



The latest

Prime Minister Truss

So, we have a new Prime Minister, the 9th Tory PM since 1955 who Scotland didn't vote for. Her victory came as no surprise to anyone, albeit she won with a much smaller majority than expected. By winning 47% of the total electorate, this would have rendered her victory invalid if the same principles as her deplorable plan for a new referendum bill were applied. So, what can we expect from a Truss premiership? I think this headline about sums it up. . .

The Liz Truss Doctrine

Prepare for the most right-wing government of our lifetime
By Andrew Marr

It won't take long to see how Truss governs, but from her campaign, we can reasonably expect the rich to get richer while ordinary households face being plunged into poverty. And in Scotland, we can expect our democratically elected leader to be ignored, and the powers of our government to be seized.

New parliamentary term

With parliament back after recess, it goes without saying that top of my agenda will be calling for a radical and rapid policy overhaul to mitigate the cost of living crisis. The government must take more of the immoral profits of oil giants and put these back into the pockets of everyday households. Failure to do so will result in an outright humanitarian catastrophe for which the Tory government will never be forgiven.

On a cheerier note, I am pleased to announce that this term I will be taking up the role of shadow DEFRA spokesperson. Perth and North Perthshire is one of the most varied rural constituencies in Scotland and I look forward to working with local interests to find ways to assist with their most pressing concerns.

Summer break

I thoroughly enjoyed getting out and about in Perthshire during the summer break. It is always nice to get away from the hustle and bustle of London and spend more time in the constituency. The local calendar was particularly busy this summer now that most Covid restrictions have been removed. I have included a selection of these outings in the following pages. . .

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A selection of Perthshire visits



My office has been working flat out to assist constituents who have sponsored displaced Ukrainians with getting them over to the UK. Successes have bringing included Persik the red chihuahua and his owners Yuliia and Nina to Scotland. After much difficulty, we managed to get them over safely to stay with their sponsor in Kettins. After a disastrously slow start by the Home Office, I am pleased that the majority of these individuals and families have now arrived safely.

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I had an excellent visit to Muirton Farm to see the blackcurrant harvest in action, and I even had a go on the harvester. Assuming I didn't ruin the crop, these berries will have gone on to be become Ribena. I heard from farmer Rowan Marshall about how the local environment is at the heart of all operations on the farm. It is fantastic to see a local business lead the way in farming sustainability and I look forward to paying another visit soon.

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I spent a sunny evening speaking to Perth residents with Jim Fairlie MSP and Cllr Ian Massie. I am sure many of us will have felt a renewed sense of motivation towards the independence cause lately, after seeing the increasing damage that the UK Government is inflicting on Scotland. An ever-increasing number of people are now sold on the view that Scotland could do more and be more without being shackled to Westminster's archaic pursuits.

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I paid a visit to 17-year-old Oisín as he prepared to compete in the Commonwealth Fencing Championships. Due to a crisis at HM Passport Office, he very nearly missed out on competing. Thankfully we managed to get him his passport in time. After a summer of assisting with an influx of passport cases, the situation seems to be improving, but the needless distress this has caused so many people is nonetheless unacceptable.

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The first Perthshire Pride since 2019 was a huge success, with an estimated 8,500 attendees over the weekend. A speech from Aberfeldy-born Alan Cumming was one of the highlights, which focussed on the threat to trans rights. Despite positive legal and social change in recent years, there is still a long way to go. Bigotry of any kind has no place in this day and age and we must continue to hold to account those who think otherwise.

Out and about with colleagues

Jim Fairlie, Ivan McKee MSP and I hosted a local business breakfast at the Salutation Hotel in Perth, where we discussed what businesses can expect from an independent Scotland. It was a constructive discussion about the range of economic opportunities that could arise from independence, as well as how we could overcome various challenges. It is so important to fully engage with businesses as we head towards Indyref2.

I had a fantastic visit with John Swinney MSP to the opening of the Foss Loop Path at Schiehallion. This wonderful part of Perthshire is now even more accessible. The initiative was made possible by the Heart of Scotland Forest Partnership, which connects six areas of land to create a linked woodland corridor stretching more than 3,000 hectares across Highland Perthshire.

It was a pleasure to attend the Perth and Kinross celebration of Ukraine Independence Day with Cllr Steve Carr and others. I am so proud of how the people of Perthshire have welcomed our Ukrainian arrivals with open arms. I have also heard nothing but positive feedback about the support from Perth and Kinross Council. As the heinous invasion rages on, it is vital that we continue to rally round the people of Ukraine during their greatest hour of need.

Jim Fairlie and I visited Stagecoach HQ to discuss the the cuts to their services, which is having a huge impact across the constituency. I was reassured that they have a number of drivers in training to tackle the shortage. However, a short-term plan is also needed to address the disruption constituents are experiencing right now. I will be continuing to engage with Stagecoach on this matter for as long as the issues persist.

I recently took part in the Bag o' Chips 'Walk & Talk' event in Perth. I caught up with the team to hear about the increasing mental health struggles that so many people across Perthshire are experiencing just now. For many, it is really going to be a case of 'eat or heat' this winter. The longer the UK Government flounders in this time of crisis, the more pressure will be placed on local groups like Andy's Man Club to fill the mental health support vacuum.

