

# Gordon Macdonald

Member of the Scottish Parliament  
for Edinburgh Pentlands

September  
2021



## 50% Off at the Company Store



Gordon recently visited the Company Shop Edinburgh on Dumbryden Road in Wester Hailes and met with the manager and staff.

Company Store is a surplus redistribution super-market, providing high-quality, low-cost food to

registered members. All the food and products sold within the store are in date and perfectly good to eat but have been deemed "surplus".

These items may have otherwise gone to waste due to incorrect or wonky labelling, seasonal packaging or overstock – amongst many other reasons. As such, the products sold are on average around 50% off the normal retail price, which can really help a family budget.

Members can therefore access food and products from their favourite household brands - including Waitrose, Nestle, Iceland and Tesco – at deeply discounted prices.

After his visit, Gordon noted, "It was great to visit the store and speak to the team. The store opened last year and brought 80 new jobs to the area. It is undoubtedly already supporting many in the local community - especially throughout the pandemic - and is helping to reduce food waste, protect the planet and feed hard-working families.

"Membership of the Company Store is open to those working in the NHS, emergency services, social care (care homes, hospices), food manufacturing supply chain, the British Army, and prison services. Due to the pandemic, the Company Store have also extended their membership to families receiving means-tested benefits."

Membership is completely free and lasts a lifetime. In order to gain membership, please fill in an application form online, at [www.companystoregroup.co.uk](http://www.companystoregroup.co.uk).

## Under 22s Free Bus Travel



All residents in Scotland under the age of 22 will be eligible for free bus travel from 31 January 2022.

The Scottish Government has confirmed the timetable for the roll out, delivered in partnership with the Improvement Service, the National Entitlement Card Programme Office and Young Scot.

Gordon welcomed the news that means "around 930,000 young people will be able to join the third of Scotland's population who already benefit from free bus travel through the Older and Disabled Persons Free Bus scheme.

"It will also embed sustainable travel behaviour from a young age and help reach our world-leading goal of reducing the number of kilometres travelled by car by 20% by 2030 and reaching net zero emissions by 2045."

# ALSO THIS MONTH...

## Long COVID



Sadly, long Covid has impacted around 80,000 people in Scotland. It can cause debilitating respiratory, cardiological, and neurological symptoms.

During both of the virtual recalls of parliament over summer recess, Gordon raised the topic with the First Minister.

Firstly, Gordon asked about how the easing of restrictions was being balanced against the risks of long Covid — particularly its impact on young people. The First Minister highlighted that caution is key to the Government's approach - especially with an increased understanding of how many people long Covid could impact and the increased pressure on it could put on our NHS.

In a later question, the First Minister confirmed that there are currently nine research projects on long Covid to help build services needed and that the Scottish Government are working closely with Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland to understand the views and experiences of people who are now living with long-term conditions.

## Local Heroes



Gordon lodged a motion in Parliament recognising the contribution of community champions during the pandemic.

In particular, the motion thanked Linda Williams of Premier Broadway Convenience Store in Oxfangs, for her continuing efforts to raise and disburse funds and donations from a hardship fund that she started at the beginning of lockdown in 2020.

Gordon said, "It's quite incredible. Linda initially set up the hardship fund with the goal of raising £300 to help locals who were adversely affected by lockdown, and went on to raise over £9,000 in the first two weeks which was then met by a further £1,000 donation from the store. I am pleased to be able to recognise this amazing effort."

## Changes to Fire Safety



Homeowners are being urged to install interlinked heat and smoke alarms before new safety laws come into effect next year.

Gordon noted, "From February 2022, all homeowners will be required to have interlinked alarms under legislation brought forward after the Grenfell Tower tragedy in 2017.

"These alarms significantly reduce casualties by alerting everybody in a property to a fire. Most homes will also require a carbon monoxide alarm.

"The Scottish Government is providing financial support to the Home Fire Safety Visit programme to allow the new standard alarms to be fitted in the homes of those identified through a robust criteria as being at higher risk."

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### Monthly Surgeries

Due to the ongoing public health concern, in the interest of public and staff safety, Gordon's surgeries are suspended until further notice but he will continue to handle enquiries as usual.

## Working for Edinburgh Pentlands