

# Gordon Macdonald MSP

January 2025 Newsletter



## Budget For 2025/26 Announced



**The Scottish Government**  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

The draft 2025-26 Budget was announced on 4th December with a record increase in frontline NHS spending, and plans to lift 15,000 children out of poverty by mitigating the UK Government's two-child benefit limit from 2026.

The 2025-26 Budget also includes a freeze in income tax rates, a record £15 billion for local government and £768 million to provide 8,000 more affordable homes, £4.9 billion of action to protect the environment whilst creating new jobs and opportunities, a real-terms uplift of 3% for spending on education and skills to maintain teacher levels and a £34 million uplift for culture in 2025-26

The Finance Secretary said "I am proud to present a budget that delivers on the priorities of the people of Scotland. Parliament can show that we understand the pressures people are

facing. We can choose to come together to bring hope to people, to renew our public services, and deliver a wealth of new opportunities in our economy.

"It is a budget filled with hope for Scotland's future and I look forward to working with all parties in Parliament to secure agreement around its provisions."

Gordon said "I'm delighted that the Scottish Government has developed a budget which includes measures which will tackle the acute impacts of poverty during a cost of living crisis whilst continuing to prioritise longer-term challenges such as the housing shortage and climate change.

"I also know many constituents will join me in welcoming the announcement that funding has been allocated to build a new Eye Pavilion in Edinburgh. This will undoubtedly benefit so many people throughout the city for years to come."

## WASPI Women Denied Compensation

## Christmas Card Competition



Gordon was shocked by the decision of the UK Government to decide against offering compensation to women hit by the changes to the state pension age.

The Women Against State Pension Inequality (WASPI) campaign group say 3.6 million women born in the 1950s were not properly informed of the rise in state pension age. In March the Ombudsman recommended that compensation be paid out.

Representatives from the WASPI group attended the Scottish Parliament following the announcement and SNP MSPs offered continued support and solidarity with their campaign.

Gordon said "This is an utterly shameful decision by the UK Labour Government. Prior to the general election many Labour candidates, some of whom are now MPs, were wholeheartedly supporting compensation for the thousands of women affected by the changes. I along with my SNP colleagues will continue to support WASPI women in fighting for the compensation the Ombudsman recommended and which they rightly deserve."



Tesco Store Hermiston Gait generously sponsored this year's Christmas Card Competition and Gordon attended a presentation event at the store. In addition

to the sponsorship this year Tesco have kindly offered to sponsor next year's card as well!

Overall winner of the card design Sonya from Nether Currie PS and runner-up Gold from Canal View PS were unable to attend but we did have Ethan from Currie PS who was also a runner-up attend along with Kimberley and Owen from the store.





## Surgery Notice / Wester Hailes Library Update

Please note there will be no surgeries held on **Friday 27<sup>th</sup> December 2024** or **Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2025** as the office will be closed over the festive period.



Due to building issues being identified which require complex repair works, Wester Hailes Library will continue to be closed for December 2024 and an update will be provided in January 2025. During this period library groups and activities are being provided at alternative local venues.

The alternative nearest library is Sighthill Library for all other library services, including PC access, printing, and photocopying.

## Wester Hailes Post Office



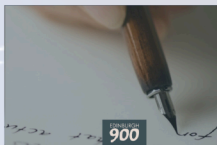
Gordon was extremely concerned to hear of the proposed closure of the Post Office sited in the Westside Plaza Shopping Centre in Wester Hailes.

Gordon contacted Post Office Ltd urging them and the UK Government, who own the Post Office network, to reconsider this proposal based on the needs of the local community and other regular users of the service. He stated the service provided is invaluable not just to the local community but for those coming from other parts of the city visiting the shopping centre.

Post Office Ltd replied to advise that no decision has been made about the future of any branches. Gordon will continue to monitor the situation.

## Poetry Competition

A new poetry writing competition to mark the 900th anniversary of the capital has been launched by Edinburgh Libraries.



The competition celebrates the city's rich history, culture, and community spirit and six winning entries will be featured on exclusive bookmarks distributed throughout the capital's council-run libraries.

The deadline for submissions is Friday 31 January 2025. Full details on [how to enter](#) and terms and condition are on the Edinburgh 900 website.

## Radio Teleswitch Service Switch-off

The Radio Teleswitch Service (RTS) uses radio signals to tell some electricity meters to switch between peak and off-peak rates.



The radio signal will be shut down and the service it supports will end on 30 June 2025. Without an upgrade, the heating and hot water provisions in some homes or businesses that use RTS could be affected.

Gordon urges all those who they think have an RTS installation to contact their supplier to arrange a meter upgrade or to respond to their supplier when they are contacted regarding their RTS installation.

## City Management Celebration Event



Photo from Tom Duffin Photography

Gordon was delighted to sponsor the Celebrating Historic City Management event at the Scottish Parliament.

Edinburgh World Heritage (EWH) was established in 1999, celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2024. Following EWH's early success, City Heritage Trusts were established in 2004 and also celebrate their 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The celebration was an opportunity to raise awareness of the importance of historic city management, the need to champion heritage, traditional buildings and skills, and highlight challenges facing the sector.

## Ride Along With Police Scotland

Gordon thanks the response team at Wester Hailes Police Station for inviting him to accompany them on their Friday backshift, especially the response officers he teamed up with.





There was a variety of interesting call outs ranging from persons of concern to suspected break ins. Despite essential roadworks in the south west of the city the patrol car managed to blue light from Wester Hailes to Dalry in a matter of minutes, thanks to the skillful driving of the officer.


## Contact Gordon Macdonald MSP

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Gordon holds open weekly surgeries for constituents every Friday at 10am.

The locations for these can be found at: <https://www.gordonmacdonaldmsp.info/surgery>

