



John Barrett

MP for Edinburgh West

REPORT 2006

*This is my fifth annual report
I hope you find it useful
John Barrett*

www.johnbarrettmp.com



John Barrett MP

Dear Friend,

Last year I was re-elected as the Member of Parliament for the Edinburgh West constituency. The new larger constituency now stretches from Stenhouse to South Queensferry and from Murrayfield through Corstorphine to Ratho.

When I was elected five years ago, I promised to report back to you each year and this is my fifth annual report. Hopefully this report will not only let you know how to contact me should the need arise, it will also give you a flavour of the work I have been doing in the constituency and campaigning on at Westminster. Once such successful campaign resulted in the government finally agreeing to scrap the Child Support Agency. Hopefully in the year ahead it will do

the same to the proposed costly identity card scheme.

I also keep in regular contact with a large number of community groups, and if you are involved in a group I have not yet contacted, please write to me with their details. If you are arranging a community event please keep me informed and I will do my best to support it in any way I can. If you are in London and would like to visit Westminster, please contact my office.

I am always happy to help with any issue related to Westminster and if I can be of service to you, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

With best wishes,

John Barrett

John Barrett MP



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Keeping in Touch

Website

In order to keep you as up to date as possible with my work, I have a website containing a wide range of news, information and contact details. This year my website was short-listed for an award for best elected member's site and it recently recorded its one millionth 'hit'. The website is the best place to keep right up to date with my work in the constituency and at Westminster. You can find it at:

www.johnbarrettmp.com

Surgeries

I hold regular advice surgeries in my constituency office. To avoid a long wait, appointments can be made by phoning 0131 339 0339. I



can arrange home visits for those with mobility difficulties.

Contact Details

Write: John Barrett MP
Constituency Office
1A Drum Brae Avenue
Edinburgh EH12 8TE

Tel: 0131 339 0339

Fax: 0131 476 7101

Email: johnbarrettmp@parliament.uk

To deter unwanted callers, cut out this sign and display it on your door

To replace this with a permanent laminated card, please call my constituency office on 0131 476 7102.

A crime prevention advice pack is also available (see *Safer Communities Campaign* article overleaf).

YOUR CHECKLIST

1. **CHAIN** your door
2. **VIEW** the caller
3. Ask for **IDENTIFICATION**

To double check...

Phone the company named on the caller's identity card (check the number in the phone book)

If in any doubt...

Phone your local Police Station:

Drylaw - 343 3171
Corstorphine - 334 4900
Queensferry - 331 1798

For help with other problems, ring John Barrett MP on:
0131 339 0339

Working in Parliament

One of the most important aspects of my job is to represent you at Westminster. Since my last report I was delighted to be promoted within the Scottish team to Shadow Minister of State for Scotland. If there is any issue you think I should be taking action on in Parliament, please contact me.



Working together on the Environment

Throughout this parliamentary session I have made the environment a key focus of my work both in the constituency and at Westminster. In recent months I have argued in parliament in favour of greater investment in renewable energy sources rather than in expensive and unproven nuclear power stations. I have also lobbied hard against environmentally dangerous proposals for ship-to-ship oil transfer in the Firth of Forth.



Over the past year I have been involved in the nationwide 'Save your 20%' campaign organised by the Energy Saving Trust. I recently arranged an 'Energy Check' at my Drum Brae constituency office. By following their recommendations I was able to cut energy use and

carbon emissions by almost 40%. Even the simplest changes can add up to make a real difference.

Throughout this year I will continue to push the Government to take real action on the environment by cutting emissions, investing in clean renewable fuels and to increase recycling.

www.johnbarrettmp.com/environment

Safer Communities Campaign

Since my last report I have launched a major new 'Safer Communities' campaign across Edinburgh West. I believe we all have a fundamental right to safety and privacy in our own homes.

A crime prevention advice pack is now available from my office. It includes helpful information on the best ways to avoid unsolicited calls or mail, dishonest doorstep sellers, and internet and telephone fraudsters.

Many of my constituents have complained to me about some of the practices of doorstep

salespeople. I know that many people are especially wary of opening their door to unidentified strangers. Attached to this report is a card you can display on your front door or window. The card warns doorstep callers that you will not buy or sell at the door and will expect identification that can be verified.

I have made these cards available for constituents since 2004 and they are proving to be a helpful tool in stamping down on rogue doorstep trading in West Edinburgh.

www.johnbarrettmp.com/safer

PLEASE NOTE

**We do not
BUY or SELL
at this door**

**I shall expect
IDENTIFICATION
that I can verify**



John Barrett MP's
Safer Community Campaign

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Make Poverty History

As a member of the International Development Select Committee I have witnessed first hand the poverty and challenges faced by some of the poorest people in the world. I was delighted to join many constituents for the Make Poverty History march through Edinburgh last July. One year on, it was good to see the Department for International Development producing a white paper which addresses many of the issues I and others have raised in parliament, such as debt, aid, fair trade, corruption and the fight against poverty.

I also co-sponsored a parliamentary Bill that will force the Government to report on progress towards meeting the internationally agreed targets on



overseas aid. Along with increased debt relief and fairer trade we can help the world's poorest countries lift themselves out of poverty.

I also opposed the military action in Iraq, which should be an oil rich country but now requires reconstruction and aid similar to the poorest African nations.

www.johnbarrettmp.com/international

Animal Welfare

Over the last few years I have campaigned on a number of issues; including the fight against a return to commercial whaling, tighter airgun legislation, and my on-going campaign for a ban on the import of cat and dog fur to the UK. This trade is banned in many countries throughout the world, although the Government has continually refused to introduce a UK ban. In recent months many other groups and organisations have joined the fight. Recent comments by Sir Paul McCartney have helped to raise the profile of this issue once again. I believe there is now a real chance



of finally banning this inhumane trade in the coming year. I was delighted to be made Honorary vice President of the Scottish SPCA for my work on animal welfare issues over many years.

www.johnbarrettmp.com/catanddogfur

Pension Credit

Answers to my parliamentary questions have revealed that many local pensioners in Edinburgh West are not receiving the pension credit to which they are entitled. If you are a pensioner and have not yet applied for pension credit and would also like further information on how to claim this benefit please contact me.

www.johnbarrettmp.com/pensions

Police not Plastic

I have opposed the compulsory ID cards proposals every step of the way and will continue to do so. Not only will the proposals restrict civil liberties, but the money could be far better spent on more police on our streets. I for one would rather see more police on the street than another piece of plastic in your pocket. I will continue to oppose the introduction of this increasingly costly and unnecessary scheme.

www.johnbarrettmp.com/idcards

Helping Constituents – Working For You

As your MP I can help with any issue reserved to Westminster, these include

- The Economy and Taxation
- Benefits, Pensions and Social Security
- European and Foreign Affairs
- Defence
- Immigration and Asylum
- Energy Policy
- Air and Rail Safety
- Employment Legislation
- Constitutional Matters

The Scottish Parliament is responsible for issues such as health, education, crime and



housing. These are best dealt with by Margaret Smith MSP with whom I work closely. You can contact Margaret on 0131 348 5786 or write to her at the Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP

www.johnbarrettmp.com/advice