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Kevin Hollinrake MP
Chairman, Conservative Party
Conservative Campaign Headquarters
4 Matthew Parker Street
London SW1H 9HQ

Cause for concern

Priority attention

Dear Mr Hollinrake

Re: Breach of Code of Conduct

I write in my capacity as the research lead for the UK Preventable Harm Project¹ to alert you to the relentless and unacceptable commentary by the Shadow Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, Helen Whately MP, whose hostile, dangerous and totally untrue commentary regarding the disabled community is in breach of the Conservative Party Code of Conduct.² There appears to be no reprimand for her disturbing statements³ when encouraged by the Leader of the Conservative Party, Kemi Baddenock MP,⁴ who both demonstrate an extreme prejudice towards claimants of disability benefit who are unable to work. Given that the Code of Conduct² requires representatives of the Conservative Party to demonstrate the *Seven Principles of Public Life*, may I draw your attention to the unacceptable and dangerous commentry by Helen Whately, demonstrating not only extreme prejudice but, also, that she is very poorly informed, as demonstrated in her hostile speech to Conference:³

“... millions have got themselves a sicknote from the GP and signed onto sickness benefits with just a form and a phone call. Millions are getting benefits for anxiety and ADHD along with a free Motability car. ... The problem is, you can get £5,000 more per year on sickness benefits than as a minimum wage worker, so no surprise that’s what many people are choosing, and it’s wrong. Our welfare system should be a safety net, not a lifestyle choice. ... Fix the sicknote system, bring back face-to-face assessments, end sickness benefit for low level mental health problems, stop the abuse of Motability and put British citizens first in our benefits system. ...”³

¹ [Preventable Harm Project](#)

² [Code of Conduct for Conservative Party Representatives](#)

³ [Letter to Helen Whately MP, 13 October 2025](#)

⁴ [Letter to the Rt Hon Kemi Badenoch MP, 22 October 2025](#)



Since the 2024 general election, when the Conservative Party were obliterated by a Labour landslide victory, it seems that the Conservative Party leadership have been playing a very dangerous game to see who can make the most extreme – and totally untrue – claims against the chronically ill and disabled community, whose physical and financial survival is dependent upon access to disability benefits. This is the danger of politicians with medical opinions but no medical knowledge, and total confusion regarding access to Motability vehicles:⁵

So, the political conference season has come and gone for another year and, at every one except the Green Party conference, politicians of various political persuasions continue to demonise the chronically ill and disabled community who are not in paid employment. Kemi Badenoch leads the field for the Conservative Party in relentless assaults on the long-term chronically ill and disabled community who survive on disability benefit. ... This political pastime threatening disability benefit claimants has been ongoing for the past 15 years but, as the numbers of deaths linked to increasingly extreme social policy reforms increase, so does the hostile political rhetoric and propaganda once again threatening the integrity of disability benefit claimants who are deemed to be unfit to work by every clinical opinion but not, it seems, by political opinion. ...

Speaking from the dispatch box, be it at a conference or in the House of Commons, every political leader since Blair has made an increasing effort to demonise those in greatest need whose physical survival is dependent upon the welfare state. Neoliberal politics decided they weren't worthy of such support, guided by social policies adopted using a fiscal priority whilst disregarding health and wellbeing. People were always destined to die when, covertly, killed by the State with no-one held to account. ...

The dismissal of 'anxiety', suggesting that it is a minor mental health condition demonstrates the dangers of politicians with lots of opinion regarding medical matters but who demonstrate no medical knowledge. Someone should alert Kemi Badenoch to the fact that anxiety '*can be a critical mental health problem, especially when it is severe, prolonged, or interferes with daily life, leading to serious consequences like social isolation, depression, substance abuse and, in severe cases, increased risk of suicide.*' That's why chronically ill people are awarded long-term disability benefit when UNABLE to work and, often, unable to leave the house, but a medical qualification is needed to make that judgement. Degrees in Law and Engineering awarded to the Leader of the Opposition appear to come to the wrong biased conclusion. As for Motability cars, Kemi Badenoch needs to be much better informed. Motability cars are not awarded depending on diagnosis but are accessed by the award of a specific disability benefit. ... There is no reason for hostile political ridicule since the benefit claimant is personally funding the lease of the car with an awarded benefit, and someone should alert the Shadow Secretary for Work and Pensions that Motability cars are not 'free.'⁵

⁵ [The danger of politicians with medical opinion and no medical knowledge](#)



You will note from the references in this letter that both Kemi Badenock and Helen Whately have been contacted and, to date, both have failed to respond to my letters^{3,4} and disregard the often catastrophic impact of their actions and comments.⁶

It is cause for serious concern that successive administrations have disregarded published DWP statistics, which routinely demonstrate that disability benefit fraud is miniscule, at the same time as DWP Ministers and their oppositions are making vitriolic comments about the chronically ill and disabled community and the rising numbers of disability benefit claims.

There is no acknowledgement within the main political parties that the disturbing rise in benefit claims for mental health problems are a direct link to the relentless political hostility directed at those in greatest need. This was demonstrated at the 2025 party political conferences where the Shadow Secretary of State for Work and Pensions for the Conservative Party, Helen Whately MP, made an extreme conference speech for dramatic effect which was totally untrue, demonstrated her total ignorance regarding Motability leased vehicles and was closely linked to disability hate speech, which is against the law.⁶

The chronically ill and disabled community who are unable to work have been relentlessly intimidated and persecuted by increasingly hostile political rhetoric by successive administrations. It is time for someone to hold to account politicians who use increasingly hostile rhetoric, when making totally untrue statements, and I am looking to the Chairman of the Conservative Party to challenge senior Conservative politicians to stop this relentless *discrimination* against those in greatest need which is in breach of the Code of Conduct.

Yours sincerely,

Mo Stewart

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The Preventable Harm Project

Author ['Cash Not Care: the planned demolition of the UK welfare state'](#)

Editor [The Preventable Harm Project](#)

³ [Letter to Helen Whately MP, 13 October 2025](#)

⁴ [Letter to the Rt Hon Kemi Badenoch MP, 22 October 2025](#)

⁶ [No-one held to account](#)

Copied to: Kamran Mallick, CEO Disability Rights UK
Frances Leckie, Editor *Independent Living*
Bob Blackman CBE MP – Chair 1922 Committee