

WELCOME TO MY

March 2024 Newsletter



Hello! I hope this finds you well.

Parliament is now in Recess for the Easter break, so I am looking forward to meeting more constituents and visiting local businesses and charities. I have a lot planned over Easter Recess, so keep an eye on my social media.

Hope you had a lovely Easter weekend.

↓ **In this Newsletter you will find:**

My work in the Constituency, Parliament and Scottish Government updates.

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IN THE CONSTITUENCY

Drymen Road

I was really concerned to hear of the accident at Drymen Road, Bearden, and the terribly sad news that it resulted in the death of cyclist Una Brandreth. My thoughts are with Una's family and friends. This tragedy should never have happened. I held a joint meeting with East Dunbartonshire Council Chief Executive, and local Chief Inspector last week to discuss how we improve road safety.



Scottish Apprenticeship Week

It was great to visit Clyde Associated Engineers for Scottish Apprenticeship Week to hear about their impressive work. I got the chance to chat with their current apprentices who are on the 4 year programme gaining qualifications and getting extremely valuable practical experience in such an important sector. Many thanks to everyone at Clyde Associated Engineers for their time.



Happy Leaf

I was pleased to meet with constituents, Amy Roberts and Iain Quinn to discuss their business Happy Leaf. Their innovative plan is to create a plant care sensor and app which can help keep our plants alive. I know I need help with this, so can't wait to see the final product! Congratulations to them for also winning the Scottish EDGE award. More success in the Constituency!



IN THE CONSTITUENCY

Commemorations for the Blitz

83 years on we continue to remember the Clydebank Blitz and those fateful nights of 13th and 14th of March 1941. The human cost to our town caused by the Blitz must never be forgotten. It was heart-warming to join the community to pay respects to those who lost their lives and lay wreaths on behalf of the community. We will never forget them.



Michaela Burns

I was delighted to present a Parliamentary Motion to Michaela Burns, local constituent, on the publication of her book *My Words in 40 Days*. Michaela has put together such an impressive collection of poems showcasing her talent. She is a determined, compassionate and inspiring young woman. I am already looking forward to the next book!

Constituency Surgeries

Another successful Surgery day completed. I held Surgeries in the Fraser Centre, Milngavie, Skoolz Out, Bearsden North, Centre 81, Whitecrook and Improving Lives in Dalmuir. We had a lot of appointments, and also picked up new cases on the spot while out and about. This is always one of my favourite days in the month as its dedicated time for me to help my constituents.



IN THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT

International Women's Day

In celebration of International Women's Day I was delighted to speak in a Parliamentary debate highlighting the importance of women being included in our politics and public life. The theme this year is Inspire Inclusion, and it was a proud moment speaking in a Parliament that has a Cabinet composed of more women than men. This is something to be really proud of.



Cladding Remediation Bill

In light of the tragic Grenfell Tower fire, the Scottish Government will undertake extensive work to ensure a similar event never happens here. I was glad to speak in this debate, as a former member of the Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee, to express my general support for the Bill, with hopefully some clarifications.

Child Poverty

Tackling child poverty is complex and it will be a challenge, but it is one we must achieve. Ensuring good quality, well paid, flexible work as a route out of poverty is something the Scottish Government is keen to make progress on. I spoke in this debate as a Member of the Social Justice and Social Security Committee, expressing my support for this aim.



IN THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT

Scottish Child Payment

I recently asked what the Scottish Government is doing to promote the uptake of the Child Payment. The latest estimates of take-up rates shows that take-up for all children aged under 16 at the end of March 2023 was 83 per cent. They also continuously promote the payment through social media, news releases and the distribution of materials to libraries, nurseries and schools.



Equalities Committee

I recently joined the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee in the Scottish Parliament. I have now left the Local Government Committee, so I can focus my efforts on this and the Social Justice Committee. The Equalities Committee will be involved in really significant pieces of work, like the Ban on Conversion Therapy and Human Rights Bill.

Constituents in Parliament

It was so great to welcome Milngavie constituents, Kevin and Sandra Brown to Parliament recently. I know they enjoyed having a Parliamentary tour and watching FMQs on Thursday. It's always nice to get constituents up to see what really goes on in their Parliament. If you ever want to visit, and possibly watch FMQs or do a tour, please get in touch with me by email or phone.



SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT UPDATES

Tackling Hate Crime - The Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Act will provide greater protection for victims and communities from 1 April.

Boosting Scotland's Renewables - Views are being sought on proposals for the sustainable use of bioenergy, including growing crops which can be converted into electricity, heat and fuels.

Support for adult survivors of childhood abuse - Up to £2.23 million funding is being made available to third sector organisations providing counselling, peer support and practical support to adult survivors of childhood abuse.

Fair Work milestone - The number of Scottish employers registered as paying the real Living Wage has hit a new high of 3,500.

Defence in an Independent Scotland - An independent Scotland would strive for peace and prosperity and without the UK's dangerous nuclear weapons.

Child Poverty - 100,000 children are being lifted out of poverty because of policies by the SNP Scottish Government. Policies like the game-changing Scottish Child Payment are enhancing children's lives.

Junior Doctors - Applications for medical training posts in Scotland are at record levels with more junior doctors joining the NHS than ever before.



DEFENCE AND SECURITY IN AN INDEPENDENT SCOTLAND

OUR PRIORITIES

- Nuclear weapons should be removed from Scotland in the safest and most expeditious manner possible following independence.
- Joining NATO, committing to the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy and building a collaborative, mutually beneficial defence and security relationship with the UK as well as other key strategic partners.
- Neither of these proposals would prevent Scotland's ability to act in self-defence or join NATO.
- An independent Scotland would build on our strong relationships with the other nations and governments across these isles to ensure our mutual safety.

