

Gordon Macdonald

Member of the Scottish Parliament
for Edinburgh Pentlands

October
2018



Good News for Currie

Bigger Bursaries for Nurses



SAVE OUR SCHOOLS

The Save Our Schools campaign was successful in ensuring that Balerno High, Currie High, Woodlands, and the WHEC were not closed. The proposals to merge the schools into a new “super” school for the region were deeply unpopular and would have created significant congestion as buses and parents would have had to travel much further.

Having campaigned all along for the review to include options to develop and expand existing educational facilities, Gordon is delighted to see news that Edinburgh Council are now taking this forward.

Currie High is to be replaced over the next five years under the proposals and an extra £78 million is to be invested in the school building programme on top of £25m already set aside. There are also proposals to rebuild the WHEC, and Balerno High, which are reliant on securing additional funding.

Gordon has emphasised that the Council should “use all the financial tools available to ensure that Balerno High, Woodlands and the WHEC also receive the investment they require, so the buildings are fit for the 21st century.

“All the new schools should be designed as community spaces, with the buildings used more intensively outside normal hours. They can fund this a number of ways, including prudential borrowing, Scottish Government grants, capital receipts, or developer contributions.”



In a speech at the SNP conference, the First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, declared that Scotland will increase the bursary paid to student nurses to £8,100 in 2019, and £10,000 in 2020. The current bursary in Scotland is £6,578/year.

Speaking to delegates at the conference, she said, “In England, the number of trainee nurses has fallen dramatically as a result of the decision to scrap the student nurse bursary. In Scotland, we retained the bursary, but recruitment is a big challenge.”

Commenting in support, Gordon noted, “The SNP value our nurses and will defend and protect our NHS — to anyone from across the UK attracted to a career in nursing, our message is simple. Come to Scotland.”

Out and About...

Programme Highlights

This year, the Scottish Government's Programme for Government includes numerous financial commitments. Highlights include: -

- £1 billion investment every year in public transport.
- Phasing out new petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2032.
- Creating at least 20 electric towns across Scotland by 2025.
- 1,500 new vehicle charge points across Scotland.
- £20 million to help people switch to electric vehicles.
- 1,500 new ultra low emission vehicles to public sector fleets.
- £1.7 million for 100 green buses.
- £250 million to reform mental health treatment — 430 school mental health counsellors.
- Fast-track specialist treatment for serious mental illness.
- Empowering head teachers to lead improvements with more power over their own budgets.
- Developing ways for parents and pupils to ensure their voices are heard in decision-making.
- £10 million to help schools and councils work across regions
- £33 million over 3 years to help children in care in education.
- £20 million national export plan.
- New support system for victims, including dedicated case worker for families of murder victims.
- Improved information and support on prisoner release.

Not Just a Wife



Gordon recently hosted a viewing of the photographic exhibition of "Not Just a Wife" in Parliament.

The exhibition celebrates the role of military spouses, their resilience and skills, as well as the challenges they face.

The exhibition, by photographer Wendy Faux, was co-sponsored by Gordon Macdonald and members of the Cross-Party Group on Armed Forces and Veterans' Community.

Gordon said, "The exhibition gave a unique opportunity to discuss, face-to-face, the challenges facing military spouses and how they could be addressed."

World Clean Up Day



As part of World Cleanup Day, Gordon participated in a litter pick organised by Friends of the Pentlands and local groups.

Volunteers in 150 countries participated in this year's event, which was hailed as the biggest civic action in human history.

30 bags of litter were collected with numerous larger items such as household goods.

Gordon commented, "It was great to be out with many volunteers who were willing to give up their free time to protect and enhance the Pentland Hills for everyone's enjoyment."

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Gordon Macdonald MSP



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Monthly Surgeries — No appointment needed

1st Monday of the month, 6.30pm Wester Hailes Library

2nd Monday of the month, 6.30pm Carrickvale Community Centre

3rd Monday of the month, 6.30pm Currie Library

4th Monday of the month, 6.30pm Oxbgangs Library

5th Monday of the month, 6.30pm Ratho Community Centre

NB: NO SURGERIES DURING PUBLIC AND BANK HOLIDAYS

Working for Edinburgh Pentlands