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August 2018 newsletter

Parliamentary recess is finally here but it's still full speed ahead for me. As you'll see below, I've now taken delivery of a massive order of newspapers which I'll be using all of my spare time to deliver to every home in my constituency, with the help of some wonderful local volunteers. I'll also be powering ahead with my constituency work. My full surgery schedule continues uninterrupted for anyone who needs my help. Details, as always, are on the back page.

If you want to keep up with my work, you can sign up online to receive this newsletter in your email inbox every month at davidlinden.scot/newsletter



Universal Credit credibility crisis

Another month, another incident highlighting the UK Government's shambolic handling of Universal Credit. This time it was the turn of the DWP Secretary, Esther McVey, who was forced into an embarrassing apology in the House of Commons for misleading Parliament.

Breaching the Ministerial Code, McVey told MPs that the National Audit Office had suggested that the Government should roll-out Universal Credit faster when in fact its report had recommended that the reforms be paused altogether.

It's time for the Secretary of State to listen up. Universal Credit is broken and the roll-out should be halted immediately so it can be fixed before it causes a catastrophe in Glasgow East when it lands here fully in December.

Extra, extra, read all about it!

At the end of my first year in office, I wanted to make sure I was reaching out to everyone across my constituency to update them on my work and to let them know how to get in touch with me.

I've been beavering away in the background to make this happen and I'm very pleased to say that work is underway to deliver tens of thousands of special parliamentary update newspapers to every single home across Glasgow East.

If I'm honest, the biggest challenge was fitting everything on to the pages - even I can't believe everything I've done in my first year! Keep an eye out for my newspaper hitting your doormat soon.





Don't be at risk - be recall ready

The average success rate of an electrical product recall in the UK is just 10-20%. This means that there are potentially millions of recalled electrical items still in UK homes. As most of these products have been recalled because they offer a risk of electric shock or electrical fire, they present a very serious risk. I've teamed up with Electrical Safety First to spread the message about the recall register. Make sure your products are registered so that you can be reached by the manufacturer in the event of a recall.

Visit www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/product-recalls/

Pregnant pause for proxy voting plans

My wife and I are expecting our second child shortly. As for any expectant parents, this throws up all kind of issues for which solutions need to be found. Members of Parliament have a particular difficulty to address - how to vote in the House of Commons. As we all know, the Westminster voting system is centuries out of date and in desperate need of reform. One suggestion being brought forward is proxy voting, where another MP votes on a colleague's behalf in circumstances such as maternity or paternity leave. Unfortunately, a scheduled debate didn't happen and so we're now left in limbo. I made my feelings clear with a point of order, and a scan of my unborn daughter.



Asylum housing plans slammed

Plans by Serco - the private-sector organisation paid by the Home Office to house asylum seekers - to evict 300 of the city's most vulnerable people received an angry backlash at the end of July, and rightly so. If the plans go ahead, these people face utter destitution and stand at risk of being preyed upon by traffickers. This is a prime example of why services like this should not be privatised. Profit should not be put before vulnerable people.

I've joined colleagues from across the city and across different political parties - though disappointingly, none of the Tories - to sign a joint letter demanding immediate action from Serco and the Home Office.



A run for your money, again

Fresh from running the London Marathon, I laced up my running shoes again for a more modest challenge - a 6k fun run around Strathclyde Park.

Despite the short distance, the effort managed to raise £246 for the Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund (SCIAF) which aims to help the poorest people in 27 countries around the world to free themselves from poverty by equipping them with the skills and tools they need to survive and thrive.

I met up with representatives from SCIAF along with Father Liam and some of the parishioners of St Michael's Church in Parkhead recently to hand over the cheque.



Brexit update



Despite July being an incredibly eventful month for Brexit, the UK is no further forward with its withdrawal from the European Union. Deperate to unite her own Government, Theresa May held a Cabinet away-day at Chequers to get all of her Ministers to sign up to her plan for Brexit. Things initially seemed to work. All those present appeared to be won over and ready to sign up to her proposals. Then the resignations began.

First it was Brexit frontman David Davis, followed not long afterwards by his hapless sidekick Boris Johnson. Not to be left out, a slew of junior ministers and private secretaries handed in their notice one-by-one. A cynic could be forgiven for thinking it was a co-ordinated effort to force the PM to resign.

If there's one thing that can be said for the Prime Minister though, it's that she always seems to just cling on. For the time being, whilst she manages to hang on to power, she's pressing ahead with her Brexit plan and white paper. It's a shame for her that it's all hopelessly unworkable and will likely be ruled out by EU negotiators.

The most alarming thing is that Mrs May seems to know this herself. Preparations for a no-deal Brexit are well under way in Whitehall. Just months after the Brexit Secretary promised that there would be "no downside" and "many upsides" to Brexit, the UK Government is - incredibly - preparing to stockpile food, medicine and human blood. This is utterly unprecedented in peace time.

To add insult to injury, Tory Brexiteer MP Jacob Rees-Mogg – whose investment firm has just launched funds in the Republic of Ireland in order to avoid the consequences of a hard Brexit – recently caused outrage by admitting that any positive effects of Brexit may not be felt for another 50 years.



Scotland did not vote for Brexit and even those who did vote to leave the EU didn't vote for this absolute catastrophe. Throughout the Brexit process, the SNP has consistently been calling for the UK to remain in the Customs Union and Single Market. Although some economic damage would still be felt, this is the least worst option for exiting the EU.

Breast Cancer Care reception

Each year nearly 4,600 people in Scotland are diagnosed with Breast Cancer. Breast Cancer Care provide invaluable support to families all throughout the country after this diagnosis. I'm hosting an afternoon tea party between 12-2pm on 23rd August, at Garthamlock & Craigend Parish Church to recognise the fantastic work of this charity, and I hope that you will join me!



Dogs Trust event

I'm co-hosting an event with Dogs Trust in Tollcross Park from 11am-3pm on Wednesday 15th August. All dog owners (and lovers) are welcome to attend. Dogs Trust will be offering free microchipping and basic health checks for our furry friends. Please do come along and, if you can, spread the word to any of your dog-owning friends and family!

Summer fayres in full swing

This time of year means lots of Summer fayres and local gala days. I've been doing my very best to get to as many of them as possible and they've been a fantastic opportunity to get chatting with people about local issues and picking up new casework.

It's also given me an opportunity to hear about some of the amazing work going on in Glasgow East, supported by incredible community activists and volunteers. There's so much good happening in this part of the city and I'm beyond proud to represent it.



Baillieston bridge almost there

As local residents will know only too well, the railway bridge on Muirhead Road has been closed for several months now for essential work by Network Rail engineers to reconstruct it.

I visited the site recently to see the work completed on this £4m project which has seen the existing bridge demolished and rebuilt bigger to enable two way traffic, a cycle route and a pedestrian footpath.

An enormous amount of progress has been made and I'm sure we'll see the bridge reopened sooner rather than later.

Working for you in every community across the East end of Glasgow

I run a number of regular surgeries throughout the East-end of Glasgow. All of these operate on a first-come first-serve basis and there is no need to make an appointment.

If you need help or advice, pop along to see me. If none of these times are suitable, please get in touch by email or phone.

Easterhouse surgery

The Bridge, 1000 Westerhouse Rd, Glasgow, G34 9JW
Third Friday of every month at 10am

Cranhill surgery

Cranhill Development Trust,
109 Bellrock Street, Glasgow, G33 3HE
First Friday of every month at 10am

Parkhead surgery

Parkhead Library, 64 Tollcross Road,
Glasgow, G31 4XA
Second Friday of every month at 10am

Constituency office

Academy House, 1346 Shettleston Road, G32 9AT
If you require an appointment to see me at my constituency office, please phone 0141 778 1177 or email david.linden.mp@parliament.uk in advance

Transport links

- Services 2, 46, 60, 60A, 61, 310, 364, N2, N60 all have stops within walking distance
- Shettleston Rail Station is a five minute walk



Baillieston surgery

Baillieston Library, 141 Main Street, Glasgow, G69 6AA
Fourth Friday of every month at 10am