

Liam Kerr MSP



**Member of the Scottish Parliament for North East Region
Parliamentary Report 2023**

The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Dear Resident,

It has been an honour to continue to represent you as a Member of the Scottish Parliament for the North East Region for another year.

During the first half of 2023, as Shadow Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero, Energy and Transport, I continued my work with the Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee, scrutinising the Scottish Government's Net Zero, Energy and Transport Strategies. In June, following a reshuffle, I was delighted to be appointed Shadow Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, and join the Education, Children and Young People Committee. The Education sector in Scotland faces many challenges, and there is much work to do.

Since my election in 2016, I have always strived to be your voice in the Scottish Parliament and will continue to represent the people of the North East to the best of my ability. I will always hold this Government to account and robustly provide scrutiny and challenge.

Above all, I will constantly fight for a fair share for the North East and demand other Parties and the Scottish Government look north of the central belt.

I hope you enjoy my annual report, which highlights some of what I have been working on in the past year as one of your elected representatives. Please do contact my office if there are any issues you would like to raise, and I will do what I can to help.

Liam Kerr MSP

Member of the Scottish Parliament for North East Region

Did you know that in 2023...

- Liam assisted more than 400 constituents with their issues
- Liam tabled more than 373 Parliamentary Questions and spoke 152 times in the Scottish Parliament
- Liam is a member of the Education, Children and Young People Committee and is deputy convener of the cross-party group on Ice sports and a member of the Sustainable Transport, Circular Economy, Women in Enterprise, Beer & Pubs and International Development cross-party groups
- Liam has regularly celebrated the work of local community groups and charities, tabling motions praising initiatives like the Gathimba Edwards Foundation, Rosie's Social Enterprises, Celebrate Aberdeen, and Caledonian Railway.



Liam Kerr MSP - Working all year round

Safety concerns on our North East Roads have yet to be addressed

Since my election, I have rarely been out of the Transport Minister's mailbox, demanding action on roads and junctions in our region. At First Minister's Questions, I have repeatedly called on the Scottish Government to deliver on its decade-long promise and upgrade the A96. Tragically, in the last year, there have been many more serious accidents and fatalities on our North East roads.

Despite my search for answers, the Scottish Government confirmed plans to dual the A90 between Ellon and Peterhead had been abandoned, and the publication of a review into dualling the A96 delayed for a third time. Sadly, no action will be taken to prevent flooding on the A90 Muchalls bends, and I am still waiting to receive the results of the A90 Tipperty safety study and a timeline for work on upgrading the Toll of Birness.

I will continue to seek action to ensure the safety of our roads in the North East.



Holyrood, away from the Chamber and official duties



Away from the more formal aspects of Parliament, there are many other things I do as an MSP. Such as, playing for the Parliament football team. I try my best! The Parliament Choir, an eclectic bunch, is a tonic to daily business. My position as an MSP also helps to facilitate school and youth organisation visits to the Scottish Parliament.

It was a huge pleasure to welcome Mannofield Explorer Scouts to the Parliament in September. After a very early start for the group, they toured the Parliament, sat in the public gallery, and watched a fiery First Minister's Questions. Over lunch, they asked me some particularly probing questions about my life as an MSP. To top it off, the troop welcomed their newest members with an investiture ceremony in the Garden Lobby.

Net Zero, Energy and Transport scrutiny continues

Although I was appointed as Shadow Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills in June, I will miss my Net Zero, Energy and Transport brief. It was a privilege and an honour to meet and learn from so many skilled people and businesses in these vital sectors.

I will, of course, continue to defend the tens of thousands of jobs in our Oil & Gas sector, and hold the Scottish Government to account by highlighting serious concerns I have with their new energy strategy.

Scrutinising Education is a Priority

In June 2023, I was delighted to be appointed as Shadow Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills. Education is a devolved matter to Scotland, and with this new brief I joined the Scottish Parliament's Education, Children and Young People's committee.

Part of my role involves scrutinising the policies and actions of the Scottish Government relating to Education & Skills, such as raising concerns about the lack of policy in the Scottish Government's Programme for Government, and seeking answers - why do so many experienced teachers leave the profession early, why has university and college funding been cut, and why there are so few places for Scottish students studying in Scotland.

Liam Kerr MSP - Working all year round

Petition to reopen Cove and Newtonhill Railway Stations

In June, I launched a petition to reopen Cove and Newtonhill railway stations. With a growing population to the south of Aberdeen, bringing rail services directly to Cove and Newtonhill would bring enormous benefit to these communities, improving connectivity and helping to reduce congestion on local roads. The support so far for reopening Cove and Newtonhill stations has been fantastic and has highlighted just how strong the public feel about this key community issue. I have been blown away, with over 1500 constituents signing and making their voice heard. Of course, any plans that come to pass would need to carefully consider location of the stations, coupled with parking and other public transport such as bus provision.

For too long, the Scottish Government has favoured the central belt on infrastructure projects, where we have seen new train stations open. I'm determined to make sure the North East has a voice for rail infrastructure, and I'm extremely grateful for the number of signatures gathered so far. I would like to encourage anyone who supports the reopening of these stations to sign the petition, which I plan to present to Parliament later in the year.



You can sign the petition by going to www.liam-kerr.co.uk/covenewtonhillpetition

It is an honour to represent the North East

Representing the North East as one of your Members of the Scottish Parliament is not only an enormous honour, but gives me a great opportunity to get out and see many local initiatives.

I had the privilege to meet a fantastic local charity, Autism & Neurodiversity - North Scotland (A-ND), including a trip to Inverbervie to see their 'Binky the Sensory Bus' project. The Binky Bus aims to extend A-ND's outreach services to autistic and neurodivergent individuals and their families. This terrific charity currently offers support to 150 individuals and families across the north of Scotland.

Other great visits included Peterhead RNLI, Cults Academy, Bread Guy Bakery and Men United. I also tested my fitness levels in 2023 with the Aberdeen Airport Runway run, Chapelton Bike Ride, the mighty Beast Race and Ride the North.

I also had the pleasure of being invited along to Shirlaws to have a look at the newest motorbike in the fleet for NERVS (North East Rider Volunteers Scotland). This is a charity whose objective is to provide a free transportation service to the Health Service.




Surgeries

During the year I hold surgeries - both chapping doors and in fixed locations - asking if there are any concerns people have that I can help with. These provide me with an opportunity to hear the key issues which matter to you, and for me to do my best to solve them.


I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible over the coming months. If your matter is pressing, please don't hesitate to get in touch. I will always do my best to help.




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Liam Kerr in our communities



Completing the mighty Beast Race



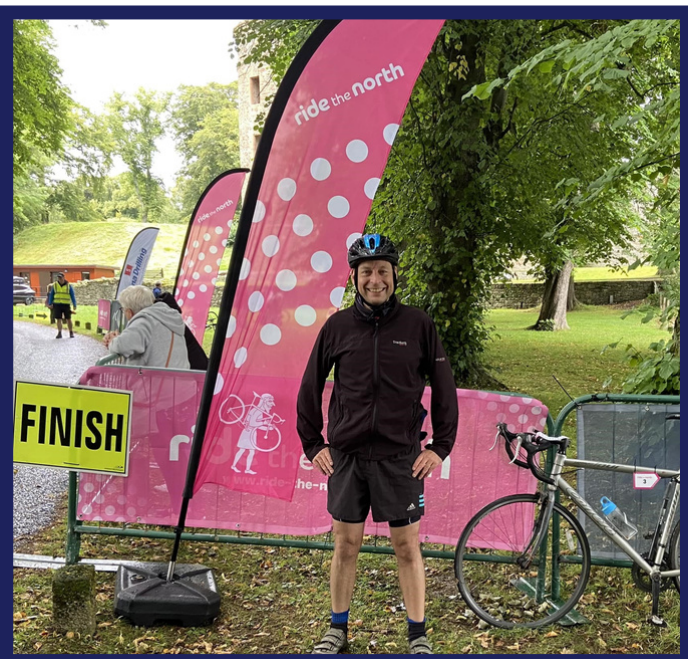
Attending my summer advice surgery at Mannofield Church



Choosing the winners of my 2023 Christmas card competition



Laying a wreath on Remembrance Sunday at Culter War Memorial



Finishing Ride the North



Supporting the campaign to restore the school bus to Hazlehead Academy with Cllr Ken Mcleod



Raising concerns about library closures in Aberdeen



Visiting Amity Seafood Larder at Peterhead Harbour



Visiting BBC Scotland Studios in Aberdeen