

Stewart Maxwell MSP

Representing You in the West of Scotland



Maxwell Calls For Review of Drink Driving

Stewart Maxwell MSP, Shadow Deputy Health Minister, has called for a review of Scotland's drink-driving limit, which is double the level of most countries in the European Union.

Stewart said: "The drink-driving limit has not been reviewed in Scotland for almost 30 years. Times have changed and there is a whole new generation of drivers who are now on Scotland's roads. Recent figures show an alarming increase in the number of under-21s convicted of drink-driving. Between 1996 and 2002 there was a 38 per cent increase in the number of drivers under the age of 21 who were convicted of drink-driving. This is a serious problem and has to be addressed."

"Overall, an average of one in six of the deaths on Scotland's roads is a

direct result of drink-driving. Figures show that in 2002 an estimated 50 people were killed on the roads due to drink-driving in Scotland and there were 11,061 recorded cases of drink-driving in 2004/5."

"Even in small amounts, alcohol can affect driving performance. Westminster has refused to respond to the growing problem therefore it is clear that the power over this matter must be devolved to the Scottish Parliament so that our Parliament can act in the best interests of the people of Scotland"

"I believe that a review of the drink-driving limit is needed, not only to bring us into line with the rest of Europe, but also to reduce the injuries and deaths that happen on Scotland's roads as a direct result of alcohol."

Security at Vale of Leven

After revealing the huge increase in the number of reported acts of aggression at the Vale of Leven Hospital, Stewart Maxwell MSP visited the premises at the request of the General Manager, Bruce Barnett. After the meeting Stewart said, "After the alarming increase in the number of reported acts of aggression at the Vale of Leven Hospital, from 11 to 289 in just two years, I was delighted to get the opportunity to discuss this

with Mr Bruce Barnett, the General Manager of the Vale of Leven. I had a very productive meeting with Mr Barnett and am satisfied that part of the reason for the huge rise is the new method of reporting 'incidents of aggression', as part of the hospital's zero tolerance policy towards aggressive behaviour."

"The nurses, doctors and ancillary staff at every hospital deserve our full protection. It is vital that both staff and

patients can go about their business without fear of attack and I was pleased by the security measures recently installed and impressed by how seriously Mr Barnett and the board took this matter. However, there is no doubt that security could and indeed should be improved further and I have already contacted NHS Argyll & Clyde and Greater Glasgow to ask that they put in place measures to protect the staff and patients at the



Constituency

Saltoun House
14 William Street
Paisley
PA1 2LZ

(Tel) 0141 887 2185
(Fax) 0141 887 2183



Parliament

Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
Holyrood
EH99 1SP

(Tel) 0131 348 5669
(Fax) 0131 348 6479



Email Stewart

Stewart.maxwell.msp
@Scottish.parliament.
uk

Vale of Leven Hospital. One obvious and effective way of doing this would be to make available funds to increase the amount of CCTV coverage within the hospital grounds and I expect the health board to consider this option. There is no greater deterrent to inappropriate behaviour than the risk of getting caught."

Time To Get Tough On Knife Crime

West of Scotland MSP Stewart Maxwell has called on the Scottish Government to end its policy of spin over substance in its attempts to tackle knife crime.

He made the call as he published figures which show that, in 2003, only two offenders out of 2800 were given the maximum sentence of two years for possessing an offensive weapon or having an article with a blade or point in a public place. The figures also show only two charges of selling knives to under 16s were brought.

Stewart said: "These figures show that the Scottish Government's approach to tackling knife crime is little more than spin over substance. The announcement of a doubling of the maximum sentence on knife

crime may grab the headlines, but only two people in Scotland would have been caught by this in 2003. It is quite clear that the threat of a two-year sentence for carrying a knife is no threat at all when offenders are aware that they are highly unlikely to be given such a sentence.

"Whilst I and my colleagues support the doubling of the maximum sentence for knife carrying and the raising of the legal age to buy a knife to 18, such actions must be coupled with moves to ensure these sentences are imposed and the law on selling knives to those underage is enforced.

"We need to do more and that is why I believe it is time that the true nature of the knife culture in Scotland was exposed and police

were given the information they need to effectively direct their resources to fighting the scourge of knife crime. My call for the introduction of a system of mandatory reporting of all knife injuries by hospitals to the police would achieve this and I am challenging the Scottish Government to support this measure.

"Ministers must do more than talk tough on this issue. The scourge of knife crime has blighted Scotland for too long, and will only be tackled when the courts impose tough sentences, the police have the information they need and we use all means at our disposal to make knife carrying not worth the risk. Headlines will not stop the epidemic of knife crime which affects Scotland, only action will."

www.stewartmaxwellmsp.com

West of Scotland MSP Stewart Maxwell is delighted to announce the launch of his new website, www.stewartmaxwellmsp.com.

Stewart said, "It is very important to me that I reach as many people as I can and in this day and age we have to continue to up-

date the ways in which we do that. I have been looking to launch my own website for some time and am now delighted to announce that it is now live. The website contains information such as my biography, contact details, a selection of press releases and newsletters, along with a selection of photos. "

"I hope the site gives people an insight into the work of an MSP and also gives them more opportunity to contact me if they wish to discuss any matter with me."

"I hope people will find it both informative and useful and would be delighted to hear any feedback."

Victory for Threatened Millport Care Home

West of Scotland MSP Stewart Maxwell recently visited Craig-en-Ros, the last remaining Care Home in Millport, which is being threatened with closure.

Stewart said, "I recently visited Craig-en-Ros to see for myself the problems that would be created by its closure. There is no doubt that this closure would leave many elderly people stranded in a care home somewhere on the mainland far away

from their loved ones.

"A care home within their own community is essential for all elderly people who require help and this is especially true of an island community"

"Unfortunately when responding to questions from me the Scottish Government stated that they would take no action to assist in preventing the closure of

Craig-en-Ros.

"I am delighted to have played a small part, along with the residents and local people, in pressuring the local council to sit down and work out a suitable agreement to keep the Craig-en-Ros care home open. The residents will be delighted that they are going to be allowed to stay on the island and keep the comfort of family and friends around them"