

SNP Spokesperson for Transport and Energy

I am delighted to still hold my position as Shadow Spokesperson for both Transport and Energy in the wake of a reshuffle. It is a big portfolio and I relish the opportunity to assist in influencing government policy on such important topics. Over the last three years my contribution record far out ranked that of my opponents, and although Hansard did struggle to comprehend my Ayrshire accent, this is a record I fully intend to maintain.

Burns Mall Surgery

My pop-up surgery in the Burns Mall was a roaring success back in May. It was great to try something a bit different - I have regular constituency and outreach surgeries but I am always looking at ways to be more accessible and the event at the Burns Mall certainly gave us that. Being able to just talk to constituents passing by was excellent. We had people popping in non-stop – even just to say hello - and you cannot underestimate how beneficial it is to be accessible and visible in a busy area of Kilmarnock town centre. I'd like to thank the Burns Mall once again for giving us the use of the unit for free.

Certainly going forward we will be looking at other ways and doing more visible and pop-up surgeries, as well as street surgeries where I will be doing some door knocking – so look out for me coming your way!

Broadband Drop-In Surgery

An area which has been badly affected with the lack of super-fast broadband was the village of Dunlop and that is why we decided to hold the event at the Dunlop Community Hub. Although there is no doubt great strides have been made in terms of roll out broadband provision in the area I am well aware of those that don't have access to superfast broadband, and I understand how frustrated they are. My office has had frequent contact regarding these matters and that's why I was pleased to hold my second broadband themed event. This was a pop-up surgery and it was scheduled for two hours but we were there for almost three hours, such was the demand. I will continue to speak up for constituents and raise their concerns—as well as notifying the authorities of what work has to be done.

Although, it should be highlighted the SNP led administration at Holyrood are the only government who have committed to a 100 percent superfast rollout. The SNP have committed to achieve this by December 2021 and I look forward to it being a success.

Alan Brown MP

Serving Kilmarnock and Loudoun



Alan Brown MP will be hosting a pop-up Surgery on:

Friday 28 September

11 am - 12 pm

Sainsbury's

1 Rigg Road, Stewarton, KA3 5LE

You can find details of all other regular surgeries on his website

www.alanbrownmp.scot

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Educational Visits

Given our youth are our next generation of doctors, nurses, tradesman—and yes, even politicians! - I believe it is important to engage in important matters with them.

Having two sons of my own, I would like to think I am not totally out of touch with the issues and stresses some of our young people face in today's society.

However, my visits to Ayrshire College, Hurlford Primary and the new William McIlvanney Campus gave me a stronger insight into the lives of our youth.



Ayrshire College



At the end of May I had the pleasure of visiting the Kilmarnock Campus of Ayrshire College. I was invited along by the East Ayrshire Financial Inclusion Team for a special Money Drop-In Event, as well as getting a tour of the premises.

Given the bulk of my casework arises from some form of financial impact or support issues, I was delighted to lend a hand in advising and engaging with our young people in these matters.

I was then shown around the state of the art campus and was extremely impressed with the facilities which were on offer for the students. In particular, the atrium, gym and the hands on learning facilities.

It was a pleasant surprise to bump into an old friend, Craig Barrie (right) who lectures the students in skills such as joinery and woodworking.

I have no doubt Ayrshire College will continue to develop the skills of our young people, as well as future generations for our society's benefit.



William McIlvanney Campus



As part of my Work Experience Week (continued on page 5), I visited the new William McIlvanney Campus in Kilmarnock. Prior to my induction at the canteen for my work experience, I was given a short tour of the Campus by Head Teachers David Rose and Diane Wright .

I was shown around the Primary and the Secondary Classroom areas, the Library Resource Centre, the gym facilities - which are available for public use - as well as the canteen and the various catering facilities on offer to pupils.

Then I was introduced to the Catering Managers Fiona McGuffy and Gillian Neil - the kitchen has 20 staff

incorporating the three schools within the Campus . I was then issued with my Catering Staff T-Shirt, Cap and Apron and set to work assisting with the task of drying the cutlery during the changeover from Primary to Secondary pupil service.

Finally, I was trusted with assisting in serving the pupils' lunches alongside the catering staff. The William McIlvanney Campus is home to 2,000 pupils so it was quite a busy shift! However, I did get my reward at the end of the shift as lunch was provided and it was thoroughly enjoyed.



Hurlford Primary

I was delighted to be invited along to Hurlford Primary who have been leading the way in healthy eating and food education.

During my visit I was shown around the premises by Head teacher, Gillian Campbell, before I was treated to a wonderful meal prepared by Primary Six pupil, Christopher Hill.

An extremely lively tour began with seeing the children participating in a variety of athletic activities, ranging from gymnastics to Taekwondo. I was then escorted into the tranquillity of the staff room, where I was given the chance to meet some of the teaching staff.

I was impressed with the infrastructure and layout of the building since its regeneration in 2017 - in particular the brand new extension where the canteen is now located.



In the canteen I was greeted by Mark Hunter, East Ayrshire's Service Manager for Food and Catering, as well as my former dinner lady, Liz Batton (left), who catered for me at Loudoun Academy all those years ago.

Along with the Primary Six class we were treated to a special meal dished up from classmate, Christopher Hill (below).

Christopher's delicious prawn stir-fry fed the whole class and received rave reviews from pupils and staff alike. His dish was not only praised from his peers and superiors, but also by cooking experts, when his recipe was sent away to the International School Meals Competition. Christopher's delicious contents caught the eyes of the judges and they then published it in their cookbook – a remarkable achievement.

It was great to see how enthusiastic the kids were about being involved and learning key cooking skills. Mark Hunter (below) then highlighted the importance of healthy eating to me: "We see a link between eating healthy at a very young age to be very important. What we try to do is bring in food education programmes into the schools, and in particular the primaries, so that we can show kids how to eat healthy and be confident enough to use a knife and those kind of things.

"It is these key skills that they are maybe missing in the early ages, and we give them the confidence to use them safely but also how to cook safely and quickly because it isn't always about cooking things for a long period of time. If they make something for instance, like tomato soup, it's about using that tomato soup the next day in a pasta sauce so they can reuse anything they have left rather than waste it."

Mark's comments were spot on. It is critical to emphasise the importance of healthy eating as well as food reuse to our young people—given that we live in a society where fast food can be accessed at the click of a button and food waste is at an all-time high in the UK.

I very much enjoyed my visit to Hurlford Primary and I would like to reiterate my congratulations to Christopher Hill for getting his recipe published. Not only was it fantastic to see first hand how enthusiastic Christopher was about cooking, but also the fact that his classmates were desperate to taste the healthy meal he produced was equally as pleasing.



Work Experience

On the week commencing the 28th of May I took part in a Work Experience project across my constituency. Throughout the week I visited a host of local businesses to give me an insight into all different walks of life and see how others provide for their families.



From civil engineering consultancy to milking cows on a farm. Then out on the beat with the local police force to pulling pints, I think it is fair to say I got a varied grounding in different jobs and working environments.

It was great fun as it allowed me to go out and meet other people and constituents, and give me an insight into how hard local businesses work. However it also enabled me to see first hand, issues such as the foodbank and the important service it provides in supporting vulnerable people. The foodbank visit was a real eye opener. Currently, the demand is so high it has resulted in their stocks being at their lowest ever – this emphasises how critical the situation is for some people in our society.

If you can please visit: ayrshireeast.foodbank.org.uk for information on how you can help.

My Work Experience Timetable

Monday: Civil engineering consultancy with Alan White Design.

Tuesday: Out on the beat with the local police.

Wednesday: Visited my local butchers – Afton Glen Meats Galston – and assisted David Skilling (above) at the East Ayrshire Foodbank in Darvel. Then off to the new William McIlvanney Campus where I served the pupils their lunch before gaining a better understanding of the world of journalism at the Cumnock Chronicle.

Thursday: Assisted Bryce Cunningham at Mossgiel Family Farm where I tried my hand at milking cows.

Friday: The week came to an end in the convivial surroundings of the Clansman pub in Kilmarnock where I poured pints for the locals.



Alan White Design

Thanks to Malachy Ryan and the rest of the Alan White Design team for such an enjoyable visit. I am also going to take Malachy's favourite Voltaire quote with me back to Westminster: "No problem can withstand the assault of sustained thinking."



On the Beat

As town centre officers PC Douglas and PC Paterson work in the core town centre of Kilmarnock and the issues they focus on are Drugs, Dishonesty Crimes and Anti-Social Behaviour. They can walk up to 30,000 steps a day as they try to spend most of their day out of the office.



Afton Glen Meats

It was a fascinating look behind the scenes and great to get hands on experience but I'm not sure if I'll be asked back...

I managed at least to provide some amusement to the team (and wipe out their supply of plasters) with my shocking knife skills!



Cumnock Chronicle

Many thanks to the team at the Cumnock Chronicle for giving me an insight into the world of journalism. It was really interesting to see the process from the other side for a change, and needless to say it was the footie archives that really peaked my attention!

Brexit, Transport and Energy Update

Given my role as both SNP Shadow Spokesperson for Transport and Energy, I thought I would provide an update for both these issues. I have been vocal in my support for renewable energy and you will all be aware of the Heathrow Airport debate which hit the headlines in June.

Then of course there is Brexit. The affair which is driving everyone mad and there is a new 'plan' just about every other day—I'll do my best to inform you all of what the UK Government's current outline for Britain's exit from the European Union.



Brexit

It is difficult to give a coherent Brexit update mainly because the UK Tory Government do not know what they are doing. One Government Minister says one thing and another Government Minister says something else.

One thing that is quite clear is the deal which the Prime Minister is proposing – the so called Chequers Agreement – does not meet the needs of those who at least want to see a soft Brexit, and Scotland in particular who want to remain in the single market and customs union which is vital to protect jobs. However, it also upsets the hard right-wing Tory Brexiteers who are doing their best to reap the benefits of these proposals, and unfortunately it doesn't seem to fit the needs of the European Union either. It's what the EU are calling 'cherry picking.'

At the moment it looks destined to fail and I do not take any comfort from the UK Government who are talking up the fact they are making preparations for a no-deal in terms of stockpiling food and medicines. Now the Chief Medical Officer in Scotland is having to look at the Scottish NHS doing the same which is frankly ridiculous – this illustrates the real mismanagement threat of this whole affair by the Tories.

Energy

In my wider energy brief I have been highlighting and raising various issues with the UK Government. Firstly, their constant refusal in allowing on-shore wind to access subsidies. Despite this being the cheapest form of energy, the Government are now ploughing into new nuclear deals.

They have Hinkley Nuclear Power Station which is costing over £20BN and I led a debate against Wylfa Nuclear Power Station in Wales – which is going to cost in the region of a further £15-20BN and is poor, poor value for money. I have also assisted in sorting out nuclear waste which has been mishandled from existing power stations which has cost us, the taxpayer, £121BN. Why would they want to build new power stations when you can have cheaper and greener energy in the form of renewable energy?

Transport

As SNP Transport Spokesperson I had to lead a debate on Heathrow Airport's Third Runway, and we took the decision to abstain on the vote. The reason being we had to balance up the fact all the Scottish Airports were in favour of expansion as they believe it will give them greater access and slots into Heathrow—therefore they can achieve more route development. However, the problem I had was that I could not get written guarantees from the UK Government that they would protect anticipated new slots for domestic routes to Scotland. This is why I did not want to block the expansion given the advantages but I felt I could not give it my full support without the guarantees from the Government.



In regards to other issues we are arguing for devolution of Network Rail to Scotland. We currently pay too much money to the Network Rail headquarters in England so it would be cheaper to have it accountable to the Scottish Government in terms of having a smaller, leaner organisation. Whereas at the moment they effectively work for two bosses—they work for the Scottish Government who are delivering the maintenance programme, but their ultimate boss in terms of culpability is Westminster. Despite it being in everyone's best interests Network rail should be devolved to the Scottish Government, the Transport Secretary (Chris Grayling) is resisting this demand at this moment in time.

Finally, we are looking for the UK Government to commit to upgrades beyond Crewe in the West coast mainline. This would give us a far better service to London by the time that high-speed rail comes in. Currently high-speed rail is obligated to terminate at Crewe which is not good enough—we need a much better service which goes beyond Crewe into Scotland.

Green Deal

For those who are unaware of the Green Deal/HELMS debacle, it is an issue which has affected many in our constituency as well as the rest of the UK.

I have been working as part of a cross-party group (APPG – All-Party Parliamentary Group) whose aim is to represent constituents who were mis-sold solar panels.

All across the UK, solar panels were widely sold to householders by HELMS which is now in administration. This Government backed scheme has left householders repaying the cost of these panels which has resulted in huge energy bills for some and enormous debts for others. Many constituents in Kilmarnock and Loudoun have been affected by this and I have been working closely with other MPs to find answers and hold the Government accountable for these actions.

I have been asking a number of parliamentary questions on this issue and have now written a letter to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (Greg Clark) asking him to undertake a review of the mis-selling and to look at some sort of collective action to address the wrongs my constituents and others across Scotland have suffered

I will continue to follow up on this now I have returned to Parliament following the summer recess.

Universal Credit

Some of you who are reading this will have been personally affected by this appalling and shambolic 'benefit.'

Universal Credit is the latest social security benefit which aims to incorporate all means-tested benefits under the one umbrella. Jobseeker's Allowance, Housing Benefit, Working Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit, Employment Support Allowance and Income Support are all now under the bracket of Universal Credit.

The scheme has done much more harm than good to people who are in desperate need of support. A report published recently (6th of September) from the Resolution Foundation has outlined a damning condemnation of the rollout of Universal Credit.

Day in day out we see the impact of Universal Credit in my office. It really is not fit for purpose and is just a ticking time bomb as the roll out continues.

I know for a fact there are constituents who are getting themselves into rent arrears, and landlords struggling because the rent is not being paid. The local council has seen an increase in rent arrears as well, which impacts on money available for running and investing in the council housing stock.

The whole process is a disaster. Our society's vulnerable are yet again the ones who are demonised and being pushed further into crippling debt and poverty.



Srebrenica Memorial Day

I was humbled to have been a part of the Srebrenica Memorial Day as part of their week of remembrance from 8th-15th July.

It was the 23rd anniversary of the worst atrocity on European soil since World War Two when over 8,000 men and boys were murdered just because of their faith, in the Srebrenica genocide.

I honoured those who were murdered during the genocide by signing the Remembering Srebrenica Book of Pledges (left). By signing I promised to stand up to hatred and intolerance, as well as promoting a fair, equal and cohesive society for everyone.

Srebrenica Memorial Day reminds us all that a shocking genocide took place in our lifetime and this should never be forgotten—I took that day as an opportunity to remember the victims and survivors of Srebrenica.

I strongly encourage everyone to work together to make our own community a place that welcomes and cherishes diversity.

Scottish Junior Cup Final

A piece of history was created in May when Auchinleck Talbot and Hurlford United faced each other in the Scottish Junior Cup Final at my beloved Rugby Park.

What a game. Two stoppage time goals were enough to secure Talbot's 12th Junior Scottish Cup—a record in itself, however this is not the piece of history I was alluding to.

For the first time ever, both finalists were from the same constituency as well as the final itself taking place in Kilmarnock Loudoun.

In preparation for the final, I travelled to both towns (on match-day) to show my support for their respective clubs.

It was an extremely proud day for our constituency to see two of our best sides competing for the biggest prize in junior football at the home of our professional team.



I actually tabled two Early Day Motions (EDMs) praising Hurlford United for their efforts in reaching the final, and also for Talbot who were victorious.

The success of both clubs has only strengthened the case that Ayrshire is the home of Scottish junior fitba!

I have no doubt both clubs will continue their success and bring more silverware back to Kilmarnock and Loudoun.

Roon The Toon

I was delighted to once again participate in the constituency's annual 'Roon The Toon' event in June.

The race starts and ends at the Kilmarnock's Ayrshire Athletics Arena. The route takes competitors 'Roon the Toon'; through the town centre and surrounding countryside, over a fast and predominantly flat course.

I think my preparation with Kilmarnock Harriers the week prior helped me achieve my new personal best.

I was able to complete the 10K after 51.25 minutes—it was fair to say I was knackered!

There was a great turnout from the public who were there cheering on the runners. Including the Provost, Jim Todd, and my Constituency Office Manager, Margaret Murray — their support was greatly appreciated.

Well done again to everyone who participated and I'll hopefully see you all again next year.



CHIP Van

During the Summer I was given an insight into how the CHIP Van operates. It's a well kented vehicle which can be found across the whole of East Ayrshire.

The Community Health Improvement Partnership (CHIP) Van provides FREE health checks and lifestyle advice to the residents of East Ayrshire since 2001.

You can get your blood pressure, weight and BMI checked. As well as these fantastic free health checks you can also get advice on healthy eating, exercise opportunities in your area, alcohol and drugs, anxiety and low mood - It really is a wonderful resource!

I enjoyed my time out and about with the Van and the Lifestyle Development team from East Ayrshire Vibrant Communities. It was great to assist the Lifestyle Development team by giving constituents free health consultations.

I would like to thank everyone from East Ayrshire Vibrant Communities for giving me a free health check and for giving me a better insight into the services they provide.

Keep up the good work!



Get in Touch

Depending on your query another office may be best placed to help however I will help if I can or signpost you to the office that will get the best result for you.

Local Issues: [East Ayrshire Council](#) (Waste and Recycling, Housing Allocations and Maintenance, Council Tax).

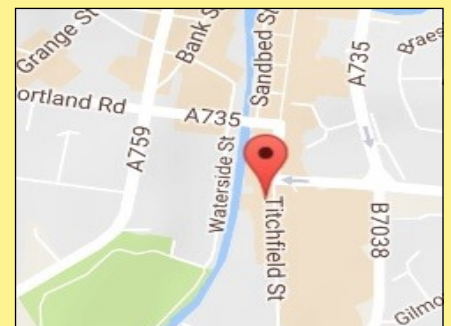
Devolved Issues: [Holyrood, Willie Coffey MSP](#) (Health, Education, Housing, Social Work, Agriculture, Tourism).

Reserved Issues: [Westminster, Alan Brown MP](#) (Immigration, Social Security, UK Foreign Policy, Defence, Constitutional Matters).

To book a surgery appointment call the constituency office on 01563 501412

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Opening hours
Monday: 9am-5pm
Tuesday: 9am-5pm
Wednesday: 9am-1pm
Thursday: 9am-5pm
Friday: 9am- 4pm
Weekend: Closed



Urgent Enquiries

If you have an issue you want to raise and cannot attend a surgery, or if you need immediate help please get in touch with me or my office by email at alan.brown.mp@parliament.uk

