

December 07 / January 08

Johann Lamont MSP

Welcome to Holyrood Briefing

I hope you find the information here of interest. This briefing is distributed across the constituency. If you know of any group or organisation that would like to be added to the mailing list, please get in touch.

HOUSING - THE WAY AHEAD

The Scottish Government has produced a discussion paper on the future of housing. I welcome the opportunity to discuss this issue and the promise in the paper to increase the number of houses by 10,000 per year by 2015.

I am concerned, however, that there is not a commitment in the paper as to how many of these will be houses for social rent - that is built by councils, housing associations or housing co-operatives. The previous Scottish Executive said that 25% of all housing developments should be made up of affordable housing. That should continue to be the case.

The paper raises the issue of the cost of subsidising housing associations and suggests that there may be ways of reducing this level of subsidy. I will be watching this closely, as I would not want anything to be done that would undermine the good work done by so many housing associations. In this constituency, there are excellent examples of housing associations and co-operatives supporting important community activity, training and business developments.

COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

The recent conference and annual general meeting of Glasgow Community Transport showed how successful community transport has been in the city.

The number of passengers carried by the service continues to rise with the hospital visiting service being especially popular.

Greater Pollok Community Transport, as part of that service, is a lifeline to the elderly, disabled and people on low incomes. It also provides outings for people of all ages, thus encouraging community feeling.

I am keen to support the growth of community transport and to ensure that it is properly funded by the Scottish Government.

JOHANN LAMONT SPEAKS OUT

In this job, I am in the lucky position of seeing the constituency's good news stories at first hand. I try, throughout the year, to share these with you and I thought I should end the year with a few more examples. They certainly give us hope for the future.

Congratulations to all the young students from Rosshall Academy who invited me to the Thistle Hotel to enjoy a fabulous meal, prepared and served by young people from across Glasgow's secondary schools who are participating in the Council's Culinary Excellence programme. Young people are given the chance to work with top chefs and catering professionals - and their prowess certainly showed on the night.

These young people were a credit to themselves, to their schools and to their families. I was delighted to enjoy the fruits of their labour.

On St Andrew's Day I attended St Paul's High School where pupils and staff were leading the charge in celebrating St Andrew's Day with huge energy and enthusiasm. I participated, along with MSP colleagues, in a debate on the future of Scotland.

It was a lively event - to say the least - and the young people were challenging and thoughtful in their contributions. If these young people are anything to go by, we do not need to worry about young people being disinterested in politics.

I hear too that Hillington Park Parish Church will soon be opening a card and gift shop in Paisley Road West, supported by significant volunteer effort, to raise funds for disadvantaged young people in Africa. This sounds like a fabulous initiative, revealing again the strength of community and voluntary activity from churches, youth groups, community organisations and charities across the area.

My thanks to all those who are making such a difference across the constituency.

CONTACT DETAILS

If you wish to find out more about any of the issues highlighted, or wish to raise any other matter with me, please contact my office:

by telephone on **0141 270 1890**,

by fax on **0141 270 1891**,

in writing to

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or by e-mail to **johann.lamont.msp@scottish.parliament.uk**

SURGERIES

Friday 14th December - 2.00pm - Labour Rooms, 996 Mosspark Drive, Cardonald

Saturday 15th December - 10.00am - The Wedge, 1066 Barrhead Road, Pollok

Friday 11th January - 2.00pm - The Wedge, 1066 Barrhead Road, Pollok

Saturday 19th January - 10.00am - Labour Rooms, 996 Mossbank Drive,
Cardonald

Johann's website : www.johannlamontmsp.org.uk