

Campaigns 2006



Cllr. Jim Lowrie, local activist Neil McLean and myself celebrate the Scottish Executive's decision to listen to the people of Davidson's Mains over changes to Council Ward boundaries.

I worked with staff from Pilton CAB to secure a free-to-use ATM in Muirhouse. HBoS have announced they will site one there soon.



Cllr. George Grubb and I have been campaigning for Fairer Bus Fares for Queensferry. I have also been lobbying the Council and bus companies on bus issues in Blackhall, Clermiston, Ratho and Kirkliston.

I also have been campaigning to have a stop on the Edinburgh-Glasgow main line at the Edinburgh Park Station. This has included talks with local businesses and the Transport Minister on this issue. I responded to Network Rail's consultation on routes utilisation and pushed for increased rail capacity and better services for commuters.



Along with Cllr. Paul Edie, I have been working to stop the Zoo building houses in the Green Belt. Meanwhile, I have written to the Executive proposing that public funding be given to the Zoo for its educational and conservation work.

Scottish Parliament Annual Report for Edinburgh West 2006-7

Margaret Smith MSP



Dear Resident,

When I was re-elected in 2003 I promised to report back to you about my work both in Edinburgh West and in Parliament. The past year has been a busy one at Holyrood and a number of significant new developments have taken place including:

- The introduction of free eye and dental checks for all
- An end to smoking in enclosed public places
- A free national concessionary travel scheme for pensioners and disabled people and the announcement of reductions in travel costs for young people
- A cut in Business rates
- Record funding for key services such as the police and the NHS that have helped bring about a drop in recorded crime and waiting times.
- A multi-million pound investment in green energy

It's also been a busy time in the constituency and many of the big local issues are covered elsewhere in this report. I also work closely with John Barrett MP, local councillors, community groups and key stakeholders such as NHS Lothian, Lothian and Borders Police and the City of Edinburgh Council to try to improve the lives of local residents.

It is a great privilege to represent you in the Scottish Parliament and I hope you will find this report helpful. I will continue to keep in touch with you through local newsletters and surgeries and if I can ever be of assistance to you, please get in touch.

With best wishes

Margaret Smith
MSP for Edinburgh West

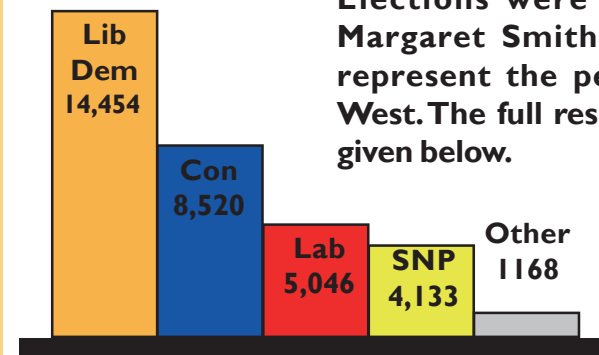


Scottish Parliament Committees

I am the Liberal Democrat Chief Whip which means I have a key role in managing the business of the Parliament. I am also a member of the Parliament's influential Audit Committee which holds the Executive and its agencies to account for their spending of public funds.

In the past few months the Committee has taken evidence on the NHS Consultant's contract; the McCrone Education settlement; the Relocation of Scottish Executive jobs out of Edinburgh and Community Planning. I am also a member of the Scottish Commission for Public Audit which is the body that oversees the work of Audit Scotland and have recently rejoined the Equal Opportunities Committee as its Deputy Convenor. I was also a member of the Waverley Bill Committee which under took scrutiny of the Executive's plans to re-open the Borders railway and I was delighted that the Parliament gave its support for the rail project earlier this year.

The second Scottish Parliamentary Elections were held in 2003, and Margaret Smith was re-elected to represent the people of Edinburgh West. The full result of the election is given below.



Contact Margaret Smith MSP

I hold weekly advice surgeries every Friday morning at 3 Drum Brae Avenue, along with regular surgeries in Queensferry, Kirkliston and Muirhouse. To make an appointment, please call my office.

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Working for you All Year Round

Action on the Environment

I have raised concerns with both Westminster and Holyrood Ministers over the ship to ship oil transfer proposals for the River Forth. I have also supported a number of communities in their objections to development proposals at the Barnton Hotel; West Craigs, Freeland and Baird Road, Ratho, and Manor Estates areas. I have supported housing proposals at Newbridge which I believe would help to re-generate the village. I have supported the Planning Bill which includes measures to improve enforcement action and raised concerns about elements of the West Edinburgh Planning Framework. I have also submitted responses to the Edinburgh City Local Plan and the North Kirkliston Development Brief. I have tabled Parliamentary questions on urban regeneration; council tax banding; green spaces; the Executive's central heating scheme and the Householder Renewables initiative.

Action on Justice

One of the high spots of the past year was spending a day with police from Corstorphine Police Station which included a chance to speak with officers about law and order issues in the local area; a visit to the Edinburgh Airport Police Station and an opportunity to watch a drugs raid. Over the course of the year I have worked with the Police, the Council's Anti Social Behaviour officers and local communities to tackle a number of anti social behaviour issues including raves in Cammo. I have questioned Ministers about speed cameras; police recruitment; cigarette and alcohol test purchase schemes wherein underage individuals are sent into shops to check whether the vendor will sell them age-restricted products, and Domestic Abuse Court pilot schemes.

Margaret Smith Action for Edinburgh West

Action on Transport

Transport remains the major issue for West Edinburgh. During its Parliamentary passage I attempted to amend the Tram Line One Bill so the tram would have to stop at the Western General Hospital. Unfortunately, my amendment was defeated and the Hospital will be served by a shuttle bus from Crewe Toll instead. I did manage to



get amendments on noise pollution accepted.

The future of the Forth crossing is a cause for real concern. I have held talks with the Transport Minister; the Bridgmaster; local community representatives

and engineers about this as well as tabling Parliamentary Questions. I support the Executive's approach of undertaking practical work while at the same time gathering information about different options, including another bridge or a tunnel. It's important that the investigations at this stage are both robust and speedy. I have supported calls for faster Edinburgh-London rail links to reduce domestic air travel. John Barrett MP and I continue to have regular meetings with BAA about airport issues affecting the local community. I have campaigned to keep the Royal Highland Show Ground in West Edinburgh.

I have supported the Edinburgh Airport Rail Link which will connect the Airport to 62 other rail stations in the national rail network and should have a positive impact on traffic congestion.



Action on Education

I have welcomed a large number of local school children to the Scottish Parliament and spoken to hundreds more in local schools. I spent a very informative day with the Head Teacher, staff and pupils at East Craigs Primary. I also visited Dalmeny Primary School with the Presiding Officer after the School adopted the Parliament's founding principles of Wisdom; Justice; Integrity and Compassion as their new school rules. I also tabled parliamentary questions about probationer teachers and student awards. I have also written to the Education Minister about the lack of language support teachers in local schools. I attended the openings of the extension to Blackhall Primary and the new Telford College.

Action on Health

I have campaigned and lobbied on a number of health issues this year. The Royal Victoria Hospital was the subject of my member's debate in Parliament in June when I pushed again for the retention of care of the elderly services on the Craighleith site. I have also met with Health Board officials and senior clinicians to discuss the future of cardiology services at the Western. I have also responded to the Board's consultation on health services for children and young people and supported plans for a new Sick Kids Hospital. I tabled Parliamentary questions on audiology services; sexual health, waiting times. the NHS consultants contract and other pay awards; childhood obesity and reducing the number of young smokers.