



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

# John Wilson MSP

Representing Central Scotland

June 2015 Newsletter



## Stage 1 Debate: Scottish Elections (Reduction of Voting Age) Bill

The Stage 1 Debate of the Scottish Elections (Reduction of Voting Age) Bill was held in the Scottish Parliament on Thursday 28 May 2015.

The bill was introduced to Parliament on 2 April 2015, and aims to extend the voting age to 16– and 17– year olds for Scottish Parliament and local elections by amending the Representation of the People Act 1983. The bill would extend the voting age before the 2016 Scottish Parliament elections.

The bill follows the extension of the voting age to 16– and 17– year olds in the 2014 referendum. Voter turnout in the referendum was 84.6%, the highest turnout level recorded since the introduction of universal suffrage.

John has long supported the extension of the voting age and voted in favour of the bill.

Prior to the debate, John said:

*“Following the success in encouraging high voter participation among 16– and 17– year olds during the referendum, in my opinion the correct thing to do is to extend the voting age in all elections.”*

## Mornay and Nithsdale Tenants and Residents Association Visit



John was delighted to host the Mornay and Nithsdale Tenants and Residents Association for a visit to the Scottish Parliament on Thursday 21 May. The group viewed First Ministers Questions from the public gallery. They then had a Q&A session with John, followed by a tour of the Parliament building.

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## Historical Child Abuse Inquiry

John has sought reassurance that the upcoming inquiry on historical child abuse will be carried out within the timescale set out and that the inquiry would be sufficiently funded.

On 17 December 2014 it was announced that an inquiry would take place into allegations of historical child abuse in Scotland. The specifics of the inquiry were explained during a ministerial statement on 28 May.

Following the statement, John asked:

*“Is the cabinet secretary confident that the inquiry can be completed within the four-year timescale that she has set out? Has a budget been set aside for the inquiry to take place, including financial support for the survivors and their advocates?”*

The cabinet secretary, Angela Constance, responded that while the timescale was tight it was also appropriate, and that the inquiry would be sufficiently funded. However, she did not specify whether or not financial support for survivors had been budgeted.

## National Epilepsy Week

John was happy to help promote National Epilepsy Week which occurred on the 17th—23rd of May 2015.

The event was organised by the Epilepsy Consortium Scotland. It coincided with a debate held in the United Nations regarding a World Health Organisation global resolution calling for member states to introduce national epilepsy action plans.



There are approximately 54,000 people living in Scotland who suffer from epilepsy.

In addition, John had the opportunity to cover sign the published revised SIGN national guideline on managing epilepsy in adults.

During the event, John said:

*"Studies show that while just over half of people with epilepsy have seizure control, seven in ten could become seizure free with optimum care. The revised SIGN guidance can play a vital part in addressing this treatment gap and improving services over the next decade. I want the very best health and social care for constituents affected by epilepsy so I will be discussing this matter with the local NHS board. National Epilepsy Week helps us highlight issues and raise awareness."*

### UPCOMING SURGERIES

#### Monday 8 June

Chryston Cultural Centre- 10-11AM

Townhead Community Centre- 11:30AM- 12:30PM

ASDA Coatbridge- 1PM-2PM

#### Monday 15 June

Bellshill Cultural Centre- 10AM-11AM

South Dalziel Studios- 11:30AM-12:30PM

## Largest Employers in Scotland Failing to Pay the Living Wage

John raised concern in a motion in the Scottish Parliament on 18 May that only 1 in 5 of the largest employers in Scotland were paying workers at least a living wage.

The motion was raised following the finding by the BBC on 18 May 2015 that only 10 of the 50 largest employers in Scotland were paying staff at least the living wage.

In the motion, John said:

*"[I believe] adherence to a living wage is an essential step in eradicating in-work poverty...[I congratulate] all employers that do pay workers at least the living wage...and [encourage] all employers in Scotland to work toward paying at least the living wage to all employees and staff."*

## Supporting the Footway and Double Parking (Scotland) Bill

John has shown his support for the Footway and Double Parking (Scotland) Bill which was introduced to the Scottish Parliament on Wednesday 20th May 2015.

The bill would ban parking on footpaths and double parking, making walkways more accessible to parents with prams and those with mobility problems. Under current legislation only driving is prohibited on pavements.

John said:

*"The bill is designed to end the abuse by some drivers who park on pavements and double park. The bill will be successful if it brings an end to that practice and gives pedestrians free movement, especially parents with young children and prams who are then not forced to walk on the road due to inconsiderate drivers."*

