

June  
2019

# Gordon Macdonald

Member of the Scottish Parliament  
for Edinburgh Pentlands



## Westside Plaza Revamp



£400,000 has been allocated by City of Edinburgh Council towards Phase Two of regeneration works at the Westside Plaza in Wester Hailes. The funding is from the Scottish Government's Town Centre Fund.

The works will include the delivery of a community green and educational garden containing semi-mature seasonal trees and planting, children's play facilities, street furniture, improved lighting, resolution of change in levels across the site, revamping of existing columns with art and signage, and the creation of a local market space.

Gordon welcomed the news by saying, "This is great news for the community and is well-deserved after all the effort put in."

In 2018, the Scottish Government allocated £20,000 to enable development of a master plan for the civic square.

Gordon continued, "We asked local residents to offer their views on the current civic square as part of Wester Hailes Community Trust's Making Places: Westside Plaza project. Community drop in sessions were also held at the Clovenstone Community Centre and WHALE Arts Centre.

"Now the plans developed by this community-led design process, where local people worked with architects, planners, and others to create a Local Place Plan for the future of the Plaza, are being funded and built."

The Plaza is now intended to become a focal point for the community where activities and events can take place.

## Visa Controls Impact Edinburgh Festival



Gordon led a debate in Parliament on the UK Government's hostile environment and the "truly devastating" impact it is having on the ability to attract international guests to Edinburgh's festivals.

Since the Tory government introduced hard-line visa controls, performers have been hit by refusals and delays, with some acclaimed writers, actors, and musicians forced to cancel visits.

Speaking in his debate, Gordon said "The Edinburgh Festival Fringe is the world's largest arts festival, and the city is well recognised for its world-leading festival scene. Artists are facing a humiliating application process. Their visas are being refused. The festivals rely on the seamless flow of artists from across the world and it's time for the UK Government to listen."

# Out and About...

## Traditional Building Skills



Gordon attended a demonstration of traditional building skills at the Scottish Parliament.

The Scottish Traditional Building Forum delivered a presentation where school children from Edinburgh, Glasgow, Falkirk and Fife were able to experience a hands on mini-masterclass in roof slating, stonemasonry, painting and decorating, and joinery. The mini-masterclasses were given by apprentices from Edinburgh College, Glasgow College, Dundee & Angus College, the University of Edinburgh, and the National Federation of Roofing Contractors.

Gordon said, "It was an interesting experience trying my hand at some of the trades, which shows the quality of our modern apprenticeships. I discussed the routes into employment and their training with the apprentices".

The Scottish Traditional Building Forum works to raise the profile of specific issues relating to traditional buildings and building practices, in particular the need to address the condition of Scotland's traditional buildings.

## Homes for Social Rent



Edinburgh Council have received the remainder of the 32 new homes for social rent at Hailesland Place and are currently handing them over to their first tenants.

Gordon has welcomed the news, saying, "There is great need for social housing and this demonstrates the commitment of the Council and Scottish Government.

The 10 houses and 22 flats are high quality and were delivered as part of the Council's Small Sites Affordable Homes programme. The energy-efficient homes have roof-mounted solar PV panels.

## The BIG Project



Gordon attended a performance of a short play from BIG Drama of the BIG Project on the theme of "getting older".

The performance, held at St David's Church Hall in Broomhouse, featured a selection of original and cover songs.

Gordon said, "I was thoroughly impressed by the ability of the young people who composed and performed in the play.

"It is great to see that the BIG Project are able to nurture and encourage local young talent. I expect many will go on to bigger things in future."

### Contact Details

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### Monthly Surgeries — No appointment needed

1<sup>st</sup> Monday of the month, 6.30pm Wester Hailes Library

2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of the month, 6.30pm Carrickvale Community Centre

3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month, 6.30pm Currie Library

4<sup>th</sup> Monday of the month, 6.30pm Oxfgangs Library (Not 24 Dec)

5<sup>th</sup> Monday of the month, 6.30pm Ratho Com. Centre (Not 31 Dec)

NB: NO SURGERIES DURING PUBLIC AND BANK HOLIDAYS

## Working for Edinburgh Pentlands