

John Wilson MSP



**Annual
Parliamentary
Report
2007-2008**



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba



Scottish Parliament Building

John Wilson MSP

John was elected on May 3rd 2007 from the Regional List to represent Central Scotland.

Prior to his election he was Director of the Scottish Low Pay Unit and had also worked with Poverty Alliance.

John's previous experience is key in his determination to give strong representation for the people in Central Scotland and improve their lives through his work in the Scottish Parliament.

John's duties in the Parliament include:

- Member of the Justice Committee
- Co-chair of the Cross Party group on Mental Health, and Member of Cross Party groups on Asthma, Housing and Nuclear Disarmament.

John has been a Trade Union member throughout his working life.





Dear Constituent,

We have just passed the landmark of the first anniversary of the new Scottish Government. This is an historic time for our country and it has been an honour to represent Central Scotland as an MSP during the past year. I believe that Scotland now has a government that is listening to the electorate and working harder than ever to deliver for each and every person in Central Scotland.

During this year it has been a privilege to represent you as part of the Scottish Government bringing positive changes to the lives of the people of Scotland. In this parliamentary report I will outline some of my own work as a MSP for Central Scotland.

As Scotland continues to move forward, my responsibility to the people of Central Scotland is foremost as I work to ensure that the Scottish Parliament and Government continues to tackle injustice, poverty and inequality in our society.

If you wish to raise an issue with me at any time, I can be reached by telephone, e-mail or letter. My contact details are on the back of this report.

Best regards,


John Wilson MSP

Representing Central Scotland



John Wilson MSP , being sworn into the Scottish Parliament , May 2007

A SAFER, STRONGER SCOTLAND

In the past year I have supported the Scottish Government's initiatives that are helping local communities become stronger, safer places to live, that now offer improved opportunities and a better quality of life.

Proceeds of Crime

Young people in Central Scotland are to benefit from new £224,000 grant scheme to be funded from the proceeds of crime. The fund is supporting initiatives such as youth drop-in services and outdoor activities including::

- climbing walls,
- skate parks,
- mountain bikes,
- canoes and yachts.



Moving Scotland Forward

Supporting our Police

I fully support the resources made available by the Scottish Government for an extra 1,000 police on our streets.

I tabled a motion to the parliament congratulating Strathclyde Police in Cumbernauld for using innovative methods, such as the use of YouTube and Bebo, to identify and track down youth gang members.

Prison Services

Our Prisons should be used for the worst offenders in our society.

I have supported the government in the commissioning of three new publicly-run prisons.

I have also tabled a series of Parliamentary questions following a serious incident at Kilmarnock prison.

I welcome the introduction of Mandatory Supervised Attendance Orders, which will reduce the number of those imprisoned for not paying their fines.

A WEALTHIER, FAIRER SCOTLAND

I believe that the Scottish Government is nurturing a confidence and entrepreneurial spirit that is enabling businesses and people to increase their wealth. As opportunity and prosperity increase we are reducing poverty and starting to tackle the serious issue of child poverty in our country.

Freezing the Council Tax

Householders in Scotland have welcomed the freeze in the Council tax.

The Government's historic concordat with Local Government, coupled with an additional £70 million investment, have marked the first steps in abolishing this deeply unfair tax.

Representing Central Scotland

Help for Small Businesses

Businesses all over Central Scotland have benefited from the reduction in Business Rates. 4000 small businesses in North Lanarkshire alone will no longer pay business rates, with a further 8,000 benefiting from significant reductions. I welcome this fantastic news for the local businesses that are vital to our communities.

Kinship Carers

The major overhaul of support for children looked after by foster and kinship carers, and better financial support for carers, will help lift our children out of poverty. In January this year I raised the issue of child poverty in the Parliament, voicing my concern about the 1.4 million children currently living in poverty. The Parliamentary motion won the support of 23 other MSPs.

A HEALTHIER SCOTLAND

It is vital that the Government helps people to sustain and improve their health, especially in disadvantaged communities. I have welcomed decisions that are ensuring better, local and faster access to health care.

Saving A&E Departments

The reversal of the closure of Monklands and Ayr Accident and Emergency departments has been welcomed across Scotland. In doing so, the Government have secured emergency care provision in some of the most deprived areas of our community, where people need it most.

Prescription Charges

As more of us live with long-term chronic conditions, it is the case that prescription charges are a tax on ill-health. The reduction in prescription charges and their planned abolition is welcome news to the most vulnerable, many of whom go without their prescribed medicines because they can't afford the prescription charges. I welcome this move forward in bringing the Health Service back to its founding principle of free at the point of need.



Moving Scotland Forward

A SMARTER SCOTLAND

I believe in expanding the opportunities for Scots to succeed at all stages of education. Whether by increasing nursery places, reducing class sizes in primaries 1-3 or removing economic barriers to study, the Scottish Government is committed to offering every Scot the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Scrapping Student Debt

Every student in Scotland will be £2289 better off by the scrapping of the Graduate Endowment Fee. It is right that the country which introduced free education has returned to this key principal.

A GREENER SCOTLAND

The Government has announced a Climate Challenge Fund for communities to reduce their carbon footprint and convened the first ever Scottish Summit on Flooding.

THE NATIONAL CONVERSATION

There is no doubt that the achievements of the Scottish Government have moved Scotland forward, improving the lives of the people of Central Scotland. I have been proud to be your representative in this process. However, the bigger question of where we go next as a Nation and our constitutional future remains to be answered.

First Minister Alex Salmond launched the National Conversation inviting everyone to take part in the debate and share their opinions on the future of our Nation.

The paper, "Choosing Scotland's Future" sets out the ground for the National Conversation by exploring the concept of Independence and other constitutional possibilities. Please take part. You can register your views at www.scotland.gov.uk/topics/a-national-conversation

Representing Central Scotland

Moving Scotland Forward

John Wilson MSP

Contact Details

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Surgery Dates and details can be found at
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