

Parliamentary Patter



October 2011 Issue 3 Parliamentary Report: John Mason MSP

HOUSING MUST BE TOP PRIORITY, SAYS JOHN

SNP Member of the Scottish Parliament for Glasgow Shettleston, John Mason, has called upon the Scottish Government to make housing a top priority for the foreseeable future.

Speaking in the Scottish Parliament - first during the Scottish Government's housing debate - and then during general questions, the East End MSP called for the SNP Government's focus to be on building more housing.

Mr Mason, who previously worked for three housing associations, welcomed the Scottish Government's success with transport projects such as the M74 extension and the new Airdrie-Bathgate rail line, which links Glasgow and Edinburgh, but said that as well as transport, housing should be a top priority over the next five years.

Speaking from Holyrood, John Mason MSP said:

"We have had a string of welcome investments in

the transport infrastructure, which have been great but, personally, I believe the top focus must be building new affordable, socially rented housing.

"The main issue constituents speak to me about is housing. Over 50% of the casework I deal with relates to housing and there is clearly a real shortage of good quality, affordable housing in Glasgow.

"As well as improving the quality of people's lives, I believe that more house building will stimulate the economy and create jobs which can only be a good thing during these tough times.

"In Government the SNP have already built a record number of new affordable houses, but we must go even further than that. I was challenged in this morning's debate to make housing my priority and only minutes later I raised this with Ministers during general questions. My personal commitment to new housing - along with better primary schools - is my top priority over the

next five years and I will continue to make that case in the Scottish Parliament".

MSP AND EAST ENDERS RAISE OVER £200 FOR CANCER CHARITY

John Mason recently held a successful coffee morning to raise funds for MacMillan Cancer Research.

The East End MSP, who was taking part in MacMillan's "World Biggest Coffee Morning", helped to raise over £200 for the cancer charity at his Constituency Office coffee morning.

Praising East End residents for their generosity, the SNP's John Mason MSP said:

"Well done to the generous people of the East End for supporting our MacMillan Coffee Morning. Early indications show that we've raised over £200 and a number of people have also pledged donations on my facebook page.

MSP SEEKS CARMYLE RESIDENTS VIEW ON PHONE MAST

SNP MSP for Glasgow Shettleston, John Mason, has been surveying local residents in Carmyle, asking for their views on a proposed mobile phone mast by o2 and Vodafone.

Following a public meeting in Carmyle Parish Church with local residents and Mono planning consultants, Mr Mason undertook to survey 500 houses living closest to each of the three potential sites.

The East End MSP recently helped deliver around 500 residents' surveys asking people for their view on the proposed mobile phone mast. Carmyle residents have been asked to indicate which option they think is most suitable to site the mast. The planning company have proposed three sites where the mast could go. These include the junction of Carmyle Avenue and River Road or the junction of Park Road and River Road or, finally, adjacent to local shops on Estate Road.

Commenting, SNP MSP for Shettleston, John Mason – who represents Carmyle – said:

“These companies have been given huge powers by Westminster and I fear it will be difficult to stop the mast being erected altogether.

“Where we might have more success, however, is in persuading them to put it somewhere that is reasonably acceptable to local residents.

“According to the companies, the mast has to go roughly within the area bounded by Estate Road, Park Road, River Road, and Carmyle Avenue. It is a small area because these newer 3G masts cannot reach a wide area so I am afraid this does not give us much room for manoeuvre.

“I have delivered surveys to around 500 properties in Carmyle and we have given residents until 24th October to respond. The companies have agreed not to formally apply for planning permission until they hear the result of this survey. However, we must stress that this survey is only for guidance and the final decision will be made by Glasgow City Council, who I hope will make the right decision for Carmyle”.

JOHN MASON URGES COUNCIL TO BE 'CONSISTENT'



MSP for Shettleston, John Mason, has welcomed Glasgow City Council's decision to increase the living wage from £7.15 an hour to £7.20.

The Shettleston MSP, who has argued for the living wage to be rolled out into the private sector, is calling on Glasgow City Council Leader, Gordon Matheson, to be consistent and ensure that the living wage is also paid by the Council's contractors and to temporary staff.

In a recent exchange with Finance Secretary John Swinney at Holyrood, Mr Mason called for Scotland to have powers to set the National Minimum Wage, which would have the effect of the living wage being extended to the private sector.

SNP Member of the Scottish Parliament for Glasgow Shettleston, John Mason, commented:

“It's time for Gordon Matheson to step up to the mark and be consistent here. Yes, it's good that the Council is increasing the living wage but if Councillor Matheson really believes, that for many people, work is the best and most suitable route out of poverty – as I do – then he should be consistent and ensure that Council contractors and temporary staff are also paid a living wage. It's only fair.

“As I said in Holyrood a fortnight ago, I would go one step further and ensure that the private sector is also committed to paying this living wage. The National Minimum Wage is too low and both the previous Labour and now coalition governments have done absolutely nothing to pay a minimum wage that truly reflects today's cost of living”.