

## Stirling Matters - July 2020 (5th Edition)

News from Stirling's Parliamentary Team

*'Through an evidence-led, upfront and cautious approach, and with remarkable levels of public patience and cooperation, Scotland is slowly making its way to recovering to a new normal. Many businesses across Stirling are re-opening their doors, or currently preparing to do so. Deaths and infection rates have dropped significantly. All of this is positive news, and very welcome indeed. But we must remain cautious, follow the public health guidance, and protect this hard-won progress. As we've seen elsewhere globally, further COVID-19 outbreaks still remain possible.'*

Keep up-to-date with current campaigns and news on my website:

**[www.alynsmith.scot](http://www.alynsmith.scot)**

I'm active at: @alynsmith

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I'm active at: @RHBruceCrawford

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Twitter: [www.twitter.com/RHBruceCrawford](http://www.twitter.com/RHBruceCrawford)

## **Stirling free childcare boost**

Stirling Council are on track to deliver 1,140 hours of free childcare as of August 2020, reaching the Scottish Government target despite the coronavirus pandemic.

The rollout involves the doubling of current provision, from 600 hours. Letters will be sent out to parents and carers in due course with further guidance on arrangements and how to make full use of their allocation.

Amidst huge upheaval due to COVID-19, this will come as welcome news to families.

Read more here:

<https://alynsmith.scot/2020/07/16/snp-delivering-1140-hours-of-free-child-care-in-stirling-from-august-2020/>

## Litter louts must face consequences

Alyn Smith MP has called for a swift increase in littering fines, in response to reports of further damage and incidents in Stirling tourist hot spots.

A spate of wild campers around the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park area have left devastation in their wake, with litter, discarded tents and hazardous waste left polluting the environment.

Alyn has written to Justice Secretary Humza Yousaf, urging a review of fines for such offences.

Read more here:

[https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/scotland-now/mp-demands-5000-littering-fines-22341313?fbclid=IwAR3fRRBpwwaVxrXqQxKL8seF\\_rDnvWQQeP7QVcmcSZkjinF7WxIZ-pSKRuUI](https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/scotland-now/mp-demands-5000-littering-fines-22341313?fbclid=IwAR3fRRBpwwaVxrXqQxKL8seF_rDnvWQQeP7QVcmcSZkjinF7WxIZ-pSKRuUI)

## 'Scammers are lowest of the low'

Speaking in the Scottish Parliament recently, First Minister Nicola Sturgeon joined Bruce Crawford MSP in condemning the actions of those who prey on the vulnerable.

Whilst the majority of Scots have rallied to look out for each other during the coronavirus pandemic, there has been a tragic increase in financial scams targeting vulnerable community members across Scotland.

Citizens Advice Scotland has more information here:

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/scotland/consumer/scams/common-scams-s1/>

Watch the clip:

<https://www.facebook.com/BruceCrawfordSNP/posts/1415183048673223>

## Giant Hogweed menace must be tackled urgently

Bruce Crawford MSP has urged Network Rail to take action over swathes of Giant Hogweed on its land.

The plant, an invasive species in the UK, can grow up to 3.5 meters tall and contains toxic sap that can provoke severe reactions in humans and animals.

Read more here:

<http://www.brucecrawford.scot/stirling-msp-urges-network-rail-to-address-growing-giant-hogweed-problem/>

## Small and micro business guidance welcome

Bruce has welcomed the publication of further public health guidance, specifically for small and micro-sized businesses, in response to COVID-19.

The advice aims to help keep staff and customers safe, and supports the continued, cautious recovery to the new normal of business operations.

Read more here:

<http://www.brucecrawford.scot/stirling-msp-welcomes-further-guidance-for-vital-local-businesses/>

## Stirling MP and MSP Back Stirling Businesses

Alyn and Bruce have re-emphasised their support for businesses across the Stirling area, as the economic impact of coronavirus becomes clear.

Through conversations with organisations across Stirling, both are firm supporters of the #ForgottenLtd campaign, and urge further government support.

Read more here:

<https://alynsmith.scot/2020/07/13/stirling-mp-and-msp-back-stirling-businesses/>

## UK Government TV Licence promise to over-75s broken

“We owe it to older people to ensure they spend their later years with a decent and dignified quality of life. What the Tories have done here is a retrograde step to securing that for many.”

Tory pledges to protect free TV licenses for over-75s will be broken from August 1st 2020, as proposed charges come into effect.

Read more here:

<https://alynsmith.scot/2020/07/10/tories-break-tv-licence-promise-to-over-75s/>

## VAT cut for hospitality and tourism a welcome start

Bruce has welcomed an announcement from the UK Chancellor, temporarily cutting Value-Added-Tax from 20% to 5% for these industries hard hit by COVID-19.

A long standing campaign point for Mr Crawford, previous Tory Chancellors had overlooked the potential benefits for Scotland's economy from such a move.

Read more here:

<http://www.brucecrawford.scot/vat-relief-welcomed-by-stirling-msp/>

For further help & support, visit:

NHS Inform: COVID-19

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19>

Scot Gov:Business Support

<https://findbusinesssupport.gov.scot/>

Stirling Council: Guidance

<https://www.stirling.gov.uk/planning-building-the-environment/emergencies-emergency-planning/coronavirus/>