



# Stewart Maxwell MSP

Scottish National Party

Representing you in the West of Scotland

Nov 03—Jan 04

## Contact Stewart

### Parliament

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## Victory for Maxwell in Scotch Beef showdown with ASDA

After being informed about the lack of Scotch beef in ASDA stores by an alert constituent, Stewart Maxwell MSP demanded that ASDA stock Scotch beef in their Scottish stores.

ASDA initially denied there was a problem, but Mr Maxwell carried out a survey of a quarter of the ASDAs in Scotland and found that none of them stocked Scotch beef.

Commenting on the issue Mr Maxwell said, "I was very concerned by this development as Scotch beef is world renowned as a high quality product. I was concerned to discover that all beef in ASDA

stores was being labelled as British beef. However this is not just a problem about mislabelling, it has far wider implications.

"If supermarkets stop selling Scotch beef then it will have a disastrous effect on Scottish farmers, butchers, transport firms, jobs and the Scottish economy and will also remove choice from the Scottish consumer."

After writing to the Chief Executive and holding meetings with ASDA, Mr Maxwell was delighted to announce that ASDA have admitted to the problem with the labelling of beef and have committed themselves to remedying the situation.

Commenting on ASDA's statement Mr Maxwell said, "I welcome ASDA's commitment to rectifying this error and I particularly welcome their public commitment to buying Scottish beef and other Scottish produce.

"I will now be writing to the Chief Executives of the other supermarkets asking them to give the same commitment to stocking Scottish produce.

"I will be fighting to ensure that supermarkets stock Scottish produce and that Scottish food producers are defended and Scottish consumers are given the chance to buy Scottish produce."

## Revealed: Over one million Scots live in poverty

In response to questions asked in Parliament by Stewart Maxwell MSP it was revealed that over 1,000,000 Scots are now living in poverty. In 1991 the figure was under 1 million. The same figures also revealed that the gap between the richest and the poorest in Scotland has grown wider over the same period.

Responding to the figures Mr Maxwell said,

"I am appalled to discover that far from poverty being tackled by successive governments in London and Edinburgh the problem has in fact been getting worse. No society can truly call itself civilised if it allows more than a fifth of its population to live in poverty. Something is very wrong when we have a declining population but an increasing number of that population living in poverty."

## Prohibition of Smoking in Regulated Areas (Scotland) Bill launched

On February 4th 2004, Stewart Maxwell MSP launched his member's bill to prohibit smoking in enclosed premises where food is supplied and consumed.

Mr Maxwell has gained the support for his Bill of the medical profession, cancer charities and organisations working to combat heart disease and asthma.

Speaking at the press conference held to launch his bill Mr Maxwell said, "I am delighted that at last we have reached the stage where my Bill has been lodged in the Parliament. I am particu-

larly delighted that the heads of the BMA, Macmillan Cancer Relief and ASH Scotland are here at the launch to speak in support of this Bill.

The Bill has now been given to the Health Committee and they have called for submissions to the committee on the Bill.

In response to the call for evidence from the Health Committee Mr Maxwell said, "It is imperative that people support this Bill and I urge all those who believe that they have the right to be protected from the effects

of passive smoking to write to the Health Committee in support of my Bill.

This is not an attack on smokers. People have the right to smoke but they do not have the right to make other people sick or kill them and that is what second hand smoke does."

Write to the Health Committee  
At: Clerk to the Health Committee, Scottish Parliament,  
George IV Bridge, Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

## Council Tax rises will hit pensioners hardest

Council tax rates for 2004-2005 have just been announced and the West of Scotland is seeing rises of between two and three times the rate of inflation.

Stewart Maxwell MSP denounced the rises saying,

"For those on fixed incomes such as pensioners these rises will come as a heavy blow. It is now clear that the Council Tax

is a fundamentally unfair sys-

tem of taxation for local government. I want to see an end to the Council Tax and its replacement with a system of local

taxation that is based on the ability to pay. Taxation must be progressive and not regressive

and must therefore take into

account a person's income. The Scottish Parliament is beginning to see a coalition of parties who are opposed to the Council Tax and I believe that it is only a matter of time

before it is replaced with a fairer system. "

*Council tax  
must be  
scrapped*

## Surgery Dates

### Saturday 28th February

Committee Room 1,  
Clarkston Halls: 9—10

Maguire Building,  
Main Street,  
Barrhead: 10:30—11:30

Mearns Library,  
McKinlay Place,  
Newton Mearns: 12—1

### Saturday 20th March

Wm Patrick Library,  
2/4 West High Street,  
Kirkintilloch: 9—10

Community Rooms,  
Bishopbriggs Library,  
Bishopbriggs: 10:30—11:30

Brookwood Library,  
166 Drymen Road,

Bearsden: 12—1

### Saturday 27th March

Alexandria Library,  
Gilmour Street,  
Alexandria: 10—11

Helensburgh Library,  
West King Street,  
Helensburgh: 11:30—12:30