

Gordon Macdonald

Member of the Scottish Parliament
for Edinburgh Pentlands

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2021 Programme for Government and Push for Independence



COVID-19 has been the single greatest public health crisis of our lifetimes. The impact on our health, economy, and our whole way of life, has been profound. The Scottish Government detailed their annual Programme for Government at the beginning of this month focussed on protecting Scotland against the continued risk from COVID-19 and build back a fairer and stronger country.

We have an opportunity, not simply to go back to how things were, but to address many of the deep-seated challenges our country faces.

The Programme for Government 2020-21 is based on a determination to recover from this virus and deliver a fairer, greener and more prosperous Scotland for everyone. The Scottish Government commits to:-

- Launch a proximity tracing app, Protect Scotland, to enhance and support our test and protect programme (can be downloaded now).
- Introduce a National Transition Training Fund to support up to 10,000 people facing redundancy and unemployment.
- Create a Scottish Youth Guarantee offering work, education, or training to every young person.
- £1.6 billion towards low carbon funding including energy efficiency in homes and buildings.
- Establish an Independent Review of adult social care — the review will set out how adult social care can be reformed to deliver a national approach to care and support services.
- Improve access to community-based health services through the launch of Pharmacy First.
- Open applications for our new Scottish Child Payment in Nov 2020, with first payments from Feb 2021.
- Complete 50,000 affordable homes (when safe to do so), and set a 20-year vision for energy efficient, zero carbon housing.
- Deliver a revolution in children's rights by incorporating the UNCRC into Scots law by the end of this parliament.
- £500 million for transformational active travel infrastructure.
- Digital technology for 50,000 people to get connected.
- £135 million to ensure young people catch-up on any lost education, with 1400 additional teachers and 200 support staff.

However, more could be achieved if we were an independent country, that is why, before the end of this Parliament, we will publish a draft Bill, setting out the proposed terms and timing of an independence referendum, as well as the proposed question that people will be asked in that referendum.

Representing: Baberton, Balerno, Blinkbonny, Bonaly, Broomhouse, Buckstone, Calders, Colinton, Colinton Mains, Currie, Dregghorn, Fairmilehead, Firrhill, Hermiston, Juniper Green, Kingsknowe, Longstone, Oxfangs, Parkhead, Ratho, Redhall, Saughton Mains, Sighthill, Spylaw, Stenhouse, Swanston, Wester Hailes and Whitson.

ALSO THIS MONTH...

Remember FACTS



The people of Scotland have been urged to remain vigilant and continue following key public health advice to ensure the coronavirus stays suppressed.

The First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, launched a awareness campaign in June across to help us to remember to comply with the public health guidance and measures that are implemented.

The campaign is called **FACTS**, an acronym to remind people of the steps they need to take:

- **“F”** - face coverings in enclosed spaces
- **“A”** - avoid crowded places
- **“C”** - clean your hands/hard surfaces regularly
- **“T”** - maintain two metre distancing
- **“S”** - self isolate and book a test if you have symptoms.

Gordon said, “If we all keep doing the right thing and follow the Scottish Government’s guidance, we are in the best position for reducing the spread of the virus and getting normality back into our lives.”

Wester Hailes Fringe of Colour



Gordon recently lodged a motion in Parliament welcoming the news that a short film created by SCOREscotland “Celebrating 50 Years of Diversity in Wester Hailes” made it to week two of @FringeofColour's online arts festival “Fringe of Colour Films”. Over 40 films made by people of colour were released throughout August 2020 via an independent streaming service as weekly collections. Each was available for seven days.

Gordon noted, “I am delighted that the SCOREscotland film celebrates the colourful diversity in Wester Hailes by uncovering stories about ethnic minorities in the community that date back as far as the 80’s, and highlights the importance of race equality work in the face of racism/hate crime.”

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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.

Coronavirus Update — Inside Homes



The main message from the Scottish Government remains to stay safe, protect others and save lives.

One of the new measures in place now mean that you cannot meet people from any other households in your home or another person’s home socially. There are a number of exceptions to this including extended households, children whose parents do not live in the same household, non-cohabiting couples, caring responsibilities and tradespeople.

Gordon commented, “The virus continues to pose real risks. As we have eased out of lockdown, we have seen an increase in cases of Covid-19. That is why the Scottish Government has acted to interrupt that growth.”

Working for Edinburgh Pentlands