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eMagazine of Ian Murray
Labour Member of Parliament for Edinburgh South

New



October/November 2012

The first eMagazine of any elected member in the UK

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Welcome

to the penultimate edition of my eMagazine for 2012.

It's been another packed month so it's taken me a while to put this one together. I've included a number of videos and other 'clickable' content.

As I say in every edition, if you have any comments, criticisms or suggestions then do get in touch.

Click the play button below for instructions on how to use the eMagazine.



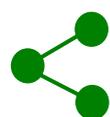
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IN THE CONSTITUENCY

Plans for Craighouse Development Submitted

Morningside Community Council Public Meeting Craighouse planning application

Friday 7th December at 7pm at St Peter's Primary School, Falcon Road
Chaired by Ian Murray MP

Speakers from The Craighouse Partnership and The Friends of Craighouse
Please submit questions in writing at the start of the meeting

I promised to keep residents up to date on the proposed residential development at the Craighouse Campus of Napier University.

The plans have been submitted to the City of Edinburgh Council and can be viewed in full at the following Council web address - <https://citydev-portal.edinburgh.gov.uk/idoxpaweb/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=details&keyVal=MDFBD1EW0GY00>

I have continually pressed the developers on the importance of meeting the needs of local residents and I know a lot of work has been done so far.

However, I strongly urge residents to look at the plans and make sure any comment or objection you may have is submitted to the Council now before the Planning Officers look at all the relevant information and produce a recommendation for the Planning Committee.

You can submit your comments by going to the above link or by writing to the Head of Planning and Building Standards, Services for Communities, Waverley Court, Level C5, 4 East Market Street, Edinburgh, EH8 8BG. The closing date for submissions is Friday 21st December and to make sure your views are recorded properly please include the planning reference 12/04007/FUL.

Winton Development Appeal Success

In last month's edition, I gave details of the site visit conducted by the Scottish Government's Planning Reporter to the Greenbelt site to the East of Winton Gardens where Miller Homes had submitted plans to build a residential development. This saw a tremendous turnout from local residents. I can now reveal that the Planning Reporter has sided with the City of Edinburgh Council and upheld the original refusal of this development.

The Reporter reached this decision after reviewing all the excellent objection letters from

local residents and community groups as well as the Council's original refusal notice. He was left in no doubt as to the strength of local feeling against the plans.

This outcome would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of concerned local residents, in particular the Fairmilehead Community Council and the Friends of Winton Woods who made sure that the Council and the Scottish Government rejected these plans and helped protect our surrounding Greenbelt.

The Planning Reporter's decision is final. However

individuals unhappy with the decision have the right to appeal to the Court of Session within six weeks of the date of the appeal decision. You can visit the Directorate for Planning and Environmental Appeals website www.dpea.scotland.gov.uk and click on the 'search' box which should take you to the main on-line appeal site.

This is not only a great result for the residents of Fairmilehead but also for the rest of the City as it refused to set a precedent for developers attacking our historic Greenbelt.



Proposal for Retail Store on Gilmerton Road

An exhibition was recently held by the developers who have brought forward a proposal on behalf of supermarket retailers ALDI.

They are seeking to turn the current site of the British Geological Survey building on Gilmerton Road, just down from the

entrance to Guardwell Crescent, into an ALDI store.

There will be a number of issues raised regarding this proposal and it is essential we fully understand the plans they have for the store and the immediate area. The consultation process will also give residents the op-

portunity to have their views reflected in the proposals.

I'm particularly keen to ensure we use this opportunity to improve the junction of Gilmerton Road and Moredun Park Road that has been giving residents and drivers concerns for some years.

I am delighted to hear that Gracemount High School in the constituency recently received an 'Awards for All' grant from Big Lottery Fund.

The School will establish a range of new after-school sports clubs and purchase new exercise equipment to refurbish the school fitness gym for use by pupils, staff and the wider community. This grant of £8,908 will help fund gym equipment, sports club coaching fees/equipment, rugby strips and a bike storage container.

Congratulations to all the teachers, parents and pupils.

Gracemount High School



Over the coming years, the City of Edinburgh Council intends to replace Edinburgh's existing street lights with new, more energy efficient and more environmentally friendly lighting.

The first phase of this initiative will be to pilot different technologies and I have been informed that this will commence in October 2012 in the Saughton Mains and Gilmerton Dykes areas of Edinburgh. It is hoped the average energy saved will be 31 to 33 per cent which is important in tackling climate change in the City.

The areas will retain some of the existing lights to act as a comparison, and some of the new lights will be 'dimmed' from late evening onwards where and when possible to further reduce costs and environmental impact. The effect of dimming is unnoticeable to the naked eye and complies with current guidance.

A consultation will take place in early 2013 to gather feedback from local residents in both areas.

[For more info, click here](#)

Street Lights

The energy savings are as follows:

- Gilmerton Dykes Area 1 - 35 per cent
- Gilmerton Dykes Area 2 - 22 per cent
- Gilmerton Dykes Area 3 - 42 per cent

Congratulations to Acting Headteacher David Dempsey, staff, parents and pupils at Boroughmuir High School on receiving the Sunday Times Scottish State Secondary of the Year Award.

If any school is proof that a good education is about more than bricks and mortar it is Boroughmuir High School. I recently visited and saw for myself the dedication of staff and the enthusiasm of all the pupils. Well done!



Cycle Security

I recently went out on a night shift with local police officers from St Leonard's station. It was a hugely useful experience and made me appreciate the pressures and the dangers that our police put themselves in on a daily basis for us. I'm very grateful to staff and Lothian & Border Police for arranging this outing.

One of the issues that has been raised with me recently involves cycle theft. Many modern bikes can cost up to 3000 and insurance policies often provide inadequate cover should the bike be stolen. It is therefore important that you take steps to reduce the chances of your bike being stolen and the police have recommended

taking the following steps to deter any criminals.

If you keep your bike in a common stair, ensure the door entry system is working properly and never wedge the stair door open or admit strangers. Also, secure your bike to an immovable object with a padlock and chain or D-Lock device. It is preferable to fasten your bike to a ground anchor as handrails and banisters can often be forced.

If you are out and about on the move, you should secure your bike to a cycle rack or other immovable object in a busy well-lit area. Use a Gold rated "SoldSecure" endorsed Padlock and Chain or D-Lock. Also, think about removing components such as lights, saddles, trip

computers or even quick release wheels. You should also use two different kinds of lock. This makes it much more difficult for the thief by increasing the number of tools required for the job. To stop thieves smashing the lock open, keep the lock (and/or chain) away from the ground.

Finally, consider security marking or electronically tagging your bike. This will increase the likelihood of it being returned to you if stolen. You can visit www.bikeregister.com for further information.

St Leonards currently have a small quantity of Gold rated Sold Secure D locks for sale by the South Edinburgh Crime Prevention Panel for £15



On the Breadline - Foodbanks

I was delighted to help support Sainsbury's in the drive to help local residents living on the breadline through their local food drive.

The Million Meal Appeal is where shoppers can donate food to help local people in crisis is being organised by charity FareShare and Sainsbury's stores across the country, including our own Cameron Toll. As I have written in these pages before, foodbanks have been hugely important since the economic downturn began.

Volunteers will be asked to greet customers and encourage them to buy an extra item of food from the Million Meal Appeal shopping list. Donations will be collected as shoppers leave the store. FareShare will then deliver the donated food to over 700 charities and community projects across the UK to help families in need. Sainsbury's will match the level of food donations collected over the weekend.

FareShare is seeking more volunteers to assist with the two-day food drive. Volunteers

can sign up at www.fareshare.org.uk to register, and choose their preferred store and time slot.

The Million Meal Appeal comes as the economic crisis deepens and the rising cost of living hits households hard. Food prices rose by more than four per cent over the last year and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation estimates that around 5.8 million people in the UK struggle to afford everyday essentials like food.

The Million Meal Appeal will help local families struggling with rising living costs and cuts to tax credits. Sainsbury's Cameron Toll food bank does an excellent job but I know that demand is rising. I am supporting the Million Meal Appeal.

Last year the Million Meal Appeal collected food for 1.2 million meals for disadvantaged people with Sainsbury's customers buying an additional item of food for FareShare, which the charity then distributed to hostels, day centres, breakfast clubs and local projects.

Hope Not Hate

Last month I attended the rally organised by Unite Against Fascism. Representatives from the many communities that make Edinburgh a warm and welcoming city - black & white, straight & gay, those of faith and no-faith, students and workers - attended to show that the streets of Edinburgh belong to all our communities, and that these communities help keep our cities vibrant. Thanks to constituent Zareen Taj for the invitation.



Southhouse Foodbank

There is a food bank actually in existence much nearer home at the Edinburgh South East foodbank situated at 47 Southhouse Broadway, Edinburgh, EH17 8EW.

Rev John Ross is the local minister and foodbank manager. The shop is open Monday, Tuesday and Thursday

11.00 - 14.30. However, if these times are not convenient there is normally somebody around the shop for other meetings at the following times Sunday 11.15, 12.45, 16.45, 18.30, Wednesday 19.20, 20.45, Friday 13.40 and 15.15.

If you are able to donate any goods, they would be hugely

appreciated. I under that at the present time the foodbank would be particularly grateful to receive any Pasta Bake Sauces, Juices, Cereal, Jam, Tinned Fruit, Tinned or Dried Vegetables, Sugar, Long, Life Milk, Coffee and Steamed Pudding.

Thanks to Braids Rotary Club for all their efforts.



Tesco for Schools

I was delighted to present pupils from James Gillespie's, South Morningside, Bruntsfield and St Peter's primary schools with equipment collected from Tesco vouchers at the local branch in Bruntsfield. I was joined by Store Manager, Samantha Tippitt. Tesco's long-running and very successful scheme last year gave over 440,000 pieces of useful equipment, worth a massive £9.3m, to schools and clubs across the UK and it's great that schools in South Edinburgh have benefited as well.

Meadows Walkway improvements proposed



The City of Edinburgh Council recently released plans for the improvement of North Meadow Walk in the Meadows.

The proposals are to bring the path up to the same standard as Middle Meadow Walk. There is an expectation that there will be even more people using this path as improvements are made to the approaches to the Meadows from the Union Canal (National Cycle Route 75), and from the Innocent Railway Path (National Cycle Route 1) over the next couple of years. The current surface is poor and very much in need of renewal. Funding of £500,000 has been provided by the government

via Sustrans (sustainable transport).

The Friends of Meadows and Bruntsfield Links do so much all year round to ensure the upkeep of this much-loved green space. Whilst welcoming the improvements, they have expressed major concerns about how this could be done without damage to the trees on either side. They have said that considerable care and thought will be required to stop damage to trees near the path.

A decision on the upgrade will be made at the end of this month. You can visit the FOMBL website for further information.



For more info, [click here](#) ➔

I was recently contacted by the staff at Bethany Christian Trust who do a fantastic job helping homeless people across Edinburgh.

They are running a project this Christmas where you can buy your Christmas trees from several locations across the city. This is a project which is funded entirely on a

voluntary basis. All the money raised will be vital to the funding and running of the charity's Winter Care Shelter here in Edinburgh which really can make the difference between life and death to the most vulnerable on the streets.

I think this is a great example of how people in Edinburgh could help homeless

people and spread some Christmas spirit. Buying your Christmas tree from Caring Christmas Trees is such a simple way to make a difference.

The trees are of excellent quality and really don't lose their needles, you put them out after twelfth night and they still look good.

Thousands of staff at the City of Edinburgh Council are set to benefit from the introduction of the living wage from January next year. The proposal, announced during Living Wage Week is to set the figure at £7.50, five pence above the recommended rate.

This is one of the first Capital Coalition pledges agreed at the Council meeting in August to be delivered. The increase in pay will make staff feel more valued, leading to improved wellbeing and improved attendance at work. This will in turn lead to increased productivity in the workplace which will improve the delivery of Council services across the city.

More than two thousand staff will benefit from the increase, the large proportion of whom are women working in jobs such as carers and cleaners.

For me it's simply a matter of fairness. People should get a decent wage for working. It's a strange logic that claims that it's essential to give the rich more and the poor less in order for the economy to work.

It is widely recognised that a fair wage strategy will undoubtedly stimulate the economy and have a positive effect socially. It's absolutely vital that we recognise the contribution that they make through their hard work to the welfare of Edinburgh's people. It's a proposal that has been welcomed by parties from across the political spectrum.

The concept of a living wage is also supported by a number of private and public sector organisations including KPMG and Barclays Bank.

A Living Wage



ONE FAIR WAGE

Much like the fantastic work achieved by the Council, the Scottish Youth Parliament is also championing One Fair Wage. This is a campaign to encourage organisations to pledge their support for a Scottish Living Wage.

I wholeheartedly support this campaign and added my name to their pledge. In his party conference speech in October, Ed Miliband talked about a 'One Nation' economy in which

everyone has a stake in society and prosperity is fairly shared. The Living Wage gives us a perfect example of this principle in practice. It has the potential to lift families out of poverty whilst far-sighted businesses are increasingly aware of the benefits that can come from paying their staff a decent wage.

A Scottish Living Wage won't solve all the problems causing poverty in Scotland. But without decent wages which

allow low paid workers a decent standard of living it is impossible to see a solution.

I wish the Youth Parliament every success in their efforts to promote a Scottish Living Wage. The benefits for both business and individuals is clear to see.

**TURNOVER...
Developments at
Westminster**



AT WESTMINSTER



No one will have failed to notice the news coverage of the hostilities in the Middle East and sadly the lives that have been lost on both sides. The news that a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas has now been agreed was welcome but is only the first step on a long road to peace, a destination which, at

the moment, seems impossible to reach. An immediate cessation of violence on all sides was desperately needed and the task is now for this temporary ceasefire to be turned into a durable peace.

Labour were the first UK party to call for a full scale UN diplomatic initiative to end the violence. We urged the Secretary General of the

United Nations to travel to the region because sustained international engagement will be vital in helping to bring this conflict to an end.

A full-scale ground invasion would have been a disaster for the peoples of both Gaza and Israel as it would have risked escalating the death toll and further damaged the hope for peace



and security.

Of course rocket attacks targeted at a civilian population deserve our categorical condemnation, but the deeper causes of the latest crisis reflect the failure over years and decades to achieve a two-state solution, along with the continued expansion of illegal settlements by Israel in Gaza and the blockade.

There have been no meaningful negotiations on resolving the Palestinian/Israeli conflict in recent months and years, despite Palestinians remaining stateless and Israelis continuing to fear rocket attacks.

What is clear is that there is no military solution to the Israel-Palestinian conflict. Real security for the citizens of

Israel and Gaza will only be achieved through the re- invigoration of a serious political dialogue, aimed at ending the Occupation and establishing a lasting and just regional peace..

I believe a critical part of this is the international community's recognition of the Palestinian's bid for enhanced status at the United Nations General Assembly meeting.

meeting which happened earlier this week. It could prove a vital injection of momentum into a badly stalled set of negotiations that have caused some to question whether a two-state solution is even any longer possible.

Now the violence has stopped, we need the talking to start so that progress can be made towards agreeing a negotiated two-state solution which will bring the security and peace that the people of the region deserve.



EU

The EU has been a hot topic following the summit to determine the union budget. I'm concerned that the stance of the Prime Minister is putting us in a difficult position. There is much we need to do to make the EU work better for Britain. Reform is needed and will be difficult, and it will have its frustrations, but one thing is certain: for business, for jobs and for wealth creation, it is better to reform Europe than to leave.

But I am extremely worried about Britain's future in Europe. David Cameron says he wants to stay in Europe, but he is too weak to ensure that we do. The centre of gravity has shifted on the Government benches, with some of the Prime Minister's most senior colleagues now saying they want to pull out of the EU. This makes for a very dangerous moment for Britain and British business.

The EU is essential for British business. It is a single market of 500 million people - where we do 60 per cent of our trade. It attracts huge inward investment to the UK. Withdrawal would leave Britain voiceless and powerless, on the outside looking in at forums like world trade talks.

With 25 million people without jobs across Europe, the EU undoubtedly needs reform. To do that, we need to build alliances for change and ensure countries like ours who aren't in the Euro aren't penalised.

The Prime Minister should be building alliances in Europe to support a plan for jobs and growth; reform further the EU budget so that money is better spent, on things like

infrastructure, energy and innovation; and change the rules of the EU on issues like state aid so that we can pursue a proper industrial policy without hindrance.

Growing the green economy

I know many constituents are concerned about the UK Government's commitment to tackling climate change. As well as failing to fulfil promises on the environment, the Government are also losing important opportunities for jobs in new low carbon energy and technology. That's why last month Labour leader Ed Miliband called on the Prime Minister to make a commitment to the 2030 de-carbonisation target so that investors all over the world know we are open for low carbon business.

It is not only environmental groups that are calling on the Government to commit to these targets. The Confederation of British Industry (CBI) believes low carbon business could halve our trade deficit by 2014-15. And yet, despite David Cameron's promises that this Government would be the greenest government ever, we have a government that has delayed crucial decisions on the Green Investment Bank and de-carbonisation targets.

The short-sightedness of the Government means billions of pounds in investment are going elsewhere or being put on hold. Since the Government came to power, investment in renewable energy hasn't gone up. It hasn't even stagnated. It has halved. I'm really concerned that the investors who want to invest in our low carbon sector are shutting their wallets or going elsewhere.

An Historic Day for Scotland and the UK

I welcomed the statement which was held in Parliament last month confirming that the responsibility for the referendum on Scotland's constitutional future should rest with the Scottish Parliament.

I'm pleased that the agreement, known as a Section 30, has been reached and that we can now start to get beyond the process of the referendum and into debating the future of Scotland and whether we remain part of the UK.

As we look at the detail of this deal, I am looking to make sure that it provides the people of Scotland with the fair and decisive

referendum that many have been calling for. There are a number of contentious issues including votes for 16 and 17 year olds. If votes at 16 and 17 are to be introduced, legislation should be introduced across the UK for every election, not just a one off referendum.

Also, there are concerns surrounding campaign finance. I feel very strongly about this - the Scottish Government cannot be the referee and a player. The Electoral Commission will act as an independent overseer of the process including finance and the wording of the question. It's important to remember that no previous

Government has overruled the Electoral Commission and I hope that Alex Salmond and the Scottish Government don't ignore that precedent. We need independent external oversight of campaign finance from the Electoral Commission to ensure fair play.

Last but not least, the question itself. We want a clear and unambiguous question that provides a fair choice for the Scottish people. Any question should be thoroughly tested by the Electoral Commission.



Questions to the Secretary of State for Scotland

Click the play button above to watch the exchange between myself and the Scottish Office Minister



Questions to the Cabinet Office

Click the play button above to watch my question and the response from the Government

AT THE DESPATCH BOX

ERR Bill - Third Reading

As readers will recall, I have been working on behalf of the Opposition to oppose the measures in the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Bill.

Many of the measures in the legislation will erode people's rights at work which is madness at a time when job insecurity is high. The Bill had its final stages in the House of Commons before being considered by the Lords.

Click the play button below to watch my contribution.



GI Bill - Second Reading

It's non-stop legislation involving my brief at the moment.

After recess the Government brought forward another growth Bill. Sadly, there is little in this Bill to address the root

causes of the Government's economic failure or the housing crisis. Instead, there are a number of ways in this Bill that could damage the planning system, housing delivery, communities and relationships in the workplace. Yet again, there are more proposals which will bring in the 'fire at will' measures. They are alive and well and being delivered by the Business

Department.

Like the Enterprise Bill, this Bill hasn't been thought through and won't do anything to get much needed growth back in to our economy.

The Bill is currently in its Committee Stage where it is debated and scrutinised line-by-line.

To watch my contribution at Second Reading, please click the play button.



GCA Bill - Second Reading
The Groceries Code
Adjudicator Bill has been a
long time coming. This

legislation will create the position of an Adjudicator who will referee any disputes between the major supermarkets and their suppliers. This was a measure which all parties committed to in their general election manifesto, and one which the previous Labour Government committed to introducing.

However, the major concern I have is that the Groceries Code Adjudicator will be a toothless tiger. As it currently stands, the Adjudicator will not be able to impose fines immediately on retailers who have breached the groceries code, even if he/she believes that is the best course of action. Instead, the

adjudicator will have to go through a fairly laborious process before being granted the power by the Government. To draw a football analogy - it's like the referee having to ask the Football Association for permission to use his red card - it makes no sense.

The Adjudicator must therefore have teeth to tackle these issues and the power to issue fines must be available to him/her from day one. We'll be pushing the Government all the way on this issue.

Click the play button to watch my speech.





Post Offices

Earlier in October, I took part in a public meeting in Airdrie on the future of local post offices which had been organised by the local MP Pamela Nash.

A large number of people turned out for this meeting which shows clearly that there is a real concern about the future of our local post offices and also that people value them.

Over the past few weeks I have received several hundred cards calling on post offices to continue to be able to deliver a range of government services such as driving licences, vehicle tax discs and other DVLA services. As Shadow Minister for Postal Affairs, I have been pushing the Government on this.

Therefore, I very much welcomed the announcement that the Post Office has been chosen as the front office counter service provider for motoring services from next April.

This has come about through the campaigning and hard work of many individuals and organisations, including the fantastic postcard campaign orchestrated by the National Federation of Subpostmasters and the Communication Workers Union (CWU). Indeed, only a matter of weeks ago it was confirmed to me by the Department that the announcement on this contract would be delayed until the end of November. It looks like the pressure has got to them. Nevertheless, it is welcome, as the network's survival will be very much dependent on government contracts of this sort and customers' ability to access these services through their post office.

I know that people across South Edinburgh appreciate their Post Offices and want to see government services being made available at their local branch.



Prostate Cancer Care

I'm backing the Prostate Cancer UK initiative to ensure that men with prostate cancer receive the best possible care and support regardless of where they live throughout the UK.

Prostate Cancer UK's 'Quality Checklist: Your Standards of Care' outlines what support men with prostate cancer should expect to receive from the health service through every step of their treatment journey. The organisation is concerned that the Scottish Quality Performance Indicators,

which are meant to outline the quality of care men should expect to receive in Scotland, are far from comprehensive and do not include many aspects of care that matter most to men.

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men. It is incredibly important that we do all we can to ensure all men affected by the disease get the care and support they need.

To view the Quality Checklist please visit prostatecanceruk.org/qualityca

PAYDAY LOANS

As the economy stagnates and wages don't stretch as far as they did previously, many people are turning to the payday loan industry. There is no doubt that there is a market for these services but we have heard too often recently of people using them simply to pay household bills.

Recently, a report from the Office for Fair Trading highlighted more deficiencies in the payday loan sector. It is becoming clear that the sector is out of control and the Government has failed to properly regulate it to protect some of the most vulnerable people in our communities.

A robust regulatory regime could resolve the initial concerns highlighted by the OFT by providing a framework to restrict the amount borrowed, the number of loans, the overall cost of the borrowing, the measures for affordability checking, the procedures for passporting customers to debt management agencies and the duty of care for payday loan customers. The UK market is flooded as payday loan companies have come from the US following a regulatory regime being put in place there. We must protect vulnerable customers and people who get into a spiral of debt

I was delighted that last the week, the Government confirmed that it will consider a

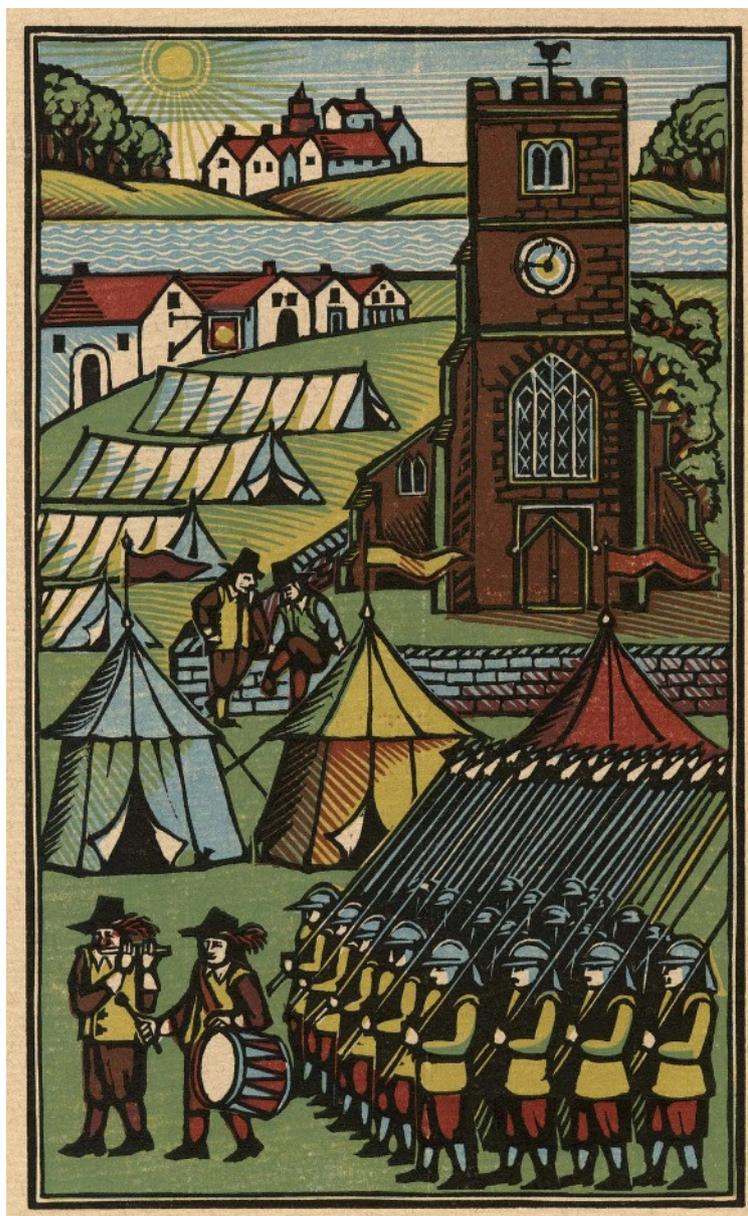
Labour amendment to the Financial Services Bill in the House of Lords. The amendment looks to give new Financial Conduct Authority clear powers to tackle the overall cost and duration of these high-cost loans where they cause consumer detriment.

My colleague in the Scottish Parliament, Kezia Dugdale MSP, has also received a high volume of casework from people regarding the rapid boom of so called "Pay Day" loan companies, and she has been running a "Debtbusters" campaign to highlight the problems and to make sure people have access to financial advice. Click here for information on where to go for debt advice - www.keziadugdale.com/debtbusters/debt-advice)

Whilst the regulation of pay day loan lenders is an issue reserved to the UK Parliament, the issue of debt is very much an issue which the Scottish Parliament can act upon. Part of the action she is taking involves seeking to change the law so that the Scottish Government provides more support to families in high levels of debt, struggling to get by. My Labour and Coop colleague, Stella Creasy MP, has also been leading a campaign to better regulate PayDay Loan lenders in Westminster and you can keep up with her campaign here - www.keziadugdale.com/debtbusters



A Radical Past



This month, I'm delighted to include a special feature by **Richard Ascough**.

Richard worked in the trade union movement for many years and has great knowledge on the history of Parliament.

This is the first of an occasional series in regard to neglected events in Britain's radical past.

Last year, The Guardian newspaper asked readers to nominate such neglected events. There were a number of nominations for events such as The Chartists, Peterloo and more modern events such as the Orgreave Coking Plant in Yorkshire with its symbolic role in the 1984-1985 Miners' Strike.

There was though one overwhelming winner which was the Putney Debates which took place in 1647.

One can still find the sight of these debates at Putney Parish Church which nestles alongside Putney Bridge and the River Thames. Although partially rebuilt in the 19th century and then again following a fire in the 20th century, there are still reminders of the church as it existed in 1647.

The 1640s marked what some historians would call the English Revolution and some the English Civil War. By this time the Parliamentary forces had all but won the war. Marston Moor and Naseby were behind them and the New Model Army had crushed the Royalist forces and King Charles I was in custody.

Despite these successes there was a feeling amongst the rank and file in particular, that Parliament and the Army Generals, who were known as "Grandeess", were preparing to sell them out. By this time the New Model Army was a hotbed of radicalism; in particular taken up by the Leveller agitators within the Army. The Levellers were in many respects the first political party and their most outstanding leader was John Lilburne.

The Levellers had drawn up an Agreement of the People which was a radical text proposing constitutional settlement. Amongst other things it called for religious toleration, a general amnesty and laws that applied to everyone. It called for two-yearly Parliaments and an equal distribution of MPs Seats. It should be borne in mind that this was nearly 200 years before the Great Reform Act of 1832 which extended the electorate in England and Wales from 400,000 to 650,000 (males only), in a population of some 14 million.

The General Council of the New Model Army met at Putney Church in October 1647. The Grandeess were represented by Oliver Cromwell and his son-in-law Henry Ireton. The debates that followed were groundbreaking discussions of basic political thinking. For the first time, the most senior General was debating issues with the most junior ranking soldier. Luckily, the Army Secretary, William Clark took shorthand notes so we know what was discussed even down to the detail of exactly what was said.

On the second day of discussions, the question of who had the right to vote was discussed and it was at that time that one of the most important statements about the rights of the franchise was made by Colonel Rainsborough, who said as follows, "And therefore every man that is to live under a Government ought first by his own consent to put himself under that Government; and I do think that the poorest man in England is not at all bound in a strict sense to that Government that he had not had a voice to put himself under".

This radical statement certainly concerned the Grandeess who still believed that property should be the arbiter of who had the franchise. Ireton himself stated that the franchise should be limited to those with a fixed local interest, i.e. those with property. Rainsborough responded by "I would fain know what we have fought for: for our laws and liberties? (yet) this is the old rule that enslaves the people of England - that they should be bound by laws in which they have no voice at all!" Somewhat like more modern debates, a compromise was reached at the end which stated that the vote should be granted to all adult males excluding servants, apprentices, foreigners, beggars and women.

Later in the debates, the discussion turned to Charles I and certainly views had changed in regard to this matter. Charles was now seen as the 'Man of Blood' following the Second Civil War. From here on the establishment of the English Republic was inevitable.

What is surprising is that in almost any other country such an event would be celebrated. Perhaps it says something about the English and I have to say that it is us that must take the blame, not the British as a whole, that this celebrated radical event should have been obscure for nearly 300 years. It was only when the Clark papers were rediscovered in Worcester College, Oxford, by the Historian CH Firth, that the events of Putney started to get the recognition that they deserved. The radical Historian, Christopher Hill, who subscribed to the view that the events of the 1640s were in fact the English Revolution, began to make these radical events more well known through his various books on this part of our history. Other Historians have also of course made the events known and now there is a new edition of the Putney Debates with an introduction by Geoffrey Robertson QC published by Verso.

This is not though a period of dry academic interest; what was debated at Putney is as relevant today as it was in October 1647. Many of the Levellers' ideas were incorporated in later political thinking - Firstly in the US Constitution of the late 18th Century but also many of their ideas found their way into Socialist thinking and there are still ideas that were expressed in those cold days in October in Putney which we could still use today such as a secular constitution.

If you have any suggestions for local events which may be of interest, please drop me an email with the details and I'll be happy to post it on this page.

Festive Fairs

Many local schools and community organisation will be holding their annual Festive fairs over the next few weeks. If there is one near you, please do go along and show your support. Check out a few of them in the following pages.

They raise valuable funds for local school parent councils and community groups. Plus, you can get most, if not all of you Christmas shopping done.

Thank you to everyone who gives up their time to help at these events.

Bridgend Inspiring Growth Farmhouse Renovation Project

Annual General Meeting

And Winter Celebration

December 9th 2-3.30pm

**Bridgend Allotments Barn
41 Old Dalkeith Road, EH164TE**

**Free homebaking and
hot wintery refreshments available**



This year (2012) we have:

- Established ourselves as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation
- Carried out an intergenerational storytelling project with Liberton Primary and Inchview. Printed and electronic book of stories available on request if you would like one
- Began developing a business plan for the farmhouse
- Written and submitted an application for funding to develop an options appraisal (awaiting feedback)

Come along to get involved in a project to renovate Bridgend Farmhouse

Open to all and we would love you to get involved If you would like to become a member, volunteer or nominate anyone to become a Trustee please contact

bridgendfarmhse@gmail.com

Or Call ; 07949230245

If you need directions or assistance with travel please let us know



Bridgend Inspiring Growth

Bridgend Inspiring Growth is a Scottish Registered Charity No SCO42769

Oh What Fun!

Bruntsfield
Christmas Evening

Wednesday 5TH December

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

6:15pm AT HOLY CORNER

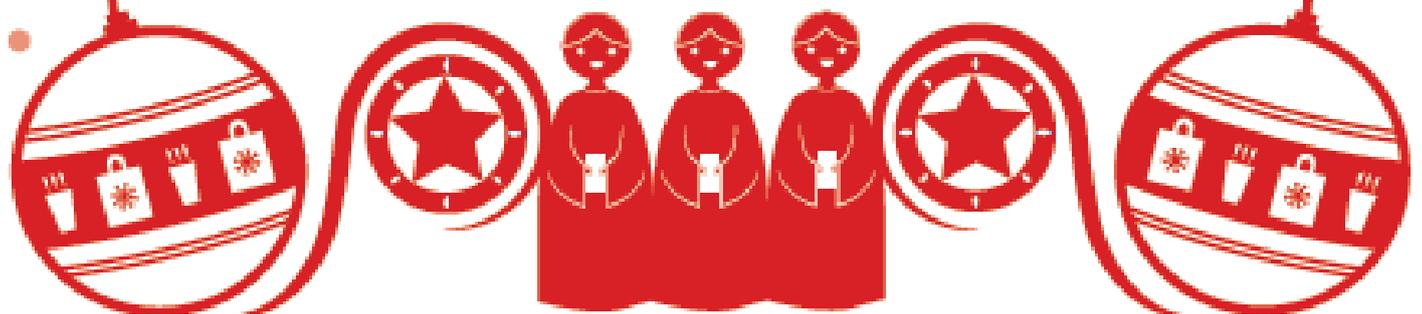
**FREE PRIZE DRAW ★ CAROL SINGING
MINCE PIES & WINTER WARMERS**

AT THE CHOCOLATE TREE

WINE TASTING

AT ODDBINS

*Shops open until 8pm with festive drinks,
nibbles, gifts and shopping galore!*



Design by www.eskimoonline.com

www.ianmurraymp.co.uk



Bruntsfield Christmas Lights Switch-on



**Wednesday 5 December
6.15pm**



Eric Liddell Centre Steps, Holy Corner

with

**Cinderella, her two Ugly Sisters and Monique (the
Baddie!) from the Lyceum Christmas show**

plus

Forgotten Carols by Songworks Community Choir

Seasonal refreshments

Santa Claus

(5.30 – 8.30pm) Christmas Market with Food, Gifts & Crafts

Bucket collection in aid of
Dementia Care Services.

ALL WELCOME!

organised by

Morchiston Community Council, supported by City of Edinburgh Council and
George Watson's College



www.morchistoncc.org.uk

James Gillespie's High School

SENIOR DRAMA PRODUCTION - 'THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST'

This vibrant drama production takes place on Friday 7th December at 7.00pm in the school hall.

This involves pupils from S4 to S6 who have worked incredibly hard over the past couple of months to put on a quality production.

Tickets are priced at £5/£2.50 concession, and will be available to buy during interval every day from Monday 3rd December.

Tickets will also be available on the door on the night. Doors open at 6.30pm.

CEILIDH AND CONCERT - FRIDAY THE 14TH DECEMBER

A message from Ann Campbell

We are throwing a concert and ceilidh to help raise funds to support Outdoor Education in James Gillespies. The school is already running a large Duke of Edinburgh programme that we want to support and we also want to extend the outdoor opportunities to more youngsters in the school who don't or can't access the DofE programme.

The award winning singer Mairi Campbell will perform from 7.30 till 8.30 and there will be plentiful cakes and drinks available.

In the second half 'The Auld Reekie Ceilidh band' will perform for dancing till 10.30pm. It should be a great night.

All this and more will be taking place on Friday the 14th of December from 7:30 pm in the School Hall.

Tickets: Adults £8 / Pupils and younger £4

Tickets available from me (please email Ann.Campbell@jamesgillespies.edin.sch.uk) and will be sold closer to the time to senior pupils and on the door. Please come and bring as many friends and family that you can gather together.

CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Tuesday 18th December 2012 7:30pm in the Usher Hall

James Gillespie's High School is returning to the Usher Hall for the annual Christmas Concert. Many years ago JGHS held the Christmas Concert in the Usher Hall before it was refurbished. Our current S6 pupils performed as Primary 7 pupils from the various feeder primary schools. The show attracted parents, teachers, and JGHS alumni students.

This year we are calling for all ex-pupils to return to the Usher Hall stage for an alumni choir. Obviously we are encouraging all pupils at JGHS to take part in this wonderful event at Christmas time. There are so many opportunities to be involved in the show by joining choirs, bands and orchestras.

Support this tradition and help JGHS make magic once again in this wonderful venue.

Tickets on sale from the Usher Hall Box Office

Ticket Prices: £10/ £8/ £6

Marchmont and Sciennes Community Council

LIGHTING THE CHRISTMAS TREE!

at Warrender Park Road / Marchmont Crescent, on

SATURDAY 8TH DECEMBER AT 4.30PM

with Ian Murray MP

and afterwards at

THE GERMAN SPEAKING CHURCH, CHALMERS CRESCENT*

where we will have more music, mulled wine and
mince pies, and a free Christmas raffle, from
5.00pm

*Admission to this event at the Church is
FREE but TICKETED.

Collect your tickets from STEWARDS at the TREE

Morningside Christmas Lights

Thursday 6 December
at Morningside Clock

Entertainments from 6.15
Mulled wine and mince pies



Switch-on at 7.00

MORNINGSIDE
COMMUNITY COUNCIL
and

Morningside Traders Association

All Welcome

IAN MURRAY MP

Your Member of Parliament for Edinburgh South

Twice Weekly Advice Sessions

Every Monday and Friday at 9.15am

At 31 Minto Street

Just drop in - no appointment necessary

Every 3rd Saturday of the month

9am - Gracemount Leisure Centre

10am - Liberton High School

11am - Constituency Office, 31 Minto Street

Noon - The Open Door, 420 Morningside Road