



Catherine Stihler MEP

Summer 2008

Member of the European Parliament for Scotland

Welcome to the latest edition of my newsletter.

If you would like to receive my e-bulletins and monthly e-newsletters please send your details to cstihlermep2@btconnect.com.

I am delighted to have been re-selected as a Labour candidate for the European Parliament elections next year. We have a strong team of candidates who will work hard with party activists to deliver a strong result for Labour and Scotland in these elections.

I would like to thank all the members who supported my re-selection and I look forward to working with you in the year ahead. The final list of candidates is as follows:

- 1 David Martin MEP
- 2 Catherine Stihler MEP
- 3 Mary Lockhart
- 4 Paul McAleavey
- 5 Kirsty Connell
- 6 Nasim Khan

This election is likely to be as challenging as ever, but we will remain focused on our key priorities, such as public health and social justice and equality, issues that affect everyone in their day-to-day lives.

Updates on Labour's campaign for the June 2009 European elections will be available at www.cstihlermep.com.

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Missing Child Alert Scheme

Protecting children should be a number one priority for all governments, and the European Commission must also take action.

National statistics from across Europe show that this is an area where the European Union can and must act, in order to track down, identify and recover missing children.

I have signed up to the written declaration which encourages the European Commission to look at adopting the United States Amber Alert system for missing children, co-ordinating the existing diverse approach by different member states, and ensuring a commitment to recovering missing children Europe-wide.

The parents of missing British girl Madeline McCann were present to support the launch of this declaration at the European Parliament. Kate and Gerry McCann have said that such a system could have helped to locate their daughter.

The McCann's presentation to the European Parliament can be found on their website, www.findmadeleine.com.



Not Giving in to Street Homelessness

Tackling homelessness and the inequalities associated with it is a cause that many in the Labour movement feel passionately about. I am therefore pleased that Europe is looking towards resolving Scotland's homeless crisis with a new initiative calling for an EU-wide commitment to end street homelessness by 2015, alongside devising winter emergency plans as part of a wider homelessness strategy.

The cross-party written declaration calls for the development of a European framework, which would provide comparable and realistic data. I have given this initiative my full support, and believe that street homelessness is increasingly particularly prevalent in areas of Scotland. This initiative will contribute towards the work that the Government has been undertaking since 1997.

Fighting homelessness is a key part of fighting poverty and inequality, and co-operation between member states will ensure that we not only learn from each other – but that we do as much as possible to eliminate street homelessness in Scotland.

EU-wide action will ensure that this remains a priority at all levels and that all of us, including people who are homeless, will realise that ending street homelessness is possible.

Further information can be found at www.cstihlermep.com.

Taking the Hump with Whaling

Japan's increasing "quota" for scientific whaling is outrageous, and I have called for UK and European governments to present a united front in ensuring the cessation of the barbaric annual whale hunt.

The European Commission should co-ordinate a united action against Japan's whale hunting in order to protect humpbacked and fin whales in view of their critical survival status.

The species within the Japanese allocation include migratory species under threat, and although Japan claims that it is catching the animals for solely scientific species, there are valid alternatives available for scientific research. The meat is being sold on the market while surplus is piling up in freezer containers.

We must address future quotas. At a UK and European level we need to ensure that we are major players in international whaling policy, and an EU common strategic approach to whaling would be very constructive.

The European Commission has assured me that it will address concerns related to scientific whaling, and has adopted and submitted a Communication on whaling issues to the Parliament and the Council, which endorses the view that developing a Community position and a common EU strategic approach to whaling would make the EU a major player in international whaling policy.

EU Steps Up To Transplant Challenge

Last year around 2,400 people in the UK benefited from an organ transplant, but more than 1,000 people die every year waiting for a transplant. I am supporting a European report identifying organ shortage as an issue in need of immediate action.

The report, which identifies organ shortage as a common problem in all European countries, will also be addressing a wide range of issues, including a European donor card, to tackle problems like organ shortage, transplantation risks and organ trafficking.

There are over 700 people in Scotland waiting for an organ transplant, and we need work together across the EU to ensure that no EU citizen dies through organ shortages.

If we support reinforced cooperation between Member States, this can hopefully lead to increased organ sharing between EU Member States – which can significantly benefit smaller Member States where there is a limited donor pool.



EU Funding helps Scots Elderly

A new initiative set to tackle and provide for Scotland's ageing population has been launched in the European Parliament. The UK has joined 22 other countries to pool funds of approximately £115 million, to improve living conditions for the elderly and to fast track research enabling Scotland to face the challenge of an ageing population.

The Ambient Assisted Living report highlights the importance of an initiative to develop new technologies to help men and women in their daily living and working environments, with the aim of enabling people to stay active longer in the workplace, remain socially connected and live independently into old age.

UK government statistics show that the number of older people over 65 is set to rise by nearly 60 per cent over the next 25 years to over 15million, and a recent study by charity Help the Aged, has suggested

that in the past year thousands of pensioners have gone a full month without speaking to family or neighbours - painting a bleak picture of isolation for many older people.

We need to develop technology in order to fit the needs of the elderly, in line with providing support for independent living – from technology and home adaptations, to improving the way we design and build all new homes.

We need to ensure that any developments will help the elderly remain independent as well as maintaining an active social life. This research is absolutely imperative – and not only will it help our ageing Scottish population but it may also benefit any Scottish companies already specialising in this field.

The programme for independent living will involve exchanging knowledge with other countries and focusing on developing new technologies to assist with the challenges faced in old age - such as loss of memory, vision, hearing and mobility.

Eye on the Tiger

I am backing the European Parliament's strategy to prevent the tiger from becoming extinct.

With only 1,411 tigers left in India's wild illustrating that the country's tiger population has fallen hugely in the past five years, and figures showing that by 2025 the tiger may be extinct, the European Parliament is calling for a new strategy to prevent extinction.

It is not feasible to rely only on India to tackle this looming extinction, and it is time for the EU to take a stronger role in the international effort to save the species.

We cannot afford to lose the tiger, and doing so would be an international catastrophe. The EU must act immediately and develop an all-inclusive policy to deal with this problem.

Further information can be found on my website www.cstihlermep.com.

Stormy Waters Ahead

The next review of the Common Fisheries Policy is due by 2012 and the defeat of my recent fisheries report is a wake-up call that historic fishing rights are under threat in the North and Baltic seas.

I was compelled to remove my name from a report I drafted, due to the rejection of key amendments by the Fisheries Committee, and in its amended form it now unjustly discriminates against northern countries.

To give the Commission carte blanche to re-allocate fishing opportunities beggars belief, especially when fishing opportunities are scarcer. We have to ask ourselves if we are facing a fishing free-for-all in the North Sea.

Unfortunately the report was passed without the key amendments being supported. This is neither in the interests of Scottish fishermen nor is it in the interests of protecting and conserving stocks.

I will continue to press for a sustainable future for Scottish fishing.

Be involved...

Out & About

Catherine is always happy to speak at meetings, attend primary and secondary schools to talk about her work as a MEP, as well as visit local businesses and support Scottish projects.

Some recent engagements across Scotland:

* Catherine recently spoke at an event to celebrate International Women's Day 2008, where women speakers, from Scotland and beyond, treated audiences to an insight into the significant changes regarding women's equality in society today.



On the day Catherine joined a range of speakers. Including, Bertha Yakubu, founder of African Women in Aberdeen, and Carol Alybaid from Women in Black.

* Catherine also visited Hawick High School, in the Scottish Borders, to talk to fifth and sixth year pupils about the role of the European Parliament, and her duties as a MEP.



To invite Catherine to speak at your event please contact Yvonne Thorpe on 01383 417 799, or email cstihlermep@btconnect.com.

Dates for your diary:

2008 Forum Dates

The following are provisional Labour Party Forum dates for 2008, and are subject to change.

28th June – Glasgow – 10am – 12noon
@ John Smith House

18th Sept – Edinburgh – 7 till 9pm
[venue tbc]

22nd Nov – tbc

Updates will be available at www.cstihlermep.com or by calling 01383 417 799.

2008 Annual Trip

There are still places available on the annual constituency trip to Brussels leaving on Tuesday 7th October and returning on Saturday 11th.

This trip allows you to see the Parliament in action, as well as visiting the surrounding areas of Antwerp, Leuven and Bruges.

Please contact Kirsty Leiper on 01383 417 799 or kirstyleiper@live.co.uk for further information.

Please note that spaces on the trip are limited, and will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

Keep in touch

Catherine's constituency office is staffed by her administrator Yvonne Thorpe (Monday – Friday, 9am – 3pm), and by her Press and Campaigns Officer, Kirsty Leiper.

For more information or to invite Catherine to events, please contact us at the address below:

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