

# Report

**Proposer:** Lorna Slater MSP (decided on: 06/20/2022)

**Title:** Lorna Slater MSP report

## Report

1 The past year has been a new challenge for my team and me, as I was first  
2 elected to parliament and then made a Scottish Government minister in a short  
3 period of time. Each month I write a report for the branch which summarises my  
4 work and updates with my office you can find them here:

5 <https://www.edinburghgreens.org.uk/msp-and-councillor-reports/>

6

- **July/ August 2021**

7 Most of the month was spent in cooperation talks with the Scottish Government.  
8 We hosted a number of events that were open to party members and have continued  
9 to do so in the months that have followed. One of the benefits of being a global  
10 movement is that it allowed us to have constructive talks with our friends from  
11 the New Zealand Greens and other Green parties from around the world, who were  
12 keen to share their experiences of being in government.

13

- **September 2021**

14 I was appointed as Scotland's first ever Minister for Green Skills, Circular  
15 Economy and Biodiversity following the historic vote within our party to enter  
16 government at the EGM. This month included a lot of meetings with stakeholders  
17 across the government and industry that helped me to understand the structures  
18 of government and further my understanding of my portfolio.

19           • **October 2021**

20       In my Ministerial capacity I announced a review into incineration, which has  
21       since reported back and recommended an end to planning permission for new  
22       incinerators in Scotland. I will be responding to the report on behalf of the  
23       Scottish Government in the weeks ahead, but it was a very rigorous piece of work  
24       and one I was proud to commission.

25       I met with the then Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development,  
26       Jenny Gilruth, to discuss how we can improve the accessibility and nature of  
27       Holyrood Park. This followed meetings with constituents, car-free campaigners  
28       and our fantastic Edinburgh councillors who have been pushing for improvements  
29       to be made. This meeting has resulted in a longer engagement with Historic  
30       Environment Trust, which I hope to update the branch about in the months ahead.

31           • **November/ December 2021**

32       I was very proud to announce the Scottish Government's plan for transforming  
33       gender identity services. This laid out our plans to put trans people at the  
34       heart of decisions about their healthcare while reducing waiting times to bring  
35       them in line with national standards.

36       Although a positive COVID test meant that I was unable to attend the first week  
37       of COP events in person, I did get the chance to visit stalls and exhibitions in  
38       the "blue zone". I gave a speech at the WWF event and met people who are working  
39       hard to protect animals and their inhabitants around the world.

40       In my role as a Minister, I was delighted to announce a £55 million nature  
41       restoration fund to tackle biodiversity loss and rewild our green spaces. I got  
42       the opportunity to meet with a lot of interesting people during COP at the Green  
43       Hub which the Party organised in Glasgow. While there, I met with fellow Green  
44       Ministers from around the world, activists from countries on the front line of  
45       Climate Change and so many other amazing people.

46       I also visited Linlithgow and Dunbar to meet with local candidates and discuss  
47       their campaigns for the local elections.

48           • **January 2022**

49 I was proud to announce a £12.5 million investment to protect our species,  
50 woodlands, rivers and seas. This builds on a £5 million fund that we launched in  
51 November and is part of the biggest investment in nature restoration that any  
52 Scottish Government has ever made.

53 We committed to funding 54 projects across the country, from cities to towns and  
54 villages. This includes support for the Edinburgh & Lothians Greenspace Trust to  
55 improve biodiversity in Edinburgh's urban parks and for Edinburgh City Council  
56 to build a coastal meadow network.

57 I was also delighted to see the introduction of free bus travel for everyone  
58 aged 21 or under, this was a key part of the cooperation agreement that we  
59 negotiated with the Scottish Government.

60 • **February 2022**

61 I joined and spoke at protests outside Parliament and the Russian Consulate.  
62 Unfortunately the powers of the Scottish Parliament are very limited, but I  
63 worked with the Scottish Government as well as my Green MSP colleagues and  
64 councillors to call for visa restrictions to be lifted and ensure that Scotland  
65 did as much as we could.

66 As part of the Bute House agreement, the Scottish Government published the  
67 Gender Recognition Act reform. This will allow self-identification for trans  
68 people and will remove some of the bureaucracy and trauma from the existing  
69 system.

70 • **March 2022**

71 In my Ministerial role, I launched the Scottish Government's new anti-food waste  
72 campaign. This was launched at the Ripple in Restalrig, a community organisation  
73 that provides vital services to some of the most deprived communities in our  
74 city.

75 I was also very proud to announce the steps that we are taking to ban the  
76 destruction of unsold goods and make sure they make it into the hands of those  
77 that need them. This will be part of the Circular Economy Bill that I will be  
78 taking through Parliament.

79 March also marked six months since we entered government. It was a good time to  
80 reflect on what we have achieved in that time. It has been a busy time, with  
81 free bus travel for everyone under 22, a record investment in active travel and  
82 biodiversity, £145 million for additional teachers and support staff, the  
83 doubling of the Scottish child payment, and a ban on many of the worst single-  
84 use plastics. I am also hopeful about the longer-term changes we are delivering,  
85 including GRA reform and better rights for tenants, including rent controls.

86 **• April/ May/ June 2022**

87 Over the election period I spent time campaigning with target candidates across  
88 the region and nationally. It was great to see so many new faces elected as  
89 Green councillors in the Lothian region, taking our Edinburgh Councillor group  
90 to 10 and the addition of the Scottish Greens first ever councillor in East  
91 Lothian Council. We saw growth in West Lothian as well despite falling short in  
92 Linlithgow.

93 I was delighted to see so many Young Greens and women elected into our Edinburgh  
94 group. I look forward to spending the next 5 years working with them to make the  
95 Lothian region fairer and greener. I have already met with some of our new  
96 councillors and have plans to meet them all as a group regularly in weeks and  
97 months to come.

98 **• Looking ahead**

99 Over the next few months my team and I are going to be working with branches on  
100 local projects to push forward the Green agenda and increase recognition of the  
101 party within communities. In West Lothian we will be working to clean up  
102 Linlithgow Loch. East Lothian we will be campaigning for a nature based flood  
103 defence rather than the proposed concrete option and in Edinburgh we will  
104 continue our work on Holyrood Park.

105 The months ahead will be very busy for my ministerial portfolio with the  
106 conciliation for the Circular Economy Bill, more beaver translocations, the  
107 Biodiversity Strategy to be published in the autumn and the further progress  
108 towards naming Scotland's next national park. You can keep up to date with my  
109 work on social media or in my monthly reports to branches.