

# John Wilson MSP

Representing Central Scotland

December 2015 Newsletter



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

## John defends workers over threatened job losses

November was a difficult month for workers in Central Scotland, firstly came the news that Tata steel finishing works in Motherwell and Clydebridge are set to close with the loss of 270 jobs, then North Lanarkshire council launched its cut back consultation which could see a further 1500 job losses across the council area.

And latterly in a third major blow, HMRC has announced the potential closure of many of its local offices across Scotland, including those in Cumbernauld and East Kilbride.

John has submitted motions to parliament asking for direct help for those affected and highlighting the significant detrimental effect on local communities as well as a devastating impact on the workers involved. Speaking in the 'Save our Steel' members debate John highlighted the need to save the last two significant Lanarkshire steel operations from closure.

"We must ensure that we support the workforce and their Trade Unions in the fight to keep these sites open and avoid devastating job losses. If we want to look forward to an industrial and manufacturing future, we need a steel industry.."

John also attended the Save Our Steel march in Motherwell, and a second protest the following week petitioning North Lanarkshire Council to reconsider its cuts programme and protect its employees.

"These council job losses and service cuts, on top of the job losses we have already heard about from Tata, and the recent news from HMRC, paint a bleak picture for our communities. For people in the most vulnerable and deprived areas, to get into employment, to get a decent income and to be able to raise themselves out of poverty will be virtually impossible."

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## Report on Wildlife Crime needs clear government response

John called for clarity from the Scottish Government, following a new report on wildlife crime. Ten recommendations for reducing wildlife crime including maximum penalty increases and greater use of alternative penalties, were set out by a review group chaired by Professor Mark Poustie of Strathclyde University.

In response Environment Minister Aileen McLeod is quoted as saying "It is vital that the available penalties are an adequate deterrent and properly reflect the impact these crimes can have on Scotland's environment and wildlife tourism industry"

This is a somewhat different position from that taken by her boss Cabinet Secretary Richard Lochhead who's official answer on the need for tougher penalties in August was that penalties were in line with the rest of Great Britain and that the Scottish Government believes that the maximum sentences available are currently proportionate.

"I am delighted to see that the report has called for an increase in the maximum penalty for wildlife crime. Such crimes are often not dealt with as seriously as they should be. Clearly the penalties cannot be both inadequate and proportionate and I hope that in clarifying their position the government embrace the need for stronger deterrents for wildlife crime."

## Marie Curie Palliative Care for All

A recent study shows only one in ten Scots over 50 felt very confident they would get the care they need at the end of their lives.

John has pledged to support the Marie Curie campaign for palliative care for everyone, which asks MSPs to work with constituents, Health Boards and Social Care Providers to improve care for those with terminal illness.

“The NHS was set up to provide health care from the cradle to the grave and it is imperative that it continues to do so despite the increasing pressure placed on it. .”

## Increase in foodbank use

Trussell Trust figures show a dramatic increase in the number of people using foodbanks in Scotland. Around 60,000 people are being forced to rely on the food donation scheme to feed themselves and their families. The number one reason identified for the increase was a delay in or suspension of social security benefits.

“The sanctions regime is another arm in the Tory arsenal which looks to batter some of the most vulnerable people in society, this pursuit of a failed austerity programme will consign more people to hardship and further increase inequality”

## Local Focus:

John attended a session of the Scottish Parliament in **Motherwell** to answer questions from the local community and youth groups.

At **Monklands** Hospital John met the bowel cancer screening team, who stressed the importance of participation in the screening programme.

John chaired an anti-fracking meeting in **Plains** community centre

At an MSP question time event held by the Federation of Master Builders in **Cumbernauld**, John highlighted the need for social housing, better apprenticeships in the industry and failings within the current planning process.

John recently visited St Cuthbert's Primary School, in **Hamilton** and met Miss Boyd's class who wanted to know all about a day in the life of an MSP.



## SURGERIES

### Monday 7th Dec

Chryston Cultural Centre - 10.00am

Coatbridge, New Townhead Community Centre  
11.30am

Coatbridge ASDA - 1.00pm

### Friday 11th Dec

Falkirk ASDA - 1pm

### Monday 14th Dec

Bellshill Cultural Centre -10.00am

Motherwell, South Dalziel Studios -11.00am

No Appointment Required

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