



JIM HUME MSP

REGIONAL MSP FOR THE SOUTH OF SCOTLAND SCOTTISH PARLIAMENTARY REPORT

Working for **YOU** in the South of Scotland

Affordable Housing

“With house prices continuing to rise, Scotland is in the midst of an affordable housing crisis. Over the last five years house prices have almost doubled. Housing is a basic human right and we must build environmentally sustainable homes, producing cleaner, safer communities. It’s unacceptable that families are living in severely cramped conditions. The main problem is a lack of council and housing association homes. The Scottish Government must make the provision of new affordable housing a priority. More funding must be made available to Councils and housing associations to build additional houses, and more must be done to regenerate unused existing buildings and land. Steps must be taken to ensure that affordable housing is guaranteed when new housing schemes are approved, either by making a proportion of the new homes available at a lower cost or by ensuring that the developers provide funding to build low cost homes. A recent report identified the South of Scotland as particularly suffering from social exclusion and said that available affordable housing was key in tackling the problem.

“I shall continue to press for better and more affordable housing the region.”

Fuel Prices

“Over the last few years we’ve seen incredible increases in fuel prices and there are sometimes massive differences between urban and rural petrol prices.

“This has created unbearable pressures on people in the South of Scotland. Its largely rural make up and the lack of good public transport infrastructure in the region mean that people have no choice other than to use the car as an essential tool.

“I have been pressing the Scottish and UK Governments to take measures to redress the balance between rural and urban fuel prices, and have been lobbying the Chancellor to freeze fuel duty increases. The recent spring budget revealed that the expected 2p per litre fuel duty increase has been delayed. This is good news, but I will continue to press the Chancellor on this issue.”



Jim campaigning to save post offices with his Parliamentary colleagues, Jeremy Purvis MSP and Mike Moore MP



Jim in Parliament promoting Scottish produce with the NFUS’s What’s on Your Plate? Campaign

Local Food Procurement

“I have been campaigning for the use of locally sourced food within the public sector for many months now. It’s ridiculous that goods and services are sourced from out with Scotland and the UK. Particularly when it comes to food and drink, Scotland has so much quality to offer - we’re a world leader and we need to promote that better through a marketing board similar to what exists in Ireland. By using local, seasonal produce we’re not only creating a healthier population, but we’re also significantly boosting our economy and creating a sustainable food, drink and agricultural sector in Scotland. A healthy agricultural sector is massively important to the South Region.

“The Scottish Government must stand by its commitment to local food and produce detailed plans of how it will get more locally grown food into our schools and hospitals.

“East Ayrshire Council extended a local food pilot scheme to more of its schools this year and it’s been met with enormous success and enthusiasm from parents, teachers and pupils. I want to see this scheme taken forward by other Councils in the South Region and I want the Scottish Government to stand by its commitment to local food and Scottish producers when it unveils its national food policy in the summer.

“Ministers have promised that they will act on the overwhelming support for the use local food and I want to see real action.”



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Road Improvements and Public Transport

“Access to good and reliable road and public transport is essential in keeping the South of Scotland moving. Whilst it’s important to encourage people on to public transport, in many parts of the South Region it’s simply not possible because the infrastructure isn’t there. Sustained investment is needed to improve and upgrade existing roads, whether it’s improvements on the main roads such as the A7 at Galashiels or further down at Auchenrivock, the A75 and A76, or work to improve the A1 at East Lothian and regular maintenance of the A68, or regular investment in maintenance of local authority roads. The same report that identified housing as a means of tackling social exclusion in the South Region also stated that transport links were key in working towards a solution. I shall continue to press both the Scottish Government and the local authorities in the South of Scotland for better roads and public transport.”



Jim addressing secondary school pupils in Berwickshire during his summer tour.

“It’s really important that we engage our young people from an early age to allow them to see that politics is about every day life and that they can influence change for the better.

“By listening to them, young people can be a part of the decision making process.”



Jim talking to livestock producers at an East Lothian farmers’ market about the challenges faced by the agriculture sector

Environment, Agriculture and Fishing

“The campaign on climate change continues. I fully support the ambitious targets outlined in the draft Climate Change Bill, but crucially, it fails to meet the Scottish Government promise of statutory annual 3% carbon emission reduction targets. On the same environmental theme, the effective enforcement of environmental law, excess packaging, and the generation of biofuels and renewable energies are hot topics just now. The Scottish Government plans to cut the rural affairs budget by 6.5% over the next three years after taking inflation into account. This will have a direct impact because less money will be available for agricultural support. The Scottish Government needs to do more to ensure sustainable agricultural and fishing sectors from safeguarding existing businesses through to encouraging new entrants. This is particularly important for the South Region because it’s largely made up of rural or agricultural businesses. It also takes in the east coast fishing market from East Lothian all the way to Eyemouth and Eastern Berwickshire, not forgetting the huge Solway coastline. I will continue to fight for the agriculture and fishing sectors be it NVZs in East Lothian, Dumfries and the Borders, fisheries dependent status in Berwickshire or a fair deal for our primary producers right across the region.”

Economic Development

“Economic development is the key to bettering the future of any region and country. For too long the South of Scotland has been ignored in favour of main cities and the central belt. I want to see more investment in the South Region for tourism, transport, housing, small and medium sized businesses, and further and higher education. Making the South of Scotland a centre of excellence for enterprise and education will provide jobs and create an exciting environment in which our young people will want to stay, thereby keeping and developing important skills in the local area. Having the Carbon Centre and Glasgow University’s continued undergraduate provision at the Crichton Campus in Dumfries as well as the University of West of Scotland, Dumfries and Galloway College, and the Scottish Agricultural College is therefore critical. The recent report which identified the South Region as having problems related to social exclusion categorically says that an enterprise body similar to what exists in the Highlands and Islands should be replicated in the South of Scotland. The Region holds great untapped potential and I will continue to press the case for its successful future through sustainable economic development.”



Jim visiting the new site of Dumfries and Galloway College during his summer tour.

“This as well as what’s happening at the Crichton Campus is an exciting development and will I hope be one step towards the South Region’s economic success.”



Jim discussing the importance of Scottish Enterprise support with Martin Aerospace in Lanark during his tour of Ayr, Lanark and Prestwick.

“It’s vital to have key sectors identified, supported and developed in any given area and the old Scottish Enterprise Network had the knowledge and experience to deliver. The South of Scotland needs its own local enterprise board with delegated, decision making powers - decisions should be taken locally, not centrally from Glasgow or Edinburgh.”

Jim’s Other Priorities in the Region

- More Police on the beat
- Better and more recycling facilities
- More work to keep our towns and villages litter free
- The retention of rural village and community halls
- More NHS dentists
- Better provision of local health services
- Educational and recreational facilities for young people
- Better services for rural areas
- Better support for small and medium sized businesses
- Protection of the post office network
- Measures to tackle social exclusion

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