



Stewart Maxwell MSP

Scottish National Party

Representing you in the West of Scotland

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Contact Stewart

Parliament

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Ban on Smoking in Public Places Moves Closer

Strides continue to be made in the campaign to ban smoking in public places. As the Scottish Parliamentary Health Committee announces that they will extend Stage 1 consideration of his Bill until January, Mr. Stewart Maxwell MSP reaffirmed his commitment to public health, championing the effort to cleanse Scottish air by disallowing smoking in enclosed public places.

The Prohibition of Smoking in Regulated Areas (Scotland) Bill was introduced by Mr. Maxwell on February 3, 2004, at which point the Scottish Parliamentary Health Committee agreed to call for evidence to inform their consideration of the Bill and seek views from all interested parties on the Bill's general principles. Within months, the call for submissions resulted in the Health Committee being swamped by submissions, of which the vast majority were firmly in favour of the Bill. The Health Committee have now ruled to extend Stage 1, originally sched-

uled to conclude by late October, until January, 2005, with a debate likely to be held on January 28.

Initiating a ban on smoking in specific settings is a vital measure in ensuring the improvement required in Scotland's abysmal public health record.

The campaign to free Scotland from the health risks associated with passive or second-hand smoke tangibly affects the life of every citizen. Clearing the air from the noxious fumes of Environmental Tobacco Smoke (ETS), a Class A human carcinogen, is integral to reducing the risk of lung cancer and acute coronary events for non-smokers exposed to ETS in the workplace. Organisations involved in cancer research and care indicate that they believe Scotland is falling behind other countries in tackling the problem of ETS. Mr. Maxwell asserts, "We must carry on the fight to remove smoking from enclosed places. We are closer than ever to realis-

ing the goal of a smoke-free Scotland."

It is paramount that the Government realises that freedom from ill-health is a right, not a privilege. They must accept responsibility for ensuring the health of all Scots. Mr. Maxwell says:

"Smoking and its prohibition in public places is the single most important public health issue of our time. We have to address the massive problems Scotland faces by its failure to adequately confront the harmful effects of secondary smoke if we wish to remove Scotland's reputation as the 'sick man of Europe.' My colleagues and I have ambitions for Scotland to lead the way, looking forward and joining nations such as Ireland and Norway, two Independent nations, at the forefront of cutting-edge health policy. I once again urge the Scottish Government to show their commitment to this goal by supporting my Bill to ban smoking in public places"

Constituency

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Maxwell Appointed Shadow Deputy Health Minister

The SNP Leadership recently announced the selection of Stewart Maxwell MSP as the Shadow Deputy Minister for Health, with special responsibility for Public Health. The decision follows a busy first year for Mr Maxwell, who was elected in May 2003 as MSP for the West of Scotland. The appointment recognises Mr Maxwell's dedication to his constituency and his campaigning work on passive smoking and his personal interest in public health matters.

Of his new post Mr Maxwell said "I am delighted to take up this appointment and eagerly anticipate working with my colleagues as we endeavour to advance policy on a number of public health issues. I am confident that my colleagues and I will maintain the innovative and constructive programmes for which the SNP is renowned, as well as establish fresh and dynamic new policy ideas."

The Shadow Cabinet is chosen by SNP Leader Alex Salmond MP.

Stewart Nominated in Politician of the Year Award

On October 25th the Herald announced their nominations for the The Herald/ Diageo 'Scottish Politician of the Year' Award. This prestigious award is now in its sixth year and is judged by a committee comprised of luminaries of Scottish public life and the media such as Mark Douglas Home, editor of *The Herald*; Allan Burns, Joint Executive Director of Diageo Scotland; Brian Taylor, political editor of BBC Scotland; Michael Crow, political correspondent for Scottish and Grampian TV and Professor James Mitchell of Strathclyde University, along with a host of editors from the Herald and other publications.

When the nominees were announced, Stewart was delighted to find that he had been nominated in the category of 'One to Watch'. Being considered for this award, after only one full year as an MSP, is a great honour for Stewart and reflects well on his achievements since being elected. Stewart's major coup since becoming an MSP has been the campaign to put the first piece of anti-smoking legislation through the Parliament. Because of his hard work the Executive have become belated converts to the idea of a full public places smoking ban and will hopefully support his Bill when it comes before Parliament. When asked to comment on his nomination Stewart said that he was "surprised and delighted to be considered" and "hopefully it is a reflection of the hard work that myself and my staff have been trying to do since I was elected."

The 'Scottish Politician of the Year' award winners will be announced at a ceremony on 11th November in the Prestonfield Hotel in Edinburgh. Presenters include Olivia Giles, the Evening Times Scotswoman of the year, 17year old violin prodigy Nicola Benedetti and actress Atta Yacub. The ceremony will be televised by Scottish and Grampian TV.

MSP Welcomes New Staff Members

Shadow Deputy Minister for Health Stewart Maxwell MSP recently welcomed two new members of staff, who will assist in the running of both his constituency and parliamentary office. This should assist in ensuring Mr Maxwell is able to give an even better service to the people of the West of Scotland than at present.

Ms Lyndsey McKendry and Ms Rebecca Shoot say they are both looking forward to working in Mr Maxwell's office and are keen to take on the challenge of working hard for the people of the West of Scotland.

Ms McKendry originally comes from Edinburgh but is now staying

in Paisley. She worked in the Scottish Parliament since it opened in 1999 and will now be based in Stewart's constituency office in Paisley. She can be contacted between the hours of 9.30am-4.00pm on Monday and between 9.00am and 2.30pm on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday where she will be assisting Mary Stevenson.

Ms Shoot is an American intern who will be working in Stewart's parliamentary office until the end of the year. Rebecca will be assisting Stewart and James Dornan, Stewart's Parliamentary Assistant. She will also be carrying out some research. A native New Yorker Re-

becca is looking forward to getting to know the Scottish political scene and the hard work that goes on inside the Scottish Parliament.

Mr Maxwell said "I am delighted to have these two valuable additions to my staff. They will be able to ensure that the people of the West of Scotland receive an even better quality of service than they have at present."

"In the short time that Lyndsey and Rebecca have worked for me they have already made a considerable contribution to the running of my office and I have no doubt that this will continue."

Parliament's New Holyrood Home Welcomes Guests

With opening ceremonies recently concluded, the new Holyrood parliament building is now open for visitors. Stewart Maxwell, MSP for the West of Scotland, would like to invite his constituents to pay a visit to this beautiful building, witness the legislative process in action, and join him in celebrating this stirring monument to Scottish democracy. Of the Parliament itself, Mr. Maxwell said, "This stunning new building presents us with the opportunity for a new beginning, a fresh start where your democratically elected repre-

sentatives can fight for full legislative powers for Scotland to match their recently completed home. Such an inspirational piece of architecture should excite and embolden everyone in their efforts to secure an Independent Scottish Parliament for the people of Scotland."

Access to the building is free and professional guided tours are available for a small fee. (For full price information, please contact the Visitor's Centre). In addition, you may wish to supplement your trip with a viewing of a committee meeting or

the full parliament in session. Tickets are free and can be procured through the Scottish Parliament office. Please do plan in advance, as the Visitor's Centre reports, "[Ticket] demand for the rest of the year is expected to remain high, with Parliament staff already receiving bookings up to Christmas Eve."

Please visit the official Scottish Parliament website at <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk> for more detailed information on planning your excursion to Holyrood