



# David Linden

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### January 2019 newsletter

2019 will be a defining year for Scottish and British politics and the decisions we make over the next twelve months will dictate the future prosperity of generations to come. The Brexit debate has generated a lot of heat recently, but regrettably not much light. We all deserve better than the current chaos.

Amidst it all though, my promise to you is that I will keep getting on with the day job. Whether it be changing the law to support parents of premature babies, fighting for a real living wage for all, or opposing a senseless hard Brexit, I will continue to do all I can throughout 2019 to make the East end a better place.



### Rip-off overdraft fees ripped up

I've welcomed an announcement of proposals to ban banks from charging rip-off unarranged overdraft fees that regularly penalise some of my most vulnerable constituents, in some cases costing people thousands of pounds a year. Last year, I joined with consumer champion Which? and over 80 fellow parliamentarians to send a joint letter calling on the Financial Conduct Authority to bring an end to these excessive charges. Which? has been campaigning on this issue for years and has welcomed strong action from the regulator.

The FCA has now announced that banks will no longer be able to charge higher prices for people who go over their arranged overdraft limit, in radical new proposals set down by the UK's financial watchdog. The regulator must now ensure these important changes are swiftly introduced and enforced to finally put an end to these excessive fees.



### Praise for Easterhouse CAB

It is always a pleasure to visit the incredibly hardworking team at Easterhouse Citizens Advice Bureau, but even more so recently when I popped in to present them with a special parliamentary motion in recognition of their recent achievement of an Investors in Young People Good Practice Award.

This award is a nationally recognised accreditation which supports organisations as they seek to recruit, develop and retain a dynamic, young workforce, and Easterhouse is the first Citizens Advice Bureau in Scotland to gain it.

It's great to see the Bureau leading the way, developing their workforce and investing in them in this way. The Bureau is an invaluable resource for local residents and with Universal Credit now, sadly, fully rolled out across the East end, demand for their services is bound to see a sharp upturn.



## Progress on parental leave campaign

Regular readers will remember that I recently raised an important issue at Prime Minister's Questions related to my personal experience as a father of premature children, and the lack of support that current laws on paternity leave allow. In response, Theresa May made a commitment that a UK government minister would meet with me, and the premature baby charity Bliss, to discuss the campaign. Well, last month, that meeting went ahead and I'm pleased to report that the Business Minister seemed to enthusiastically take on board the case we put forward to extend parental leave in certain cases. Make no mistake the campaign is far from over, but I'll keep the pressure on the Government to treat this matter seriously.

## Festive visit to Royal Mail

I visited Royal Mail's Glasgow South East Delivery Office early in December to see first-hand the operation of delivering Christmas post and to pass on Season's Greetings to its dedicated, hardworking staff. I was shown around the Royal Mail office and introduced to the postmen and women, who were pulling out all the stops to sort and deliver mail in Glasgow East over the very busy Christmas period. At no other time is the hard work and dedication of the workforce clearer than during the festive period. There is clearly a huge amount of effort and dedication that goes into delivering a first class Christmas all over Scotland.



## Small Business Saturday

I was delighted to get out and about on the 1st December for some Christmas shopping in the East end in support of Small Business Saturday. Marking its sixth year, the annual event has been going from strength to strength, encouraging people to get out and support smaller businesses instead of large chain stores. This year, an estimated £812 million was spent with small businesses across the UK on the day — an increase of 8% on Small Business Saturday last year. Whether it's in Baillieston, Shettleston, Carmyle or Tollcross, small businesses are the life blood of local areas. Small Business Saturday provides a welcome reminder that the high street is still thriving and small businesses remain at the heart of our communities.



## Bannerman backs Beatson

Last month, I popped in to visit pupils at my old school, Bannerman High, to congratulate them and present them with a parliamentary motion of commendation. S6 pupils from the school organised a quiz night which raised £890.42 to aid not only their school prom fund, but the Beatson West of Scotland Cancer Centre too.

The Beatson is the lead centre for the delivery of non-surgical cancer care for the West of Scotland. Each year, the centre sees more than 8,000 new patients and delivers more than 25,000 courses of chemotherapy and 6,500 courses of radiotherapy. On top of this, its expert staff offer support and guidance to patients. The big-hearted pupils of Bannerman certainly picked a worthy cause!

## Brexit update



Well, after endless months of Brexit political paralysis from the British Government, December certainly proved to be quite hectic. As I've said before, the Prime Minister has been kicking the Brexit can down the road - delaying the inevitable for as long as she possibly could. Now, her Brexit mess has caught up with her and there's no road left and nowhere for her to hide.

As we approach Burns Night, it seems fitting to quote Scotland's favourite son in saying the best-laid plans of mice and men often go awry. It's fair to say December didn't go according to plan for Theresa May, who had hoped to get her botched Brexit deal through Parliament.

The Prime Minister scheduled five days of debate for the Withdrawal Agreement which began on 4th December, completely overshadowed by a privilege motion which was voted on by a majority of MPs finding the Government in contempt of Parliament for its refusal to publish Brexit legal advice. This was a major event - never before in history has this happened and the Government was shamed into publishing the information. It was clear why they didn't want to do so - the advice over the Northern Ireland backstop looks set to sink her deal.

As if that weren't enough, before the debate could even begin, MPs defeated the Government by voting for another amendment which gives Parliament more say over Brexit if and when the Government's deal is voted down. Parliament, it would seem, was taking back control.

The following day, the UK Government suffered another humiliation as the Scottish Parliament voted overwhelmingly against the Prime Minister's Brexit deal. Although it was fairly obvious to everyone apart from the Prime Minister that her deal was headed for a similar defeat in the House of Commons, it finally dawned on Theresa May the day before the meaningful vote was due to take place that her plan was doomed. The vote was abruptly pulled while the Prime Minister went on a whistle-stop tour of Europe in an attempt to seek concessions from EU leaders. None were forthcoming and her tour was prematurely cut short when news broke that more than 48 letters of no confidence in the Prime Minister had been submitted by Tory MPs, thus prompting a vote of no confidence to oust her as their leader.

Although Theresa May's political career survived the vote, it was far from an overwhelming win. 117 of her own MPs no longer think that the Prime Minister is capable of leading the country. That's a pretty damning result for a Prime Minister on borrowed time!

Theresa May's deal returns to parliament this month to be voted on and it still remains likely that it lacks sufficient support to pass. As this saga drags on, it is of little surprise that polls show that Scotland is increasingly becoming fed up of the abject failure of Westminster. The last Panelbase poll of 2018 for the Sunday Times put support for independence at 47%, and found a majority of Scots would back independence over both a No Deal Brexit (59%) and the Bad Deal scenario negotiated by the Prime Minister (53%). The Prime Minister may have no Plan B, but many more Scots are starting to realise that they do.

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## New Brexit explainer video updates

What exactly is going on with Brexit? Are you confused about the Single Market, the Backstop, and other jargon? Well if so, fear not. Last month I published my first 'Brexit Explained' video in order to break down some of the key terms and to convey the current state of play. I hope to publish more of these soon, so please stay tuned to my Facebook page and Twitter account. Last month's video might be a wee bit out of date by the time you read this, but you can still view it at:

<https://davidlinden.scot/update/brexit-explainer-december-2018>



## Let's end puppy smuggling

I attended an event hosted by Dogs Trust at the House of Commons where I was given the opportunity to experience through virtual reality the terrible conditions in which puppies are transported across Central and Eastern Europe to be sold to unsuspecting buyers in the UK. Dogs Trust has unveiled a horrendous trade that has been growing over the past few years and we now have the opportunity to make a positive change to stop this practice. I've been shocked by the findings of their reports and am proud to support the case to bring an end to puppy smuggling with the introduction of tighter controls and the need for much stronger penalties to deter this horrific crime.



## Westminster gets East end visitors

There are few parts of my job I enjoy more than visiting schools in the East end to chat with pupils about my job and politics in general. It was a special treat to be joined at Westminster recently by Modern Studies pupils from Shettleston's Eastbank Academy and Easterhouse's Lochend High School.

The political views of young people are often discounted, but I regularly find that they are some of the most enthusiastic and switched-on people I speak with. It was a pleasure to take time out with pupils, engaging with them on a range of political issues affecting them and answering their many questions.

## 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](mailto: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