



## Welcome

...to my last Newsletter of the 2020/21 Parliamentary session now that Westminster is in Summer Recess. Here's some of the Tory policies enacted since my last Newsletter that are continuing to damage our society: the Australia Trade Deal; the EU Settlement Scheme; and cuts to International Aid. These, of course, are in addition to the numerous instances of corruption and cronyism that lie at the heart of this Tory government. We must keep up conversations every day to persuade our friends, family, neighbours, and work mates to support the Yes campaign and secure a brighter future free from these charlatans.

## Westminster Update

### Fuel Poverty

You might remember my Backbench Business Debate "Fuel Poverty and Energy Price Caps" that I secured last November. I've been continuing to pursue tackling this scourge on society and, most recently, have presented my "Energy Pricing Bill" to prohibit energy suppliers from excluding existing customers from their cheapest available tariffs. This is just one example of how UK Government (UKG) policy has a direct effect on fuel poverty, which is devolved. On the 8th of July I also took part in the UKG's first Fuel Poverty debate since 2018, where I focused on the negative health implications caused by living in a cold household. The effects on children include asthma, chest, breathing and mental health problems and slowed physical growth and cognitive development; while the elderly and vulnerable are exposed to an increased risk of circulatory and respiratory disease, exacerbation of arthritis, an increased risk of falls and injury, social isolation, and poor mental health including anxiety and depression. I urged the UKG to consider these impacts, and the harsh reality that fuel poverty disproportionately affects the most vulnerable in our society. However, given its timely announcement on the phase-out of the £20 universal credit uplift - potentially pushing half a million people below the poverty line in time for the onset of winter - I took the opportunity to highlight that it appears tackling the heat or eat dilemma is not on this Tory government's priority list.

Meanwhile, the Scottish Government (SG) has pledged £64 million in 2021/22 to tackle fuel poverty and climate change - an increase of £9 million from its £55 million investment last year in its Area Based Scheme (ABS). ABS is a programme enabling local authorities in Scotland to deliver energy efficiency measures to fuel poor households (thereby helping them to save on their heating bills) as well as communities (by supporting a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions). ABS projects have helped deliver improvements in energy efficiency to more than 100,000 homes since the programme launched in 2013, which has generated cumulative savings for household fuel bills worth over £900 million and reduced CO2 emissions by over 3.4 million tonnes. It is part of a £1.6 billion investment over the next five years to transform the heat and energy efficiency of buildings. The SG's draft Heat in Buildings strategy sets out a vision for more than one million homes to be using low and zero emissions heating systems by 2030. As COP26 in Glasgow approaches, the SG is wholly committed to ending our contribution to climate change but, crucially, doing so in a way that ensures Scotland's fuel poverty objectives and its commitment to tackling climate change work together, ensuring a fair and just transition to net zero. Reducing emissions in a way that is fair and leaves no one behind is embedded in Scotland's climate change legislation and is central to securing a green recovery from COVID-19.



### Statement on the NHS from 21st July:

I was astounded that this "Update" did not cover the subject of NHS pay, which was well trailed in advance. I joined others hoping the UKG would match the 4% pay rise, backdated to December 2020, that was offered by the SG to NHS workers in Scotland. The SG also secured agreement for a real living wage for social care staff at £9.50 an hour, underwriting the promise with £64.5 million in support. However, this is yet another example of trying to deliver for Scotland with one hand tied behind our backs; as a weakness of devolution is that UKG decisions affect our funding levels. Far better we have full control over these matters with independence.

## Active in the constituency

### #indyref2 Campaign



On 19th June Nicola Sturgeon announced the appointment of Michael Russell, SNP President and former Scottish constitution secretary, as political director at the SNP's independence unit. The independence unit was unveiled in January to create policy papers and campaign materials to "fire up" the Yes movement. Mike is well placed to oversee development of our #indyref2 campaign after stepping down as MSP for Argyll and Bute ahead of May's Holyrood election - when we secured an overwhelming mandate for Scotland's right to choose its own future.

Whilst tackling COVID-19 remains the immediate priority, we can all still be "active in the constituency" doing our bit to start building our case for independence now. Let us debate mindful

of delivering impartial and accurate information, not propaganda, and the type of Scotland that people want. Our case has to demonstrate optimism and hope, grounded in the reality that shows how successful an independent Scotland could be free from the UK union. Here is a link to a detailed, 8-page leaflet that includes vital facts, stats and arguments to inform conversations with those still undecided about Scottish independence, or to share with those you believe need to know the facts: [Download and share the leaflet](#) If each one of us convinces just one No voter, the momentum for independence will be re-energised ahead of a referendum.

### Virtual Surgeries

Please remember that although Parliament is in recess I'll still be conducting online surgeries on Fridays between 10 and 11am. If this time isn't convenient, video meetings at other times can be arranged. Don't suffer in silence, it's easy to contact my office to find out if I can help on 01506 654415.



## Links between Parliament and the constituency

### Ballantine Castings

A family-run iron foundry based in Bo'ness with a rich and expansive history of metalwork in the UK, and beyond, has been involved in the restoration of the home of Big Ben - Elizabeth Tower.



Ballantine's employed traditional methods of cast iron work in the ongoing conservation project, remaking over 400 roofing tiles and producing elegant pieces of work - as can be seen in the stunning picture above. The company has worked on many prestigious projects and this work isn't its only link with Westminster, having previously been awarded the contract for the full replacement of all the fascia panels on the historic

Westminster Bridge.

The company takes pride in fusing modern engineering techniques with traditional iron foundry skills to deliver high quality castings to its clients. I'm proud it's in my constituency.



### Motor Neurone Disease (MND) Debate

I was honoured to lead a debate on increased and targeted research funding for MND that was signed by 110,700 - including 373 constituents of Linlithgow and East Falkirk. The petitioners called for new investment of £50m over 5 years to kickstart a pioneering MND Research Institute, which would lead to better, faster and more definitive research outcomes and hope for those with MND. The petition creator, George Wilson "Doddie" Weir, is one of rugby's most recognisable personalities and I was lucky to meet him virtually ahead of the debate. Doddie's positivity and energy - four and a half years on from his diagnosis - was striking. His registered charity, My Name's Doddie Foundation, shares a vision: A World Free of MND. I was inspired by all the testimonies I've heard and have no doubt that more MND research funding from the UKG is needed to find effective treatments and a cure. MND research is undoubtedly progressing but it is disparate and urgently needs to be targeted. I fully back the petitioners' calls and urge the UKG to meet the petitioners' request. Here's a link to the full debate: <https://hansard.parliament.uk/.../>



 Martyn Day  
6 Preston Crescent  
Linlithgow  
EH49 6HW  
 [www.martynday.scot](http://www.martynday.scot)  
 [martyn.day.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:martyn.day.mp@parliament.uk)

 [facebook.com/MartynDaySNP](https://facebook.com/MartynDaySNP)  
 [twitter.com/martyndaysnp](https://twitter.com/martyndaysnp)  
 [instagram.com/martyndaysnp](https://instagram.com/martyndaysnp)  
 [linkedin.com/in/martyndaysnp](https://linkedin.com/in/martyndaysnp)  
 [youtube.com/martyndaysnp](https://youtube.com/martyndaysnp)

 01506 654415

# SNP