

Gordon Macdonald

Member of the Scottish Parliament

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Delivering for the people of
Edinburgh Pentlands



Redford Barracks “Closure Plan”



It is seemingly still the intention of the UK Government to close Redford Barracks as part of a plan to close eight military bases in Scotland. The plan also includes the closure of nearby Craigiehall in Edinburgh and Glencourse in Penicuik.

Gordon Macdonald MSP has again recently contacted the UK defence minister, Gavin Williamson, urging him to rethink the future of Redford Barracks — especially given that a recent report by the National Audit Office had concluded that the closure plan did not deliver guaranteed savings.

Commenting, Gordon said, “The UK Government is displaying a complete disregard for the jobs and communities who depend on the base.”

Gordon highlighted to the Defence Secretary that there has been little consultation or consideration for the communities involved and further requested that the MoD clarify their closure strategy and what they plan to do to support those affected.

Further commenting, Gordon emphasised that, “There needs to be a consideration of the economic and social impact of this decision. The Tories think they can do whatever they want to Scotland and get away with it — this seems to be less of an attempt to optimise the defence estate, as they claim, but simply a case of centralisation and asset stripping.”

Nuclear Convoys in Safety Incidents



Eight times a year, an Army convoy carrying nuclear warheads and material use the Edinburgh bypass on route from Coulport, where the weapons are stored, to the Atomic Weapons plant in Berkshire, where they are maintained. Gordon spoke on this and the importance of community safety in Parliament.

Commenting, Gordon said, “People who live along the route have never been informed what to do in the event of an accident. It would likely require total evacuation of all west Edinburgh, including schools, two universities, and a college. The UK Government cannot even prepare for an accident.

“I have called for a ban on the convoys as a first step towards completely removing nuclear weapons from Scotland.”

Out and About...

Schools Closure Update



The Council Education Committee met on 22 May to consider the responses to the consultation of the West & South West Schools Review. The meeting concluded more information was required.

The committee will publish a report on 15 June, ahead of the next committee on 21 June 2018, at which the decision will be made.

I have made it clear that they need to consider what will be left in Wester Hailes if the WHEC goes? There is only one community centre, Clovenstone — Calder community centre has closed, the Wood Centre has become a postal centre, and there are few play areas. If Wester Hailes loses the WHEC, they also lose a swimming pool, gym, adult education classes, and a place to host events.

As, I underlined in a recent Evening News article, I, and most of communities affected, have been clear that the bottom line is that the four schools — Balerno, Currie, Woodlands, and the WHEC — must remain open and on their current sites. Only "Option 1" of the alternative options would see this happen.

New Homes for Rent at Fernieflat Neuk



Work on 37 new council for rent homes is nearing completion for allocation in July.

The homes will be let via EdIndex and will be available for new movers and existing tenant to bid on.

The development will consist of 15 terraced (three-bed) properties, 22 flats (one- and two-beds). 3 properties will be wheelchair accessible.

Commenting, Gordon noted, "This is a small but positive contribution towards meeting the housing challenges we face in Edinburgh."

Firrhill High S3 Mental Health Awareness



As part of Mental Health Awareness Week, Gordon attended a presentation by S3 students from Firrhill High School to see the work undertaken by them with Barnardo's Scotland.

The students took part in a two-day research project that involved creating their own survey, which they then used to gather views of young people about mental health.

Congratulating them on winning 2nd place, Gordon said, "This was a meaningful task that helped raise mental health awareness. I'm keen to see what other schools are doing in this area."

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Gordon Macdonald MSP



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Monthly Surgeries — No appointment needed

- 1st Monday of the month, 6.30pm Wester Hailes Library
- 2nd Monday of the month, 6.30pm Carrickvale Community Centre
- 3rd Monday of the month, 6.30pm Currie Library
- 4th Monday of the month, 6.30pm Oxbgangs Library
- 5th Monday of the month, 6.30pm Ratho Community Centre

NB: NO SURGERIES DURING PUBLIC AND BANK HOLIDAYS

Working for Edinburgh Pentlands