



Malcolm Bruce MP

Lib Dem MP for Gordon

Annual Report 2008



Backing a rail link for Kintore

Malcolm Bruce has continued to challenge the Governments in Holyrood and Westminster for improved local and national rail links.

Working with local colleagues he has backed calls and launched a petition for a new station at Kintore which he believes is a priority for linking the growing community to other towns such as Stonehaven and Inverurie.



Malcolm has campaigned for improved rail links to and within the North East

Malcolm explains, "Kintore is the fastest growing community in Scotland, and is facing increased road congestion. A railway station would allow local residents choice and flexibility, and should be part of a regular commuter service between Inverurie and Aberdeen."

Malcolm has also called for improvements to the Inverness-Aberdeen line and links further south including greater electrification of lines and the need for a High Speed Rail link to decrease travel times between England and Scotland. He was granted a debate in the House of Commons and asked the Transport minister for Government commitment to improve services for passengers and freight which will have long term economic, environmental and social benefits for the North East.

International development priorities

As Chair of the prestigious international development committee, Malcolm leads the House of Commons monitoring of the Department for International Development.


The Committee works on a wide range of subjects. In the past year they have launched inquiries into issues that many people have concerns about and have written to Malcolm on. These include development assistance to Palestine, refugees on the Burmese border, maternal health, the HIV/AIDS pandemic, the World Bank, assistance to Afghanistan and to Iraq, the consequences of conflict in Uganda, sanitation and water and Fairtrade.



This year looks set to be another busy year, with reports on China, West Africa and European donor co-ordination

Constituents can keep up to date on the Committee's work through the website: www.parliament.uk/indcom

Malcolm says, "Very few people realise that over half of the staff for the Department for International Development are based in Scotland at East Kilbride. This is an area where Scotland plays a major part proud to be British, and be involved in delivering aid and development through one of the most effective agencies in the world."

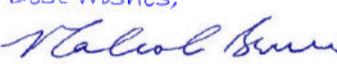

Spring 2008

Dear resident,

2008 is my jubilee year marking the 25th anniversary of my election as MP for Gordon. It is an honour to have been Member of Parliament for Gordon since 1983, and I look forward to continuing to do so. This period has seen many changes to the areas in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire which I represent. Campaigning on behalf of local people is always very important to me.

The Gordon constituency covers a large area including Dyce, Danestone Bankhead and Bridge of Don in the City of Aberdeen and Kintore, Inverurie, Huntly, Ellon, Insch, Oldmeldrum, Newmachar, Rhynie, Lumsden, Pittmedden, Tarves, Potterton, Balmedie, and Newburgh in Aberdeenshire. It is the only constituency which covers both City and Shire.

If you have any issues or concerns you would like to raise with me please contact my office on 01467 623 413.

Best wishes,

 Malcolm Bruce

P.S I also hold regular advice surgeries around the constituency and in my Inverurie office. To arrange an appointment please contact 013398 89120

Farmers need a fair deal

Local farming did not had an easy 2007. With blue tongue and the accidental infection of livestock with Foot and Mouth Disease in the South East of England earlier last year, farmers across Gordon were affected. The outbreak affected farmers, not only due to the restrictions on the movement of livestock, but also the effect on the sector's reputation within export markets.



Malcolm listens to a local farmer explaining the effect the movement restrictions have had on his livelihood

Though the restrictions prevented the further spread of FMD, the consequences for local farmers were severe. "When I heard the news of the outbreak I had a sinking feeling for what the industry must have been going through. Everyone understood the reasons for the restrictions, but the frustration was clear," said Malcolm Bruce.

Malcolm commented "I wrote to the Secretary of State, Hilary Benn, at DEFRA to help push for compensation.

"Local sheep farmers suffered in particular, since their trade was disrupted during peak season. The pig industry, struggling under high feed costs, was also badly affected. I am disappointed that Holyrood and Westminster have not agreed a compensation package.

"I hope that the farming community has a settled and uneventful 2008. But I will also work hard to ensure that farmers get the best possible deal from both Governments", Malcolm added.

Malcolm Bruce MP - making an impact for Gordon

Printed by Nevis Print, Aberdeen. Published and promoted by Sheila Ritchie on behalf of Malcolm Bruce MP, both of 67 High Street, Inverurie, AB51 3QJ. This report is paid for from funds made available to each MP to assist them in communicating with and representing their constituents

Action on transport

Improving local infrastructure has always been a priority for Malcolm in his 25 years as an MP, and this year has proved no different.

With the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route facing further delays and with slow progress on the campaign for a Third Don Crossing, Malcolm is determined to keep the pressure on to make sure that these essential improvements are delivered.



The proposed Third Don Crossing
© Aberdeen City Council

Malcolm will work with MSPs and the Government in Edinburgh so they will recognise and back the plans that already have the support of the Council in Aberdeen. The Third Don Crossing and the APWR are necessary to improve the local transport infrastructure in order to catch up with the

increased house building that has taken place over the last thirty years. Malcolm has also pledged to campaign further on other vital road projects such as improvements to the Haudagain roundabout.

Travel and tourism

Tourism is important to Scotland's economy but it should be better managed Malcolm Bruce believes.

Malcolm is calling for a new tourism strategy for the country and has been in touch with Visit Scotland putting pressure to save the Inverurie Tourist Information Centre. However, he believes that there should be a bigger vision for tourism in the North East.



Aberdeenshire's landscape deserves proper promotion

Malcolm comments, "Tourist information centres must be in a position to provide a service rather than constantly worry about the survival of the business. Tourists want to know what there is to see and do in our local area- not just receive a list of subscription or charge services. I have heard this from many local businesses and will be happy to hear more so that I can take it up with the tourism authorities in my ongoing discussions with them."

Child Support Agency

Problems relating to tax credit overpayments and Child Support Agency payments have continued to affect constituents. Other issues relating to benefits and pensions also concern people at Malcolm's surgeries. The MP takes up these individual cases with Government ministers and continues to campaign more generally in Parliament for a fairer deal for pensioners and those on low incomes.

Support for local post offices

Malcolm continues to work with local sub-Post masters and mistresses to support Gordon's vital post offices.

The Post Office will shortly publish for consultation a list of post offices facing closure in the North East. He is pledged to work with local communities to keep the maximum number of post offices open.



In brief...

Website praise



Malcolm Bruce's website was a finalist in last year's British Computer Society competition for MP's. Malcolm's website was praised for its accessibility, finishing runner up to Health Secretary Alan Johnson's website.

Malcolm was delighted with the result and noted "MP's web sites are of increasing importance, I hope many more people will check it out, at www.malcolmbuce.org.uk"

PM to discuss BSL with Bruce



In response to a call by Malcolm Bruce at Prime Minister's questions, Gordon Brown agreed to meet with Malcolm Bruce to discuss this "very important issue".

Malcolm commented:

"Currently, between 50,000 to 60,000 people use British Sign Language as their first language but there are less than 500 interpreters in the UK. If we followed the Finnish example however, we should have something approaching 6,500 interpreters.

"I hope that the Prime Minister will back my efforts to seek further legal recognition and protection for sign language users so they can fully integrate into British society."

Land Girls recognition welcomed



'Land Girl' and 'Lumber Jill' badges are now available for those women who served in the World Wars. This follows on from the successful Veteran's Badge campaign which was itself extended to include all those who served before 1994. Malcolm has supported veterans by raising awareness of the scheme as well as meeting with veterans to hear their concerns and put them in touch with each other. In addition to veterans, Malcolm has also taken up issues on behalf of currently serving soldiers.

Working on local schools



Malcolm has welcomed the work on the new Bankhead Academy building.

Malcolm will monitor the forthcoming City review of schools and will be working with local residents and representatives to ensure the best outcome.

Scottish banknotes campaign



Malcolm Bruce took up the campaign on Scottish banknotes calling on the Scottish Secretary of State to do more to promote banknotes throughout Britain so Scots do not face the embarrassment of having their perfectly legal notes refused when visiting other parts of the country.

Need to contact Malcolm?

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