

# Report

**Proposer:** MSPs (decided on: 09/14/2020)

**Title:** Report: MSPs

## Report

1 **Alison Johnstone**

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3 It's fair to say that the past year has been a challenging one. In the midst of  
4 the climate emergency and the mass extinction of species, we find ourselves  
5 tackling the impact of a global pandemic that has exposed entrenched inequality  
6 and the failure of an economic model that assumes an endless supply of planetary  
7 resources. The pandemic has devastated the lives and livelihoods of many of our  
8 constituents in Lothian and beyond and there has been a marked increase in  
9 correspondence from people seeking advice and support on a wide range of  
10 pressing issues.

11 As Co-Leader of the Parliamentary Group I have scrutinised the Government's  
12 response to Covid-19, working with colleagues, clinicians and public health  
13 experts to ensure public health measures are appropriate and timely. I sought to  
14 amend the Coronavirus legislation to improve support for carers, reaching  
15 agreement with the Government, and was defeated in my efforts to make the birth  
16 control pill available, free of charge, at pharmacies during the pandemic. I  
17 have used my opportunity at First Minister's Questions to raise a wide range of  
18 issues including the pandemic, the treatment of asylum seekers, wildlife  
19 persecution, transport, austerity and more.

20 My work in Lothian has involved meeting and supporting various local groups,  
21 organisations and individuals including Gorgie Farm who fought against closure  
22 with a well-supported local campaign involving Green Councillors and MSPs. I met  
23 with local residents in Liberton concerned at the gradual erosion of local open  
24 space to development pressures, accompanied by our local branch representative,

25 visiting sites enjoyed by many. I met young apprentices in Edinburgh's  
26 nurseries, visited the Cyrenians Fare Share project and helped local volunteers  
27 clean our city's beaches.

28 I have spoken at several Youth Climate Strikes, represented the Party at  
29 conferences including the Poverty Alliance Conference, the Nourish Scotland  
30 Conference, Scottish Women Stand and the inaugural Revive Conference. I took  
31 forward my Members Bill proposal to properly ban fox hunting in Scotland and  
32 make the mountain hare a protected species. I took advantage of the legislative  
33 opportunity afforded by the Government's Animals and Wildlife Bill and achieved  
34 the latter with overwhelming public support. As part of our budget negotiations  
35 this year, the Green MSP group achieved free bus travel for Under 19s. While the  
36 pandemic has impacted this delivery, this marks another concrete result due to  
37 our pragmatic engagement with the Scottish budget process.

### 38 **Andy Wightman**

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40 The 14 months since the 2019 AGM have continued to be dominated by external  
41 events including a General Election, the ongoing Brexit debacle and, latterly  
42 the global coronavirus pandemic. Our work in Parliament has been disrupted in  
43 recent months by the pandemic but it has been a busy year, nevertheless.

44 As MSPs, we try to get out and about as much as possible and highlights of the  
45 past year have included a visit to the South of Scotland Golden Eagle project  
46 (as Scottish Parliament's `golden Eagle species champion), a visit with Ross  
47 Greer MSP to the HarburnHead Wind Farm in West Lothian with representatives of  
48 the Lothian Pension Fund, and filming for a BBC travelogue with Frankie Boyle to  
49 discuss how Scotland's land is owned.

50 Constituency work has been wide and varied including the usual health, housing  
51 and social security issues as well as casework that has led to wider campaigns  
52 such as my representing constituent Colin Brown in the Housing Tribunal and  
53 working on a human rights challenge to private renting law.

54 I have been involved in a wide range of legislation in Parliament including the  
55 Period Products Bill, Heat Networks Bill, Scottish National Investment Bank bill  
56 and Non-Domestic Rates Bill. In the latter, we made a determined (but  
57 unsuccessful) effort to repatriate non-domestic rates to local authorities. More  
58 recently, I have been campaigning strenuously for more protection for private  
59 renters through the two emergency Coronavirus Bills.

60 Wider work has included working with residents and professionals to resolve

61 issues related to suspect cladding on residential buildings, ongoing work on the  
62 Homes First campaign along with Edinburgh Councillors and continuing efforts to  
63 eradicate wildlife crime and ban driven grouse shooting. On 5 May 2020, I  
64 introduced my Members Bill (European Charter of Local Self-Government  
65 (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill) to Parliament and Stage One scrutiny is  
66 underway.