are all set to be rebuilt!

Schools across Mansfield also had a record uplift in funding last year, and 2024 is set to bring over £96 million in funding, another record. On top of all that, the County Council also announced a new SEND school will be built in Ravensdale!

Many of our schools, and our College, achieved 'Good' Ofsted ratings for the first time too this year, and I'm positive we'll continue to see more schools head in this direction going forward as funding increases and standards improve.

It's great to see this trend nationally too with over 90% of schools rated either 'Good' or 'Outstanding'.





## They did it!

Mansfield's own have successfully rowed across the Atlantic!

Absolutely amazing effort. Well done guys!

[Read more!](#)



## At Kingsway Hall in Forest Town

I've been at Kingsway Hall in Forest Town with Bob Wyatt, where we spoke about the community and voluntary sector, and the amazing job they've done in revamping and revitalising this place over recent years. Huge credit to Bob and the team here for everything they do.

I also bumped in to the day service from Portland College and we had a good chat, largely about Uno and how jealous I was that they were having chips for lunch. Great to see the hall busy and at the heart of the community.





NEW: Overall NHS waiting lists have dropped for the 4th month in a row, despite industrial action.

Decreasing by a total of 192,000 since September.

This is thanks to the hard work of NHS staff — helping us to make access to care faster, simpler and fairer for patients.

Much more to do but we will stick to our plan to cut waiting lists.

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## Bringing buildings back into use!

I'm in Chesterfield.. but wait! Hear me out!!!

I've been to Burlington Street to meet a developer who has turned a run down old row of shops in to new retails space and 50+ new apartments in the town centre. They've brought the building back to life, created loads of new, affordable homes, and all of that is a big boost to the town centre.

The same developer has just bought a similar building in Mansfield! Ah see... the penny drops!

I wanted to see the work for myself, to talk about the opportunity and find out how we can get more of this done in Mansfield.

With a little bit of support we could help to unlock a whole load of private investment in town centre. In truth that's a bug part of what this whole Combined Authority and Ben Bradley for East Midlands Mayor thing is about - having the tools, the powers, the funding to unlock these things where it's been a struggle for a long time. If we can use these new powers to help get projects like this delivered in Mansfield then we're on to a winner.

[Watch my video on this here](#)

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## Visiting the Coal Authority in Mansfield

I've been at the The Coal Authority poring over maps and records going back hundreds of years, as well as talking about the work the Authority is doing on future energy production too. Fascinating place, with thousands of photos etc. available here too, and you can come yourself and look around.

The national Coal Authority is still based here in Mansfield, and far from being all about the past, still plays a massive role in the management of the industry and environment, as well as developing ideas and technologies that could help coal mines support clean and renewable energy in the future.

[Watch more here!](#)





## Rain gardens update...

You may remember that last week I met with Severn Trent to talk about residents' concerns regarding the rain gardens that have begun to be installed in some residential areas. I have been inundated with questions and issues related to these projects since it began a year or so ago.

As a result of this feedback, Severn Trent have now responded to me to say that they intend to stop the highway rain garden projects from 1st April. Whilst the evidence of recent heavy rain/storms etc has shown that they've been effective, they've also been very expensive and obviously raised a large number of complaints from local people.

They intend to continue with other elements of the project, which to be honest are things that have the largest impact and have been less controversial, such as detention basins/bioswales etc outside of the highway that have been met with much more positive responses. However the level of interventions on the highway itself will decline steeply in the coming weeks.

Given that this is a pilot project, intended to support some learning and development of flooding interventions, I'm really grateful that STW have listened to the concerns and are changing their plans based on residents' feedback. Hopefully Mansfield constituents will feel this is good news.





# Inspiring more young people into careers in science and engineering!

This March, National Grid UK Electricity Distribution - the electricity distribution network operator for the South West, South Wales, and the Midlands - is launching the latest round of its Community Matters Fund. National Grid is making £250,000 available for projects which look to inspire more young people into careers in technology, science and engineering.

Registered charities and non-profit companies within National Grid Electricity Distribution's operational area could get up to £5,000 each to engage children in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) activities. Unregistered community organisations can apply for up to £2,000. While schools, whether registered charities or statutory bodies, are not eligible for the fund, Parent Teacher Associations and similar organisations can apply on behalf of their school.

Since its launch in 2021, National Grid's Community Matters Fund has awarded grants totalling £10 million across more than 1,500 community groups and charities.

Projects eligible to apply for the latest round of funding will need to meet at least one of the following themes:

- Open the eyes of a new generation to the exciting possibilities of a career in STEM e.g. projects that bring the area to life in a lively and engaging way.
- Inspire further confidence and widen the skills of those already interested in STEM e.g. via hands-on workshops and interactive experiments.
- Break down barriers with access to tools, time, and resources for those for whom STEM's potential may be unfamiliar, e.g. launching after-school coding clubs or giving access to 3D printers.

National Grid would particularly welcome nominations from projects focussed on supporting young people from disadvantaged or underrepresented backgrounds for whom STEM may feel unfamiliar or out of reach.

[See more here](#)

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HM Government

B U D G E T 2 0 2 4

# EXTRA £500 MILLION TO EXTEND HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND



OUR PLAN FOR THE ECONOMY

Good news as it's confirmed that the Household Support Fund will continue, supporting those who are struggling as we continue our recovery from Covid and the subsequent inflation/cost of living challenges.

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# BARCLAYS

## **Face to face banking services**

I've had the following update this week from Barclays describing the face to face services that are still available to Mansfield customers, even though the local branch has now closed. Customers can now access Barclays at the Library, on West Gate.

### **Here's the info:**

I'm writing following my previous correspondence regarding the Barclays branch closure in Mansfield, where we noted that we would be offering a face to face replace service for our customers to be able to come and talk to us locally, following the branch closing on 1st March 2024.

I'm pleased to be able to confirm, Barclays colleagues continue to be available in the constituency offering face to face financial support and education for customers, without the need for them to travel. From 4th March, we have been based at:-

- Mansfield Central Library, Four Seasons Centre, Westgate, Mansfield NG18 1NH– Monday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday (Monday 12.30 - 17.30, Thursday/Friday 9.00 - 13.00, 14.00 - 17.00 and Saturday 9.00 - 12.30, 13.00 - 16.00)

Customers visiting us are able to access a wide range of services including financial reviews, balance requests, opening saving accounts and have support with digital banking. As the Barclays Local service is a cashless site, everyday banking transactions including cash deposits and withdrawals need to be completed at a local Post Office.

Barclays is rolling out the largest network of community banking sites in the UK, providing customers with access to a colleague in settings such as libraries, community centres and shopping centres. Over 300 are already open, and we believe this supports customers in a more flexible and sustainable model.

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## Common sense prevails...

This is really positive news and something I have long called for. Whilst I have a firm belief in your right to live how you want to as an informed adult, it is plain wrong to experiment on children with gender-blurring drugs and treatments.

In the Cass Review of these services a few years ago, it was found that there is no long term evidence of the impact of these drugs. There has been a 20x increase in referrals to gender clinics over recent years, and so it's vital that this is all looked at again to keep children safe.

Just looking away and pretending it's not happening is not an option, when these treatments are potentially causing permanent damage to children. It's absolutely the right decision to end the use of these drugs on children.

[Read more here](#)

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# BREAKING NEWS:

## LABOUR FAIL TO SUPPORT TAX CUTS

Only the Conservatives **are cutting taxes for working people - worth £900 on the average salary.**

 BREAKING: Labour fail to support tax cuts for working people. In other news, the sky is blue 🤖

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**And finally... This week's column** 



"It's clear to see that the plan to grow economy is working"

Thank-you for reading my latest update, I hope you have a great weekend!

Warmest regards,

**Ben Bradley MP,  
for Mansfield & Warsop**



**Keep up to date with my work** 📍



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**Member of Parliament for Mansfield & Warsop**

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