



Member of the Scottish Parliament for Edinburgh Pentlands **Gordon Macdonald MSP**

April 2023 Newsletter

Humza Yousaf Elected FM



Humza Yousaf has been officially appointed as the sixth First Minister of Scotland after taking the official oath in front of the Lord President of the Court of Session and other senior judges.

The day before, he was nominated for the role by a vote in Parliament. MSPs voted 71 to 57 to select Mr Yousaf from a total of four nominees who put themselves forward. Humza Yousaf announced his intention to appoint Shona Robison as Deputy First Minister.

On securing the nomination, Humza Yousaf commented, "This is a really proud day for me and my family. I hope it is also a proud day for Scotland, as it speaks to our values as a country as I stand here as the first ever Muslim to lead a western democratic nation.

"A key priority of my government will be to protect every Scot, as far as we can, from the harm that has been inflicted by the cost-of-living crisis. We will protect and we will reform our NHS and social care and other vital public services – to support our wellbeing economy to improve the life chances of people right across our country. We will rapidly develop plans to extend childcare, improve rural housing, support small businesses, and boost innovation.

Gordon said, "I would like to congratulate Humza on being elected as the new leader of the SNP and as First Minister. I have every confidence that Humza will serve Scotland well."

Scottish Apprenticeship Week 2023



Gordon was pleased to support Scottish Apprenticeship Week 2023 with a visit to Aramark at Dregghorn Barracks. Aramark provides food services, facilities, and uniform services to organisations, such as military units, hospitals, and schools.

Gordon said, "Apprenticeship Week shows how apprenticeships can unlock potential in people and businesses. It is a celebration of how apprentices and employers can benefit through work-based learning and highlights how learning providers support apprentices to achieve."

There were 25,401 Modern Apprenticeship (MA) starts in the last financial year, and, as at 30 December 2022, there were 39,794 MAs in training. Around £100 million is invested in apprenticeships training each year from the public purse. A Scottish Government report shows that for every £1 invested in apprenticeships, up to £5 is returned in tax.

Colinton Primary School Tombola



Gordon visited pupils of Colinton Primary at their tombola stall in Colinton Mains Tesco where they raised £320 for school their camp.

Commenting, Gordon noted, "I was impressed by the enthusiasm of the children in running their stall and the support they received from local shoppers, a big well done."

Harmeny School New Logo



Harmeny Education Trust have recently unveiled their new logo and website.

The school is based in Balerno where they offer therapeutic residential care and

education to children aged 5-18 years, as well as day education in primary and early secondary years.

Neil Squires, Chief Executive, noted about the logo and website, "They beautifully reflect Harmeny's vision of being a place where some of Scotland's most remarkable young people have the love, encouragement and nourishment they need to grow and reach their potential."

Gordon agreed, "The unique setting, enhanced by new facilities, are allowing Harmeny to extend day learning and support more young people from 2024."

Big Noise Wester Hailes at Canal View PS



Gordon visited Big Noise Wester Hailes at Canal View Primary School. Gordon met with CEO Nicola Killean and Stewart Wilson the Head of Centre.

Big Noise is a high-quality music education and social change programme, where the symphony orchestra becomes a community which supports children and young people to gain vital life skills such as confidence, resilience, creativity and aspiration.

Gordon noted, "Big Noise Wester Hailes supports participants' wellbeing and helps them reach their full potential through music."

Big Noise Wester Hailes began in spring 2022 working in partnership with the Council and with Clovenstone, Canal View, and Sighthill primary schools.

Forced Adoption Apology



Nicola Sturgeon has issued a "sincere, heartfelt and unreserved" apology to people affected by the practice of forced adoption. It is estimated that 60,000

women in Scotland had babies adopted simply because they were unmarried in the 50s, 60s and 70s.

The first minister told Parliament it was time to "acknowledge the terrible wrongs that have been done" and "What happened to these women is almost impossible to comprehend".

Gordon noted, "Adoption UK are now calling on other UK governments to follow Scotland's lead in issuing a formal apology to all those who have been affected by forced adoptions. The UK Government should follow suit to meet the needs of all adopted individuals who would benefit from support."

Edinburgh Highest Uptake of Bus Passes in Scotland



A recent report has revealed that Edinburgh has the highest uptake of the Scottish Government's concessionary travel scheme at 89.4% which has provided a

wealth of new opportunities for young people.

The scheme, brought in under the leadership of Nicola Sturgeon, is the most generous in the UK, with over 2 million people across Scotland now eligible for free bus travel. Everyone in Scotland under the age of 22, everyone 60 and over, and disabled people and companions can benefit from free bus travel.

Gordon commented, "However, there remains a percentage of young people who have not yet applied for their card. If you know anyone who has yet to apply please encourage them to go to freebus.scot to find out what they need to do to apply."

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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>