



Member of the Scottish Parliament for Edinburgh Pentlands

Gordon Macdonald MSP

December 2023 Newsletter

Have YOU Claimed YOUR Pension Credit?

£332m of Pension Credit goes unclaimed every year in Scotland

Check in | 0800 12 44 222 | Cash out

Age Scotland
Love later life

Gordon and Age Scotland are urging low income pensioners in Edinburgh to claim for Pension Credits.

Pension Credit helps those over State Pension Age on low income with the cost of living. It tops up a single person's weekly income to £201.05 and to £306.85 for couple, contributing around £1,900 on average for each entitled household each year. However, across Scotland 123,000 eligible households did not claim Pension Credit this year.

Gordon said, "With growing numbers of older people struggling to cope with the rising cost of living, there has never been a more important time to make sure you are receiving everything to which you are entitled. Every year, hundreds of millions of pounds in social security payments go unclaimed by older people due to lack of awareness, difficulty in accessing them, stigma surrounding benefits or just not knowing where to apply."

Therefore, if you are over State Pension Age and are on a low income, please check your eligibility at: www.gov.uk/pension-credit-calculator.

You can apply online: <https://apply-for-pension-credit.service.gov.uk/start> or call 0800 99 1234.

Additional help is available from Citizen Advice Money Talk (0800 0281456, www.moneytalkteam.org.uk) or from Age Scotland (0800 12 44 222, www.ageuk.org.uk/scotland).

Christmas Card 10th Anniversary Competition Winners



Pupils from Broomhouse, Canal View, and Nether Currie primary schools took part in Gordon Macdonald's 10th annual Christmas Card competition. This year's competition sponsor, Sainsbury's Superstore, Longstone, have awarded vouchers that can be spent in store to the winner and two runners-up.

The overall winner was Eydie Moffat, a P5 pupil at Nether Currie Primary School, whose design will feature on the front of the card and the designs from the runners-up Micaela Cordeiro Coelho, P5, from Broomhouse Primary School, and Riyad Hantish, P5B from Canal View Primary School, will feature on the back of the card.

Commenting, Gordon said, "We had so many excellent drawings to choose from this year. It was an incredibly difficult task to select the winning artwork. However, Eydie's design effectively captures the season. I want to thank all of the pupils who submitted entries for their hard work in creating some really great designs, they all made my job of selecting the winners very tough. I also want to thank the school staff who were instrumental in the submissions."

Scottish Parliament Votes For Gaza Ceasefire



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs) backed the First Minister's call to prevent further loss of innocent lives in Gaza.

MSPs voted for support of an immediate ceasefire and the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages held by Hamas, following a debate in the Scottish Parliament.

The chamber was unified in resolute condemnation of Hamas' abhorrent terrorist attacks and the humanitarian catastrophe unfolding in Gaza.

Gordon noted, "The UK Government needs to be supportive of breaking the political impasse that has condemned Israelis and Palestinians to successive cycles of violence. There must be a renewed, and serious international effort towards a resolution."

Home Energy Scotland Grant and Loan Scheme



Home Energy Scotland (HES) are funded by the Scottish Government and managed by Energy Saving Trust. They help people in Scotland create warmer homes, reduce their energy bills, and lower their carbon footprint.

Gordon noted, "HES work with people and organisations to help tackle fuel poverty and the climate emergency. These are key priorities for Scottish Government. HES do this through a network of regional advice centres, which offer local knowledge and expert advice on: -

- Saving energy, keeping warm, cutting water waste;
- Greener travel including electric vehicles and ebikes;
- Funding options including Scottish Government grants and interest free loans; and,
- Installing renewable energy at home.

They can be contacted on 0808 808 2282 or at www.homeenergyscotland.org/funding/grants-loans

Debate on Independent Convenience Stores



Gordon hosted a debate on independent convenience stores in the Scottish Parliament.

Gordon highlighted the important role of the sector in the economy and the essential

contribution that they make to their communities.

Gordon said, "Across Scotland, there are 5,171 convenience stores, many of which are open 24/7. They provide more than 49,000 local jobs for local people and support further employment across the town or city in which they are located through their use of local tradesmen, produce suppliers, shopfitters, garages, and local legal and accountancy firms.

Gordon further noted that "81% of retailers have been engaged in some form of community activity in the past year. That takes many forms, including collecting for charities, providing funding for local events or sponsoring local sports teams."

Supported Bus Services



Gordon has welcomed a report by the Council announcing revisions to the existing supported bus services network. The routes align with the City Mobility Plan and Net Zero objectives.

The new routes are: -


- Gyle - Ratho Station - Ratho - Hermiston Park & Ride
- Queensferry - Kirkliston - Newbridge - Gyle
- Craighleith - Ravelston Dykes - City Centre - Dumbiedykes
- Gyle - Clermiston - Corstorphine
- Chesser - Wester Hailes


In addition, a new service would connect Cramond - Gyle - Edinburgh Park - Sighthill - Hermiston - Currie - Balerno, improving north-south connectivity in the west of the city.


Gordon said, "This is great news for the constituency and increases public transport options for residents in Sighthill, Wester Hailes, Ratho, Currie, and Balerno."


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>