

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE:

- We have had a bumper Freshers' Fair this year with sign up increasing dramatically year on year with 54 out of 57 campuses growing. Some anecdotes:
 - Queues forming at the Freshers' stand in Newcastle.
 - A CF Area Chairman in Southampton walking into a crowded student bar for the CF Freshers' drinks and asking where the CF table was - only to be told the entire bar was CF.
 - Most stands running out of posters within a couple of hours - students have swapped Che Guevara for Boris.
- We are signing people up in huge numbers in unconventional Conservative places. Particular highlights include:
 - Leeds University signing up over 200 people.
 - Newcastle University signing up c 300 people.
 - Sheffield University signing up c 200 people.
 - University of East Anglia increasing membership from 10 to over 70.
- Reasons behind the increase seem to be a mix of smart marketing, the Cameron effect and policy substance:
 - Boris marketing campaign attracting people to the stall.
 - Climate Change and Global Poverty leaflets providing substance on the stand.
 - Cameron leaflets on the stand linking to our popular leader.
- We continue to have limited knowledge on our membership levels because few associations collect date of birth information. We continue to believe that our membership is likely to be around 12,000 non student members. Therefore a total membership CF of around 18,000 seems reasonable.

RECENT PRESS COVERAGE:

- We have had excellent recent coverage of CF with favourable pieces in the Guardian (twice), Daily Telegraph and The Sunday Times. Quotes include:
 - The Guardian: "*Boris Johnson goes Warhol to become poster boy for Tories*"; "*Move over Marilyn Monroe. The Conservatives have a real blond pin-up for student rooms*".
 - Daily Telegraph: "*Forget Tory Boy, Conservative are now Cool*"; "*There is a new generation of Tory boys and girls and cutting taxes isn't their number one concern. Instead, they'd like to save the planet - and have a good time too*".
 - The Sunday Times: "*Conservative Future... reports a membership boom in the north of England*"

CF FOCUS AREAS:

Building CF Branches in Target Seats:

<i>Background</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We know CF branches help win elections - e.g. Croydon Central's CF branch helped deliver a 75 vote gain. • Key seats that we only just lost we had at the time no CF branch in e.g. Crawley (37 loss), Harlow (97 loss). • In our top 70 marginal seats we have only five CF branches.
<i>CF Action:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have developed plans with the Target Seats team for an initial round of eleven constituencies to build CF branches in. These are Loughborough, Torbay, Solihull, Pendle, Wirral West, Worcester, Keighley, Harlow, Aberconwy, Finchley and Portsmouth North. • We have agreed plans with the PPC and/or Association Exec, booked events and planned marketing in most seats already. Those without PPCs in place are proving more challenging to make swift progress.
<i>How to help:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financially support marketing proposals which you receive for contacting prospective members. • Attend events in the new CF branches in target seats when invited.

Rob Halfon, Harlow PPC: "*Having an active CF branch will be essential to winning the campaign in Harlow...I have very much welcomed the support I have been getting from National CF... it will make a crucial difference to my campaign*"

Maggie Throup, Solihull PPC: "*Your help (building a CF branch) will make a real difference to my campaign, helping to revitalise Solihull Conservatives as well as the political scene across Solihull. I am sure your input will make a real difference in winning back Solihull.*"

Attracting 'Working Life' Professionals:

<i>Background</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are four times less likely to be a Party member if you are 29 than if you are 19. • With the ages at which people marry and have children now five year older than it was fifteen years ago, we are seeing many quasi CF members in their early 30s.
<i>CF Action:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are extending the successful 'working life' events programmes in London this year with more events and events based in the City and Canary Wharf. • We have already extended the programme to Newcastle. • We are planning to extend this year to Birmingham and Manchester.
<i>How to help:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote CF to young professionals in your areas.

Dr Clementine Maddock, Psychiatrist and new party member: "*I went to my first Conservative event a year ago and in that time CF's Working life programme has helped me find out more about politics and get more involved with the Party*"

<u>Campaigning in Marginal Seats:</u>	
<i>Background</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We know that CF is a great campaigning vehicle in marginal seats. As we do not have the CF strength we need in marginal seats, as a stop gap (while we create branches) we are transporting teams to marginal seats to campaign.
<i>CF Action:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National campaign day in target seat of Swindon North saw 30 activists come out for a full day's work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 400 homes canvassed. 3500 leaflets delivered. Plans for one National campaign day every quarter in a target seat. Most CF branches already campaign hard year round in their respective areas. E.g: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> UCL Conservatives have campaigned every week of term in a council by election in Kentish Town Gloucestershire and Bristol CFers went to Stroud (target seat) to assist in council by election "Turn out the Lights" Energy Saving campaign by Newcastle-under-lyme CF Sheffield CF backing the "NH Yes" campaign protesting hospital closures
<i>How to help:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remember CFers like campaigning on specific issues and around social action as well as merely leafleting A round of drinks afterwards to say thank you always goes down well.
Robin Walker, Worcester PPC: <i>"CF members' help, already provided in supporting our canvassing and campaigning, has been invaluable"</i>	

<u>Improving Female Leadership in CF:</u>	
<i>Background</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 47% of our membership is female. Only 10% of our branch and area leadership last year was female. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Branches with at least two female officers are on average 55% larger than ones with all male leadership.
<i>CF Action:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Database created of 150 up and coming CF women from around the country - plan to develop a mentoring arrangement with women2win. Women's training conference organised for up and coming CF women. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> trainers including Justine Greening, Iain Dale, Esther McVey, Sheila Gunn, Mary Macleod etc. Content including: How to navigate your Association; an introduction to the Conservative coalition; introduction to CF; how to write a press release; what is blogging; political paths to being an MP, Councillor and MEP etc. The CF National Management Executive has used its powers of co-option to increase the number of female CF Area Chairman from three, this time last year, to nine - all chosen for their talent and capability.
<i>How to help:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct women with up and coming potential towards the National CF team.
Margot James, Party Vice Chairman for women: <i>"It is crucial that we identify and develop the huge potential that exists amongst female students. I am really delighted that CF are making such a valuable contribution to bringing more women into leadership positions"</i>	

RESOURCING

- We are operating at significantly reduced resource staffing levels vs merely three month ago. Previously, we had support from Sarah Southern (National Organiser), Simon Jones (Special Adviser to Lord Ashcroft) and Richard Jackson (CCHQ Staffer). We have now lost Richard Jackson, Simon Jones has been reassigned and Sarah Southern is spending 50% of her time preparing for the IYDU Conference.
- We are in the process of supplementing our National Management Executive through the recruitment of three additional volunteers. We have openly advertised for people to assist with the marginal seats and, social action programmes and with marketing/media. To have the most transparent and professional recruitment process we have enlisted the support of experts like Hannah Parker (HR professional and former CF Chairman), Conor Burns (former PPC for Eastleigh) and Philippa Stroud (Director, Centre for Social Justice). We have had nearly 30 applicants.

DID YOU KNOW?

- CF is hugely strong in the Northern cities - supposed Tory deserts:
 - We have 100s of members in each of Newcastle, Manchester, Sheffield, Durham and Leeds.
 - Our branches attract non students - our last working life event in Newcastle attracted 70 young professionals.
 - Our student branches are long term assets because 60% of northern universities graduates remain in the area.

CHALLENGES FOR CF OVER NEXT TWO MONTHS

- Continue to build CF Branches in marginal seats.
- Bring Social Action projects to life more for CF.
- Secure effective resourcing for CF.

MORE INFORMATION?

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- There is more information on www.conservativefuture.com or on my blog www.markclarke.blogspot.com.