



Member of the Scottish Parliament for Edinburgh Pentlands

Gordon Macdonald MSP

August 2023 Newsletter

Disposal of Closed Police Station



Police Scotland are consulting on the potential disposal of the site of the former Balerno Police Station, 13-15 Bridge Road, which closed in 2015.

Balerno Police Station has not been in operational use for an extended period. Local policing services have been effectively delivered by Response and Community Officers and police staff colleagues based in other local stations with ongoing support offered by officers and staff across Police Scotland’s Specialist Divisions.

Gordon commented, “The station has not been in active use for many years and no longer complies with Police Scotland’s 2019 Estate Strategy. As a public body, Police Scotland are required to make effective and efficient use of public funds, and, therefore, dispose of unused assets because whilst the station is no longer in operational use, it continues to incur day-to-day running costs and ongoing repairs and maintenance.

The views of the communities, including local representatives and stakeholders will be considered and no formal decision has been made so far. The matter will also be considered by the Culture and Communities Committee of the Council and the Edinburgh Partnership.

Gordon continued, “Given the pressure on public finances, it is imperative that we make the best use of the police budget. I would welcome your views. Please email me at gordon.macdonald.msp@parliament.scot.”

Wester Hailes Community Carnival



Gordon attended the recent Wester Hailes Community Carnival Showcase held at the Westside Plaza. The event, celebrating the local area, was organised by Edinburgh Art Festival, Community Wellbeing Collective, SCOREscotland, and Edinburgh Festival Carnival.

The carnival held a parade with costumes, Caribbean-inspired food, afro-hair styling, face painting, arts and crafts, music, dance and Edinburgh Carnival performers. This was the culmination of work by MACS (Motivation Art Culture Stories) After-school Club.

Gordon noted, “It was a fantastic day out filled with music, costumes, and dance. Thanks to the organisers and participants — the local community certainly enjoyed it!

“Hopefully, this can be an annual event that can continue to bring people together”.

Changes to Service Bus Route 10



Bonaly Road between its junctions with Woodhall Road and Munro Drive, is to be closed due to gas mains upgrading works (there will be local access). The works will take up to 13 weeks and will also impact on the service bus route 10.

The updated bus route can be seen in the map above.

Margaret Halkett, National Youth Work Award Finalist



Gordon presented Margaret Halkett, a local volunteer, with a framed Parliamentary motion congratulating her on becoming a Volunteer Youth Worker Award finalist

at the Youthlinks National Youth Work Awards 2023 held in Glasgow.

13 years ago, Margaret began volunteering with The BIG Project in Broomhouse, which supports children and young people aged five to 18 to “learn, achieve, have fun and feel good about themselves”.

Gordon commented, “Her expertise has enabled her to provide the perfect level of challenge for young people, allowing them to learn new skills and have fun. I was pleased to recognise her dedication and passion for youth work.”

Youth Community Voices



The Youth Community Voices project by SCOREscotland is calling for young people to join.

The group is for any young person aged 13+ who lives in South

West Edinburgh, who would like a safe space to explore issues of racism, islamophobia, and create their own education programme, and share each other’s heritage and culture while doing fun activities.

Gordon said, “The project is a cross-cultural learning project that includes anti-racist peer education. This is a great way to open up discussions around racism, race, hate crimes, and power and privilege”.

You can send them a short video or audio recording detailing why you would like to be part of the project to 07504826683 (scan the QR code for the leaflet).

Renewing Scotland’s Play Parks



COSLA and the Scottish Government have agreed £50 million in funding to local authorities over the next three years for refurbishment of children’s play parks.

Children will have access to high quality play areas, which will remain free of charge, as a result of new investment.

Up to 2025/26, Edinburgh will benefit from £4.9 million in Scottish Government funding to renew public, free-to-access play parks.

Gordon noted, “Outdoor play provides huge benefits to children’s physical and mental wellbeing. Provision of play parks can ensure children have access to high quality safe environments that are free of charge as families face the cost of living crisis.”

Scottish COVID-19 Inquiry



The Scottish COVID-19 Inquiry has launched its listening project, *Let's Be Heard*. This will be the main way in which you can take part in the Inquiry by sharing your

experiences of the pandemic.

The Inquiry is investigating the devolved strategic response to the coronavirus pandemic in Scotland between 1 January 2020 and 31 December 2022.

Gordon stated, “This is your opportunity to let the Scottish Government know your thoughts on how we dealt with the pandemic.”

You can complete the form online at bh.covid19inquiry.scot, order one by contacting LetsBeHeard@covid19inquiry.scot or by leaving a voicemail on 0808 175 5555.

Contact Gordon Macdonald MSP

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Gordon holds open weekly surgeries for constituents every Friday at 10am.

The locations for these can be found at: <https://www.gordonmacdonaldmsp.info/surgery>