



Member of the Scottish Parliament for Edinburgh Pentlands

Gordon Macdonald MSP

September 2024 Newsletter

Riccarton Mains Road Pavement Expansion Approved



Gordon and local campaigners have welcomed the agreement from city councillors to expand the pavement at Riccarton Mains Road adjacent to Currie Children's Nursery.

Gordon has been seeking an extension to pedestrian access on the west side of Riccarton Mains Road following representations from residents and nursery users for over a year. The council agreed to carry out a survey on the area which unfortunately did not reach the council threshold for action.

However, Gordon continued to pursue the case with the council on what he, and many others believed to be a serious risk for pedestrian users. Gordon sponsored the scheme, applying to the Local Traffic Improvement Programme (LTIP) and at the Transport and Environment Committee councillors agreed to accept the recommendations. The scheme has been proposed with funding of between £20,000 to £30,000 and the detailed design work is now being progressed with work scheduled to begin in 2025.

Gordon said "This is fantastic news for local residents accessing Riccarton Mains Road, and in particular the children, parents, carers, and staff at Currie Children's Nursery. The lack of adequate pavement space was a danger to everyone trying to navigate what is essentially a country road and we have pushed for pavement expansion for some time.

"The project proposal was one of 60 submitted to the LTIP with only 10 securing the funding required to progress to the next stage. I am delighted for the local community in Currie and thank those who have raised this issue and supported the campaign."

Exam Results 2024



Gordon congratulates all young people in the local area on their achievements in National 5s, Highers, Advanced Highers or technical and vocational qualifications, noting the record number of technical/vocational qualifications awarded at an increase

of almost 25% on 2024.

Those getting ready to start university or college should be aware of recent changes announced by the Scottish Government. From 2024/25 academic year students will see a £2400 increase to the annual support package which will take the undergraduate funding package to £11,400 every year.

In addition, for the first time students will also have the option to spread this support out over 12 months, meaning that students can opt to receive payments across the summer months which can be very challenging as they struggle to pay household bills.

More information on funding available can be found on Student Information Scotland's website at <https://www.studentinformation.gov.scot/>.

Surgery Notice



Due to Wester Hailes Library being closed temporarily please be advised that the next two surgeries in Wester Hailes will take place on **Friday 6th September** and **Friday 4th October** at **10-11am** at:

**The Health Agency
Wester Hailes Healthy Living Centre
30 Harvesters Way
EH14 3JF**

Cancer Patients Urged To Apply For Disability Benefits



A cancer charity, Cancer Card Scotland, has joined forces with the Scottish Government to urge people with cancer to check if they could be eligible for disability benefits.

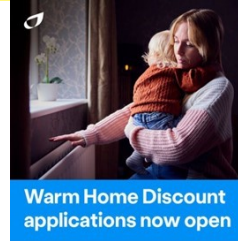
Cancer Card Scotland founder Jen Hardy MBE, who was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2017, set up Cancer Card Scotland as an online hub where people with cancer could find out about all the support available to them. Jen said:

“There is a perception that to get disability benefits someone needs to have a physical disability that is there all the time, but that’s not the case.”

Both Adult Disability Payment and Child Disability Payment are available in Scotland. Importantly, Social Security Scotland fast tracks applications for disability payments from people who are terminally ill and can take as little as 48 hours.

More [information on eligibility and how to apply](#) is available via the MyGov.scot website.

Energy Bill Support



The **Warm Homes Discount Scheme** for 2024-25 opened on 29th August for Scottish Gas customers.

The Warm Home Discount is a one-off £150 payment towards electricity bills, paid directly by energy suppliers to their customers.

The payment is targeted to those on low incomes including those who receive means tested benefits and is separate from the Energy Bill Support Scheme. **Customers must apply for the payments through their electricity suppliers before 31st March 2025.** You can check if you are eligible and apply for your payment [on British Gas’s website](#).

Additional support is available to both Scottish Gas customers and customers of other energy suppliers through the independent Scottish Gas Energy Trust. Customers can [apply for grants](#) of up to £1,500 through the Individual and Families Fund or through the Energy Support Fund which is solely funded by Scottish Gas’ profits.

Broomhouse Street Party



Gordon attended the Broomhouse Street Party, hosting a stall and joining in with the fun.

There were around 1,600 people at the event organised by Space @ The Broomhouse Hub, B Healthy Together, Community One Stop Shop, St David’s Carrick Knowe Church and The BIG Project.

The event was made possible by National Lottery funding and staff served up 2,000 meals.

Neil Hay, CEO of Space @ The Broomhouse Hub, said “We are extremely grateful to The Fringe and all the performers who came along, risked the weather, and put on a fantastic show for Broomhouse and the communities of Southwest Edinburgh”.

Gordon added “It was impressive to see such a diverse collection of acts and activities at what was a very enjoyable event for the community”.

SCOREScotland Bike Skills Project



Gordon attended a visit to SCOREScotland to see their Bike Skills Project in action at Gate 55 alongside Cabinet Secretary for Transport Fiona Hyslop.

The visit was an opportunity for the

Cabinet Secretary to meet members of the dedicated staff team and volunteers, listen to the young cycling participants and hear about the impact of their work in the local community.

Thanks to funding from sources such as Cycling Scotland and Edinburgh Council’s ‘Smarter Choices Smarter Places’, SCOREScotland have been able to offer a series of cycling skills courses tailored for different groups.

Gordon said “It was great to hear from the young people on how the project has improved their cycling proficiency. I look forward to seeing this initiative foster a culture of active travel in Wester Hailes and beyond.”

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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>